letters to the editor

Stop spreading misinformation Last month, Jack Dresser attempted to convince us that masks were not effective by misrepresenting a study in ways the authors explicitly warned against. This time (Letters, Feb. 14), he presents some scary-sounding numbers from the HHS Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System that are taken out of context to warn us of dangers of vaccines along with related conspiracies regarding drug manufacturers.

As its own website cautions: ' [...] VAERS reports alone cannot be used to determine if a vaccine caused or contributed to an adverse event or illness. The reports may contain information that is incomplete, inaccurate, coincidental, or unverifiable.'

But my concern here isn’t so much with him as with The Register-Guard for giving a platform for such pseudoscience, whether it be related to COVID-19 or climate or something more mundane. While your guidelines for letters indicate that they are fact-checked, for science this involves much more than merely verifying anecdotes.

Recently Robert F. Kennedy Jr., a long-time anti-vaccine activist, was removed from Instagram for spreading misinformation that was deemed harmful for society. When will The Register-Guard review its own policies and procedures on this front?

*Paul Bunson, Eugene* Wicked games NW Natural is playing a dirty game. It's telling customers that the city wants to raise gas prices when, in actuality, the corporation is doing everything it can to increase rates and protect its Wall Street investors’ profits.

The city of Eugene is negotiating a franchise agreement that would allow the city to reduce its carbon footprint. This includes levying a fee on NW Natural, which the city could use to retrofit homes with safer, low-carbon footprint, electric appliances. In the city’s proposal, this fee would come out of NW Natural’s profits — the corporation would not be permitted to pass the fee onto residents.

A fee makes sense: NW Natural has long profited from the pollution of low-income households and our climate. Children in homes with gas stoves have a 42% increased risk of asthma, and gas stoves produce NO₂ levels that would be illegal if found outdoors. Yet instead of embracing its role as a partner in the city’s transition away from this polluting fuel, NW Natural would rather have its customers pay. Like a two-headed snake, it’s asking the city to raise rates on customers while telling its customers that rising costs are because of the city’s regulations.

*Nicholas Tippins, Eugene* Whatever happened to coaching up? Are Oregon’s quarterbacks so good that they don’t need coaching? Was Justin Herbert not allowed to be himself while at Oregon?