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Dawn McIntosh for Circuit Court judge

Judges are a largely unseen, but essential part of local government. Our democracy relies upon judges' impartiality as well as their competence in running a trial. The judges of the Clatsop County Circuit Court — Phil Nelson, Paula Brownhill and Cindee Matyas — are widely praised for their competence.

A rare vacancy on the court is coming, because Judge Nelson is retiring at the end of a distinguished career.

The three candidates for this open position have one thing in common. They have worked or are working as deputy prosecutors in the office of District Attorney Josh Marquis.

David Goldthorpe is a deputy district attorney. Dawn McIntosh is partner in a Gearhart law firm. Ron Woltjer serves as municipal judge for Warrenton, Seaside and Cannon Beach.

It is exceedingly rare to find a prosecutor who has been a corrections officer. Goldthorpe has done that, in an Idaho medium security prison. Of his judicial candidacy, he says: "You shouldn't send someone to a place you haven't seen." That is a valuable perspective.

Marquis has endorsed Goldthorpe, saying he exhibited qualities essential to judicial temperament — "compassion, fairness, commitment to equal justice, decisiveness." Goldthorpe is also endorsed by law enforcement officials, such as Sheriff Tom Bergin.

McIntosh has the most extensive legal experience of the three. She has been a prosecutor and a lawyer in private practice. Prior to being recruited by Marquis, McIntosh worked in the Multnomah County district attorney's office. Upon McIntosh's departure from

Good riddance, Jim Crow

It is difficult to think of a name that white people would react to with the same distaste many African-Americans feel for Jim Crow: Osama Bin Laden? Adolf Hitler? Vladimir Lenin? How would we feel about having anything around with one of these names attached to it?

For most of the nation, Jim Crow is code for a set of racist attitudes and formal laws that were designed to enforce a regressive racial caste system. It encompasses obnoxious stereotypes and American apartheid — the whole hateful pattern of separate and unequal facilities for whites and non-whites that finally began to be dismantled in the 1960s.

A Washington state senator has initiated a campaign to strip Jim Crow and other racially

derivative names from geographical features in the state, including three instances of Jim Crow in Wahkiakum County. Local leaders appear to have no intention of joining the renaming campaign, and are dismissive of concerns. It is cringe-inducing to hear any contemporary elected official refer to African-Americans as "colored."

The time has passed for this naming issue to be a local option. Residents are free to think of Jim Crow Creek/Point/Hill however they wish. But as far as official maps and nautical charts are concerned, change is overdue. The simplest solution would be to just strip off "Jim."

This isn't "political correctness." It's simple good manners and good sense.

his office, Marquis said: "She was the best child abuse prosecutor I've seen in the 22 years I've practiced law." Judge Brownhill has endorsed McIntosh, saying: "She is smart, she is analytical, and she knows the law. We should take advantage of this opportunity to elect a skilled lawyer who can hit the ground running."

Goldthorpe has suggested that McIntosh would have to recuse herself from cases involving former clients. But we must remember that Judge Nelson and Judge Brownhill both came to the bench from private practice, and this was not an impediment.

Woltjer's strength is that he has courtroom experience as a lawyer and as a municipal court judge. But the leap from municipal court to circuit court is considerable.

This is a good field of candidates. With differing levels of readiness, it is safe to say that each of them could do the job. Since they are all graduates of the Josh Marquis graduate school, we know they would bring the prosecutor's perspective.

Our recommendation is Dawn McIntosh. Her acknowledged excellence as a prosecutor and her private practice experience in the courtroom make her the most versatile of these candidates. All three are prepared, but she is the most prepared.

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Washington Nationals' very own Mickey Mantle

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON — We all have our ways of marking the seasons.

I know it's spring when in early April I start my morning by skipping *The Washington Post* front page and going right to the sports section.

It's not until I've fully savored the baseball box scores that I resignedly turn to politics.

My non-baseball friends are forever puzzled by my devotion to the game. I agree entirely with them about the irrationality of fandom. Why should a grown man with a house, a family, two jobs and a cat named Will Feral (brought in from the cold and now largely domesticated, like the Danish King Canute by the English) care about a bunch of millionaire 20-something strangers playing a boys' game in baggy uniforms?

It's ridiculous. Yet when the hometown Washington Nationals win, my mood brightens. Can't help it.

When they first came here a decade ago, they didn't win much. In 2008-09, the Nats lost 205 games. I went to the park anyway. When your team is good, you go to see them win. When they're bad, you go for the moments — the beautiful moments, like the perfectly executed outfield assist, that grace every difficult athletic endeavor from the balance beam to the giant slalom.

The Nationals, being a very good team now, practically guarantee such moments every game. Their newly acquired second baseman, the one with the impossibly level swing and no leg kick, leads the league in hitting. Their star pitcher tossed two no-hitters last season, something done exactly five times in the previous 115 years. And then there's Bryce Harper.

He's the best baseball player on the planet, probably in the entire Milky Way. (Those box scores are slow in coming in.) And for the next three years, he'll be playing at Nats Park.

America is in Hamilton's debt

By PAUL KRUGMAN

New York Times News Service

The Treasury Department picked an interesting moment to announce a revision in its plans to change the faces on America's money.

Plans to boot Alexander Hamilton off the \$10 bill in favor of a woman have been shelved.

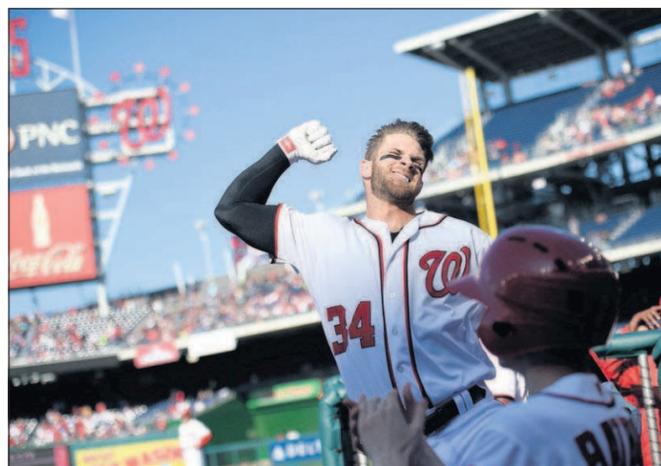
Instead, Harriet Tubman — one of the most heroic figures in the history of our nation, or any nation — will move onto the face of the \$20 bill.

She will replace Andrew Jackson, a populist who campaigned against elites but was also, unfortunately, very much a racist, arguably an advocate of what we would nowadays call white supremacy. Hmm. Does that make you think about any currently prominent political figures?

But let me leave the \$20 bill alone and talk about how glad I am to see Hamilton retain his well-deserved honor. And I'm not alone among economists in my admiration for our first Treasury secretary. In fact, Stephen S. Cohen and J. Bradford DeLong have an excellent new book, *Concrete Economics*, arguing that Hamilton was the true father of the U.S. economy.

Full disclosure: I know next to nothing about Hamilton the man and his life story. Nor, I'm sorry to say, have I managed to see the musical. But I have read Hamilton's pathbreaking economic policy manifestoes, in particular his 1790 *First Report on the Public Credit*, a document that remains amazingly relevant today.

In that report, Hamilton proposed that the federal government assume and honor all of the debts individual states had run up during the Revolutionary War, imposing new tariffs on imported goods to raise the needed revenue. He believed that doing so



AP Photo/Nick Wass

Washington Nationals' Bryce Harper pumps his fist as he takes a curtain call after he hit a grand slam during the third inning of a baseball game against the Atlanta Braves, April 14, in Washington, D.C. It was Harper's 100th career home run.

It's spring. It's warm. There's baseball.

After that, he becomes a free agent and will command the largest contract in the history of professional sports. He might very well end up with the money-bag Dodgers or Yankees and \$500 million. Give or take.

So be it. By 2019, we could all be underwater or living under Sharia law, depending on whether your doomsday is of the Democratic or Republican flavor. In the interim, I'm going to eat, drink and watch Harper.

At 16, he graced the cover of *Sports Illustrated* as the "Chosen One." At 19, when most elite players are starting college ball, he was the National League rookie of the year. At 22, he was unanimously voted the NL Most Valuable Player, the youngest to score such a sweep. That was last year. This year, he's even better.

He came in as a brash, hyperenergetic, often reckless rookie who in his eighth major league game stole home off a former World Series MVP pitcher who had deliberately plunked him minutes earlier just to teach him a lesson. It obviously didn't take.

These days, Harper plays with more controlled fury. No longer crashes into outfield walls. And has tamed his violently explosive swing with such pitch

recognition and plate discipline that in the age of the strikeout — up 24 percent in the last decade — he has (as of this writing) fewer strikeouts than home runs.

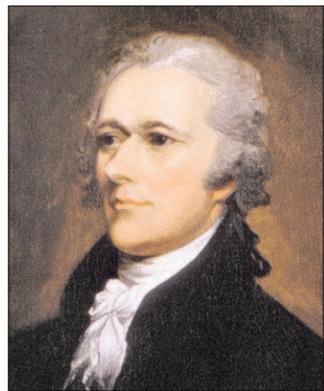
And it's those home runs that turn every Harper at-bat into an event. Like Thursday last week. Harper comes to the plate with 99 career home runs. Bases loaded, two outs, Nats trailing 1-0, crowd rocking.

It was a movie moment and he did his Roy Hobbs — a rocket to right field that seemed to be still rising when it hit the scoreboard on the upper-deck facade. And broke it. Knocked out the "r" in the Good Humor ad running at the moment of impact. Place went nuts.

Harper's first-ever grand slam. What does he do the very next time he comes up with the bases loaded, just five days later? Need you ask?

In spring training, Harper hit two home runs in a game off Cy Young winner Justin Verlander. The second cleared a 35-foot wall at the 420-foot mark in dead center. Said the Nats' new pitching coach, incredulous, to the manager: "We get to watch this every day?"

If you live in Washington, you get to watch this — our own young Mickey Mantle — 81 times a season. How then can you get too despondent about our presidential choices, the kowtow to Cuba or the decline of the California smelt? It's spring. It's warm. There's baseball. There's Harper. Why, even the Cubs are good this year.



Washington University Law School Alexander Hamilton portrait by John Trumbull, 1806.

Hamilton isn't around to help counter foolish debt phobia.

would produce important benefits, which I'll get to in a minute.

First, however, I think it's interesting to ask how such a proposal would be received today.

On the left, it would surely be denounced as a bailout — a giveaway to speculators who had purchased devalued debt for pennies on the dollar, and would reap large capital gains. Indeed, a fair bit of the report is devoted to explaining why trying to prevent such windfall gains, via "discrimination between the different classes of creditors," would be impractical and unwise.

Meanwhile, on the right — well, Hamilton was calling for a tax increase, which modern conservatives oppose under any and all circumstances. Luckily for him, there was no Club for Growth to demand his impeachment.

But why did Hamilton want to take on those state debts? Partly to establish a national reputation as a reliable borrower, so that funds could be raised cheaply in the future. Partly, also, to give wealthy, influential investors a stake in the new federal government, thereby creating a powerful pro-federal constituency.

Beyond that, however, Hamilton

argued that the existence of a significant, indeed fairly large national debt would be good for business. Why? Because "in countries in which the national debt is properly funded, and an object of established confidence, it answers most of the purposes of money." That is, bonds issued by the U.S. government would provide a safe, easily traded asset that the private sector could use as a store of value, as collateral for deals, and in general as a lubricant for business activity. As a result, the debt would become a "national blessing," making the economy more productive.

This argument anticipates, to a remarkable degree, one of the hottest ideas in modern macroeconomics: the notion that we are suffering from a global "safe asset shortage." The private sector, according to this argument, can't function well without a sufficient pool of assets whose value isn't in question — and for a variety of reasons, there just aren't enough such assets these days.

As a result, investors have been bidding up the prices of government debt, leading to incredibly low interest rates. But it would be better for almost everyone, the story goes, if governments were to issue more debt, investing the proceeds in much-needed infrastructure even while providing the private sector with the collateral it needs to function. And it's a very persuasive story to just about everyone who has looked hard at the evidence.

Unfortunately, policymakers won't do the right thing, largely because they keep listening to fiscal scolds — people who insist that public debt is a terrible thing even when borrowing costs almost nothing. The influence of these scolds, their virtual veto over fiscal policy, somehow persists even though their predictions of soaring interest rates and runaway inflation keep not coming true.

The point is that Alexander Hamilton knew better.

Unfortunately, Hamilton isn't around to help counter foolish debt phobia. But maybe reminding policymakers of his wisdom is one way to chip away at the wall of folly that still constrains policy. And having his face out there every time someone pulls out a 10 can't hurt, either.