

## Our View

## Time for George's nostalgia is over

George's Ballroom still lives in the memory of many as THE place to go on a Saturday night, a place to listen to music, to dance, to meet friends. It was the scene of many a first date, engagement party and wedding reception.

But memory has to face reality every now and then, and the time for facing reality with George's is here.

Brown County commissioners heard yet another report on the status of George's this week. The former recreation hall is in bad shape, with trees growing through the roof and mold seeping deeper into the floor. Estimates say it would cost \$5 million to fix it up, and that it would have to produce \$30,000 a month in revenue to keep it going. It will cost \$1 million to demolish, freeing up a prime corner of land in downtown New Ulm.

Commissioners are resolved to deal with the issue now, to seek a state demolition grant and take the building down. They tried selling it before, and even if they gave it up for \$1 to someone, it would only be a matter of time before it was back on the county's delinquent tax list, waiting for the county to take it over again.

Clearing the land now will free it up for development. Whatever happens on that corner, it will ultimately result in property tax revenue coming to the city, county and school district.

We agree with Commissioner Scott Windschitl that the building deserves a full historical documentation, with the salvaging the iconic George's marquee and building signs, and whatever else can be saved. But the time for nostalgia is over. This situation has been going on a long time, and it needs to be resolved.

## Letters

## Have we been drinking Kool-Aid?

## To the editor:

The reference is to the mass suicide in Jonestown in 1978, an event figuring prominently in Charlan Nemeth's book, "In Defense of Troublemakers — the power of dissent in life and business." Cult leader Jim Jones "understood the power of consensus for thought control" (p. 84). Isn't one reminded of refrains one hears today? "We're all in this together." "Can't we all just get along?"

Nemeth's book begins with a description of the ill-fated Dec. 28, 1978, United Airlines Flight 173 from New York to Portland. Preoccupation with a landing-gear problem led to failure to reckon with the dangerously low fuel level. And so the plane fell out of the sky and crashed six miles from the airport. Desperately needed vigorous and insistent dissent had not been voiced. May the fuel problem be compared to the colossal collateral consequences of the reaction to COVID-19? Has something of the greatest urgency been largely sidelined? To cite just one example: The lockdowns are a major factor in

placing 130 million people worldwide at risk of starvation.

Have the "experts" proven themselves reliable when it comes to the response to the virus? Should the voices of dissenters be simply dismissed? Jennifer Cabrera. Ivor Cummins. Ian Miller. James Delingpole. Jeremy R. Hammond. Martin Kulldorff. Jay Bhattacharya. Sunetra Gupta. Scott Atlas. Gret Glycer. Jay Richards. Gregory Morin. Nick Hudson. Jordan Schachtel. Michael Betrus. Alex Berenson. Naomi Wolf. John Hinderaker.

Let's hear from Nemeth again (p. 214): "Dissent and debate also bring joy and invigorate discussion. Best of all, genuine dissent and debate not only make us think but make us think well. ... I will let the philosopher Eric Hoffer bring this book to its close beautifully and succinctly: 'The beginning of thought is in disagreement — not only with others but also with ourselves.'"

**R.E. Wehrwein**  
New Ulm  
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## Other Editors

## State needs immigrants to succeed.

A new report from the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce confirms what our state demographers have been telling us for a long time: Minnesota's economy needs the immigrant population to succeed.

... (B)eing home to a healthy immigrant population affects all Minnesotans — wherever they live in the state and whatever their citizen status. As the COVID-19 pandemic whittled us, if one sector of the economy suffers, it has a domino effect. We saw that when some manufacturers had to temporarily shut down at the start of the pandemic and livestock producers ended up having to euthanize animals when they couldn't be brought to the food-processing plants.

In southern Minnesota many of those food plant employees are immigrant and refugee workers. Without them, many of the groceries that people stocked up on wouldn't have filled supermarket freezers and shelves during the pandemic. And numerous health care workers are immigrants, acting as front-line workers during this crisis. The immigrant population often works at jobs that employers are desperate to fill; the workers are not taking jobs from others as some anti-immigrant voices claim.

And immigrants spend their money here. Their spending power in Minnesota is over \$12.4 billion annually, while households paid \$4.5 billion in state taxes in 2019. Those taxes, of course, support Minnesota by funding such areas as education, criminal justice, social services and transportation. Over time, immigrants are upwardly mobile on multiple fronts including household income, employment and homeownership. The Chamber report cites that while there are costs for supporting foreign-born populations when they first arrive, these costs diminish as subsequent generations assimilate and gain economic success.

It's up to all Minnesotans to recognize that our state's economic stability and success depend on supporting and encouraging the growth of our immigrant populations. And U.S. and state governments as well as nonprofits need to continue to direct resources to agencies that can help ensure their success.

— Mankato Free Press



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## Beussman to resign

## Dear fellow citizens of New Ulm,

One of my passions in life has been meeting and greeting people; both from, and visiting, our community. As your mayor, as a musician, as a teacher, at festivals, and just passing people on our beautiful streets, I have met so many cheerful faces. Maybe due to years of teaching, I also find joy in helping others. I enjoy listening to concerns, problem-solving, and finding ways to provide answers.

Eleven years ago, when it was suggested that I run for mayor of New Ulm, these were some of the opportunities that intrigued me. As mayor of New Ulm, I could be a spokesperson for the town, offer gemütlichkeit to guests, showcase our community, and help find answers or solutions to situations that arise. I was honored that you elected me mayor three times.

One of my main goals to accomplish as mayor was to see the funding for the expansion of Highway 14 be approved without a heavy financial burden to the citizens of New Ulm.

I achieved that goal. Another was to bring more community opportunities for those who live here, such as the splash pad, improvements to playgrounds, the holiday lighting of the city tree, improvements to downtown and the bike trail, to name a few. I achieved that goal. And another was to represent our city with professionalism, compassion, respect and honor in any and all meetings, events, and speeches I was a part of. I do believe I achieved that goal.

Over the last year, I have had increased medical issues. Knowing that the mayor of New Ulm is a figurehead without voting powers, and researching the Americans with Disability Act, I assumed I could continue with the mayoral duties described in the charter/bylaws. However, after receiving a letter last week from the city council that in their opinion I was not doing my duties completely, it is time for me to pass the position to a younger or healthier person.

This is a bittersweet decision for

me. I have cherished every moment and have been honored to serve the city of New Ulm. I consider this one of the greatest accomplishments in my life. I have also become a grandfather to 3 of my 4 wonderful loves in my time as mayor. That is a very big accomplishment of which I am also proud. I believe it is time to be the grandpa who can come to the school parties, ride to the class, and attend sporting events rather than attending meetings and functions to support New Ulm as mayor.

Now, I encourage all citizens of New Ulm to consider running for mayor of this community. I hope my successor will share the same values and dedication I believe are important and will continue the honor, respect, compassion and professionalism that I aimed to bring every day I served. I, Robert Beussman, am resigning as mayor of New Ulm.

**Robert Beussman**  
New Ulm

## The unconstitutional drizzle in Congress' money shower

## By George F. Will

WASHINGTON -- The essence of progressivism's agenda is to create a government-centered society by increasing government's control of society's resources, then distributing those resources in ways that increase the dependency of individuals and social groups on government. Hence this stipulation in Congress' just-enacted \$1.9 trillion money shower: None of the \$350 billion allocated for state governments can be used to finance tax cuts.

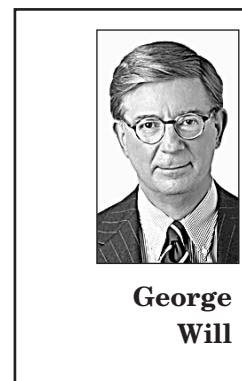
So, the federal government is using the allocation of society's financial resources to state governments to coerce them into maintaining their existing claims on such resources. This illustrates how progressives try to implement a leftward-clicking ratchet. The Supreme Court, whose duties in supervising democracy include reminding a forgetful Congress about federalism, should find the following provision unconstitutional.

It says states shall not use federal funds "to either directly or indirectly offset a reduction in net tax revenue ... resulting from a change in law, regulation, or administrative interpretation." This seems to forbid tax relief of any kind, for any reason. If so, it constitutes (in the language of a letter by 21 Republican state attorneys general seeking clarity from the Biden administration) "an unprecedented and unconstitutional intrusion on the separate sovereignty of the States through federal usurpation of essentially one half of the State's fiscal ledgers (i.e., the revenue half)."

The letter notes that money is fungible, and states must balance their budgets, and adds this: Washington's "gross federal overreach," which takes "state tax policy hostage," is "the greatest attempted invasion of state sovereignty by Congress in the history of our Republic." Today's 117th Congress cannot bind the 118th, but, the letter says, a governor accepting stimulus funds under Washington's terms could bind his state's legislature and his successor from cutting any tax or tax assessment through 2024.

The Biden administration's lachronic response is: "It is well established that Congress may establish reasonable conditions on how states should use federal funding that the states are provided." The Supreme Court, however, has thought about reasonableness.

In 1984, Congress, concerned about interstate problems arising



George Will

from a diversity of states' drinking ages, imposed a national minimum age of 21, to be enforced by withholding a percentage of federal highway funds

from noncompliant states. South Dakota, which permitted 19-year-olds to purchase low-alcohol beer, objected. The court, however, held that 5% was a "relatively small financial inducement" and "not so coercive as to pass the point at which pressure turns into compulsion."

So, the court signaled that some financial inducement could constitute unconstitutional compulsion. Arizona's \$4.8 billion share of the \$350 billion at issue today equals about 40% of this year's state budget from general funds -- not a "relatively small" sum, a coercive one.

In 1985, Congress gave states various financial incentives to dispose of low-level radioactive waste within their borders. New York challenged this, and the Supreme Court objected to one of the incentives: A state failing to dispose of waste by a set date must take title to and possession of the waste and become liable for all damages the producer of the waste might suffer because of the state's failure to promptly take possession.

The court held that this "would

'commandeer' state governments into the service of federal regulatory purposes" and thus be "inconsistent with the Constitution's division of authority between federal and state governments," thereby violating the 10th Amendment ("The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.")

The court said "the Constitution has never been understood to confer upon Congress the ability to require the states to govern according to Congress' instructions." Today, however, Congress is attempting to commandeer the states, telling them they cannot receive their portions of the \$350 billion -- which Congress says addresses an emergency -- without forfeiting discretion concerning their core function, fiscal policy.

In the 2010 Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"), Congress stipulated that states refusing to participate in the expansion of Medicaid would lose their existing Medicaid funding. The court blocked this: "The threatened loss of over 10% of a state's overall budget is economic dragooning that leaves the States with no real option but to acquiesce."

Dragooning, commandeering, coercing, compelling -- pick your gerund, the legal significance of the practices denoted is the same: The progressive drive to break the states to the saddle of the federal government, which progressives attempt for the purpose of producing an ever-more government-centered society, is unconstitutional.

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