

OUR VIEW

Support, attend the Union County Fair

The Union County Fair kicks off this week and you should go check it out. That's because there will be plenty of entertainment along with a plethora of Future Farmers of America and 4-H activity. There will also be live music every night. The fair — and along with it, the fairgrounds — should be the cornerstone of the county, a place that stands out once a year as the venue to go to. This year's fair looks to be one that will not disappoint.

Attending the fair, while a fun element to the week, is also very much about supporting an important community site.

The fairgrounds should — and do — represent a location where every year the community can gather and interact and enjoy some late summer fun.

Attending the fair helps deliver needed financial resources to the facility which, frankly, needs to be a much higher priority for county and city elected leaders.

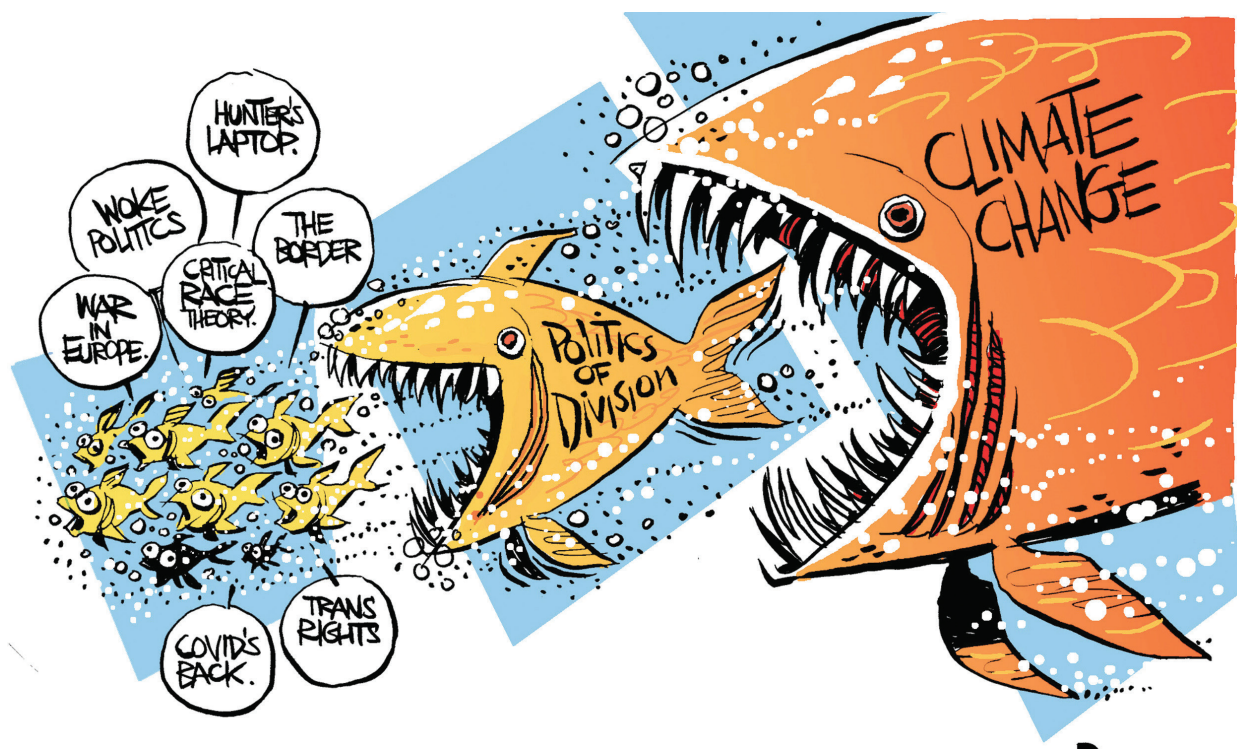
Why it isn't is somewhat of a mystery. Part of it, though, certainly rests with the very rural nature of our county. In the rural parts of the state, finances are almost always tough for county and city governments. The tax base isn't huge and there are always a series of competing priorities. So, area lawmakers can't take all the blame for a facility that needs millions more in upgrades, but more can be done to help.

A key piece of that help should rest at the state level with our elected representatives. While there has been some valuable help delivered to the fairgrounds through the work of state lawmakers, more is needed.

That's because, in the end, the fairgrounds should be a bright light for visitors to visit and experience the entire year. The possibilities for the fairgrounds are really only as limited as one's imagination. The more that can be done to capitalize on this ready platform right in our backyard the better off the entire community will be.

Aside from the politics, though, the fair this week will just be one very nice family-oriented event. Those don't come along as much as we'd all like, but this week the community can travel out to the fairgrounds for a good time.

We hope you do.



FITZSIMMONS ONE ART CO. ATTN: MAR 2022



YOUR VIEWS

No land owner will benefit from this boondoggle

Here we go again with the push to build the “for profit” Boardman to Hemingway 500 kilowatt power line. Idaho Power Co. is one of the operators of the B2H and owns 45% of the line, along with PacifiCorp. The companies hope the line can become a “clean-energy superhighway.” What the comment should say is the companies hope the line will produce the estimated \$80 million in profit for the stockholders of the two investor owned companies.

“The more we study, the more we are convinced that this is the best option for the Pacific Northwest,” Idaho Power spokesperson Sven Berg said. What he should say is that it is the best option for the shareholders and has no benefit to the 700-800 private landowners who will suffer not only from the loss and destruction of their land but the significant loss of value due to the line. No land owner will benefit from this boondoggle.

This land grabbing project began back in around 2007-10. At that time Idaho Power was to present an estimate of cost to build the line, and it was projected to be around a billion dollars, and, as I understand it, there was to be safeguards that taxpayers and ratepayers would not be picking up any of the costs. At this point it should be noted, with the withdrawing of Bonneville Power, PacifiCorp (Berkshire Hathaway) is asking for a rate increase of more than 6% for construction and updates of their lines. It is time for Idaho Power to submit a new updated projected costs budget.

Idaho Power had planned on buying steel from Russia for the towers and lines themselves. That to date has not been done, nor can it due to current actions of Russia. What is the new costs of construction, or should I say destruction, of the planned line site.

If it was estimated around a

billion dollars in 2010, what is the overall estimates now? Why did the Oregon Public Utility Commission form a commission to study the fire prevention plan of Idaho Power, which returned a summary that Idaho Power's fire prevention plan was not up to standards, only to override the commission's findings and make an exception for Idaho Power?

How many energy projects has the Department of Energy Siting Council ever rejected? Idaho Power is to receive a 10% bonus in construction costs, most of which will go to investors.

John and Cyndi Harvey
Pendleton

Yes, a feral cat can be tamed, but it takes time

Maria Carmichael stated in the July 28 Observer that you cannot tame a feral cat. She is so wrong. In the 14 years that my husband and I have lived in La Grande we have not only fed the strays and ferals, but now have five cats, four of which were feral.

We found out almost immediately there was a huge problem here with ferals and strays. We live on South 12th Street and were told by our neighbors that people drive to the top of 12th, which turns into Bushnell, and dump their animals off. They figure this is the rich side of town and the animals will be taken care of. We are not rich but do what we can for the animals. We trap as many as we can, have them fixed, then release them, but the problem with that is they still don't have homes, so still need to be fed. We also enjoy the other wildlife that is here, the squirrels, birds of all kinds and the city deer, so we have to tread lightly when feeding the ferals outside, because we don't want to encourage them to kill the birds and squirrels.

Two of our ferals were kittens, so it was fairly easy to domesticate them. The other two ferals took time.

The first one it took over two years before he started to trust us, but with patience and time he is now a domesticated loving boy. He still loves to go outside, but sleeps inside every night. The second feral showed up when he was just a kitten. We fed him for more than a year, but trapped him right away and had him fixed. With time and patience he is now part of our happy family. Only one of the five was a stray. He just came walking in the back door 10 years ago. No one claimed him, so we figured he was dumped off.

Nothing is impossible if you want it to happen. So to Carmichael's comment that you cannot tame a feral cat, you probably couldn't because you don't want it to happen.

Jamie Thiesfeld
La Grande

Shoutout to Liberty Theatre Cafe

I would like to give a shoutout to Liberty Theatre Cafe for being such an asset to our downtown business community.

Food service is risky. There are many variables that can easily make or break the sustainability of its success. Key elements are: continuity of a good product, trained staff with the ability and willingness to sell and promote said product, and of course, someone with business sense to execute and maintain a viable business plan — this usually takes a team of dedicated and focused individuals. In my opinion and observation, Liberty Theatre Cafe, in downtown La Grande, has achieved this plan.

Liberty Theatre Cafe serves up a stellar menu of savory and sweet cuisine, with a consistent product outcome. It is nice to have this morning venue to start the day and enjoy a delicious culinary treat. Thank you, Liberty Theatre Cafe, and team, for hanging in there.

Debera White-Waters
La Grande

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