



A better year ahead?

Let's allow ourselves to dream that our leaders will exceed our expectations in the New Year.

Maybe Nevada's elected Republicans will locate their moral courage in 2019 and break the silence of their complicity. History won't be kind to those more afraid of a primary than of their grandchildren's harsh judgment for backing an ignorant, narcissistic, dangerous man unfit to lead our country. Nevada GOP leaders can look to four female Kansas GOP legislators who switched parties in December, choosing their state and constituents over the Republican Party. One said she "just can't stomach trying to 'fit in' any more to a party that grieves me so each and every day."

I hope America will recover its humanity and stop separating children from their families at the border. We must prevent more deaths of children like little Jakelin Caal Maquin, who left her impoverished Guatemalan village with her father to seek a better life only to die in the custody of our border patrol. No more pouring out

water jugs left by volunteers in the unforgiving Arizona desert. No more *hieleras* detaining immigrants in freezing steel boxes. No more excuses for failing to pass comprehensive immigration reform that protects Dreamers and creates a rational pathway to citizenship.

I hope Democrats in Congress will hold Republicans accountable for their incessant attempts to ensure no one but the rich can afford health care. As Republicans delight in a new ruling by a federal judge in Texas who found the Affordable Care Act to be unconstitutional, 17 million Americans must worry once again whether they will have access to affordable, quality health care in 2019. Republicans insist they want to protect pre-existing conditions, even as they press forward with plans to destroy a system which doesn't come close to what every other industrialized country has already accomplished: universal health care.

Gradually expanding population groups covered by government-run insurance

plans is a practical way to achieve universal coverage. The ACA included this strategy in its original design, expanding Medicaid to cover poor, childless adults. In 2019, Democrats in Congress should steadily and thoughtfully work towards expanding Medicare and Medicaid to cover more people. We don't need 50 different pilot programs in the states. Health care demands a national solution.

Democrats in the Nevada Legislature should be bold in 2019 as well. There is no shortage of issues to work on, especially with a Democratic governor and a majority female Legislature. Leaders should prioritize needs and set a strong agenda including background checks, stronger gun safety laws, mental health reforms to save money and lives, affordable housing for those most affected by businesses enriched by tax subsidies. There are plenty of policy debates that need to be fostered—pollution of public lands and waterways by the mining industry or the uselessness of the archaic death penalty.

I'm hoping the entire Legislature and Governor-elect Sisolak will remember that the role of government isn't to make it easier for business owners to make money. Government is there to serve the people, not corporations. Bloated projections of theoretical economic return don't help seniors displaced by a spiking demand for housing or those supporting a family on a minimum wage.

Let's encourage businesses to emulate corporations like Patagonia, whose leaders decided to use the \$10 million windfall from the Republican tax cut to invest in grassroots groups fighting climate change. Years ago, Patagonia's local leadership demonstrated similar corporate values when they resigned from the Chamber of Commerce to protest the Chamber's support for the Oil-Dry corporation's attempt to desecrate the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony's Hungry Valley land by producing kitty litter from open pit mines.

Let's all resolve to live our values in 2019. Maybe we'll have a better year. □

Get short!

Time for our annual micro fiction competition!

The **RN&R's** 95-word fiction contest
Write a miniature story that's exactly 95 words long.

Stories must be received before Jan. 16, 2019.

Email submissions to contest@newsreview with the subject line "Fiction 2018."

Here's an example:

Lieutenant Nishiyama's unit searched for Viet Cong soldiers in a village near the Laotian border. As expected, they found nothing. No hidden enemies.

A solitary, elderly woman was cooking rice. The smell made Nishiyama homesick.

Nishiyama called to the translator: "Tell her I'll trade two packs of American cigarettes for a bowl of that rice."

It was delicious.

"Ask her for more."

"She's not poor enough? You've got to eat all her food?"

"What? There's enough food here for a dozen men."

Nishiyama looked at the woman.

"Hey Captain, we better search this property again."

*This year's story example is based loosely on a story told by Vincent Okamoto in Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's 2017 documentary series *The Vietnam War*.