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OPINION

IS 20/20 HINDSIGHT?



By **Barry Cassidy**

The year 2020 seems to have lasted longer than any other year. Many of us sat at home for most of the year. The virus has kept us isolated and in the company of our families.

One of the things I have learned is that my house needs a lot of work. Stuff that I took at face value became urgent repair items. I realized that my house needed attention. Another issue that availed itself was that I had no opportunity to spend money. Isolation made me a thrifty shopper, and the fact that stores were all closed, and travel was restricted, made me more willing to fix what was wrong with my house.

The fact that I am 71 and not as handy as I used to be, puts me in a position where I realize how old I am and what my limitations are. I fixed any number of

deficiencies with my house. I found that it was a common theme for people, and the delays in getting any kinds of materials were common. The economy turned micro, with local people recognizing a need and making the corresponding purchases. The key ingredient here is that they did it locally with local people doing the work, keeping the economy going.

There have been a plethora of things happening that make this year a year that many do not want to re-experience — Killer Hornets, riots, threats of an asteroid impact on election day, and almost any scandal possible was brought to our

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attention. I learned to turn off my TV and read more because some processed information was so biased and slanted that I had my fill.

It was announced that Killer Hornets were now in America, and we all had to be on the lookout. Since I was not going outside, it did not matter to me. I had an adequate supply of bee and hornet spray, and I felt I was immune to such an attack. Instead, I had the attack of the ants. I was able to find a kind of ant trap that provided the food they brought back to the nest and killed them.

I watched as they formed a line in and out of the trap to the corner of the window. Hundreds and hundreds of ants participated and thus met their doom. I witnessed the excellent ant apocalypse.

Then riots started across the US, and in many cases, I believe were made possible because there were not many people on the streets. To a great extent, there were many hoodlums on the street protesting in the name of equal rights, which had no real connection to this effort. I think the fact that the three people killed in Kenosha were felons, and it seemed odd to me that they all were felons. As a random sample of people, you see three white felons killed? The fringe of societal exclusion was on the

streets, causing problems. These people used racial injustice as an excuse. I watched as an elderly black woman was pushed to the ground as people dressed in black with masks broke store windows. She wanted peaceful protests. They wanted havoc.

By the time this column comes out, the election will be over, and the veracity of asteroid predictions will be known. I hope that we do not plunge into total darkness but instead have a close miss.

These assertions lead me to the purpose of this article. You cannot trust the information put out by the news media or social media. Truth is relative, but it should not be this relative.

Truth should have some basis other than shouting down the other side.

I am not known to be a shrinking violet and have taken issue with the "word police" as they seek to improve upon my lexicon to satisfy their needs. It was hard to restrain myself from attacking, but when a prominent member of my political party singled my posts out as invalid because I am a white male, I have to admit, I lost it. I have seen it happen to others, and they exhibited gentlemanly like responses. I am not a gentleman.

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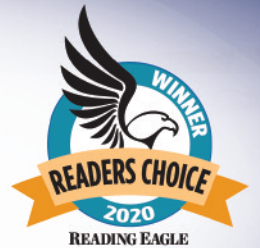
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OPINION

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I am not a stranger to the “F” word and, in many cases, happen to be a little more well-read than most. Studying internationally recently made me more aware of the known limits of expression. I tried desperately not to respond in kind as I pointed out what I interpreted as nonsense. So, on occasion, I reverted to what my first wife called “Old Barry Syndrome” (OBS), which was much more vulgar and aggressive than the new Barry.

I think my most frustrating reveal was fact-checking. I watched that fact-checkers label as “false” assertions that were mostly true but had a small error. Something like “XYZ happened in late spring” would be labeled as false because it happened in early summer. What kind of nonsense is that? What was particularly troubling to me is the follow up by people saying it was falsely based upon that denial. Then the process of being called a Nazi or a racist followed.

I am not sure how all this will play out in the future, but my ability to process information has become much more

discerning. I would go back to the seeing is believing, but even pictures and videos can be edited to constitute a fraudulent interpretation. What do you believe?

In the case of 2020, hindsight is not 20-20. I am not sure where we are headed in the last months of 2020, but I hope that things get more transparent in 2021.

Barry Cassidy is a freelance grant and economic development consultant. He can be reached at barrycassidy@comcast.net.

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