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WAKE OF VANPORT SCREENING
Coming in Sept.



Opinion

Jeff Trades an Unknown Known for a Known Known

When Pat and I moved from Portland to Central Oregon, I felt confident that trading a Rumsfeldian unknown known risk — that an earthquake will devastate Portland at some unknown time in the next 500 years — for a known known risk — that wildland fires threaten homes in Central Oregon every year — was a good bet. Until last week. That's when the sheriff's office ordered us to evacuate immediately as the number one priority fire in the entire country bore down on our little development. Thanks to the efforts of hundreds of firefighters over many days, the fire appears to have spared us but it has gotten me thinking about how one manages risk in life.

I operate on a fairly straightforward risk calculation — size of risk X probability of event occurring within a given time period = risk quotient; compare two options and choose the less risky. OK, sounds good, but wait, our house just nearly burned down and Portland is probably going to be intact for my lifetime!

What has worked out for me since moving here is getting back into horses. Last year, my boy, Cimarron, and I had the best 'limited distance' (25 - 35 mile courses) record on any horse and rider in the entire Northwest region —



Jeff Tryens
Guest Columnist

five first place race finishes and four coveted 'Best Condition'(BC) awards for Cimarron. Woohoo! And true to the horse world, this year has been a wreck. Cim and I started out beautifully coming in third against very stiff competition in our first ride and

“Our house just nearly burned down and Portland is probably going to be intact for my lifetime

then winning the Klickitat Trek against 48 other horses. (See photo.) “Oh no”, vet tells me Cim is “not right” when we stand for BC at Klickitat. \$1,000 later, for a limp I can't even discern, a big shot lameness vet says Cim is confined to bed rest for at least 90 days (the entire riding season) for an injury he is unable to pinpoint.

So an endurance teammate



Jeff Tryens on his horse Cimarron

(I'm a WhoopA\$\$er.) kindly offers me her CMK Arabian (fancy horse) requesting that I get this green trail horse to the point that she can handle an endurance race. Sweet, gorgeous Cara — how hard could that be? Well, turns out Cara has a couple of really bad habits — when she doesn't want to go forward, she backs up really fast without looking where she's going and when that doesn't work she stands straight up on her hind legs — think Silver, but out of control — and, finally, falls over on her rider — me. With a burst of humility, I recognize that Cara is out of my league and return her to my teammate. Then, hearing of my misfortune, my chief competitor

from last year offers me her horse for the next Central Oregon ride while she rides a teammate's 50-mile horse in her quest to move up from 25s to 50s - so I'm back in the saddle. And to think, two years ago I was a total stranger in this world.

Here's my big news. As of July, I am an elected public official. How, you might ask, could that have happened? Well, I've been a parkie for many years,

so, when an uncontested seat on the parks and recreation district appeared on the May ballot, I said, “What the hell”. I swept to victory with 61 write-in votes. Turns out we don't actually manage any parks and 25% of the population has never heard of us despite being around for 20 years but, hey, we have taxing authority.

Overheard at the gym in my semi-liberal town in a red county — “Of course I voted for him. What choice did I have?” I hope the Dems can do better next time around. In fact, I'm going to go out on a limb, right now, and be the first public official in the country to endorse Biden/Obama for 2020!

When You Educate a Girl, You Educate a Nation

As I write this, I am preparing to travel with my colleagues to Nigeria, where I will have the honor of meeting some of the Chibok girls who were released after two waves of negotiations between Boko Haram and Nigerian government officials. It is my fourth trip to Nigeria since April 14, 2014, when the terrorist group shocked the world by abducting nearly 300 schoolgirls from their dormitory rooms. More than three years later, 113 of the original 276 Chibok girls are still being held captive.

Many of the girls who escaped their kidnappers on that fateful night or have since been released have remarkably not allowed this hugely traumatic ordeal to diminish their determination to pursue an education. It is my mission to help ensure that they, and indeed every girl in Nigeria, have the opportunity to go as far as their desire to learn will take them.

Before Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari was sworn into office, the president-elect wrote in a New York Times op-ed about the urgent necessity to educate girls so that “they will grow



Frederica S. Wilson
Congresswoman (D-Fla.)

up to be empowered through learning to play their full part as citizens of Nigeria and pull themselves up and out of poverty.” He rightly surmised that the country owed at

“A lack of education has been a key factor in Boko Haram's ongoing ability to successfully recruit young men and boys

least that much to the Chibok schoolgirls, whose fate at that time was gravely uncertain. I look forward to working with the nation's activists and government leaders to examine ways to help Buhari keep that pledge.

There is an African proverb that says, “If we educate a boy, we educate one person. If we educate a girl, we educate a family — and a whole nation.” Fifty percent of Nigeria's population is female, so it borders on the absurd to not

push for them to receive the “best possible education” that Buhari promised in his opinion piece. They will in turn ensure that their children—boys and girls—are educated, which as the proverb suggests will greatly benefit both their families and ultimately the nation by equipping it with a workforce that is prepared to help undo the extensive damage that has occurred during Boko Haram's reign of terror.

A lack of education has been

unlikely to see the appeal of becoming a terrorist.

Girls can change the world and there is no better example of that than the young Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai, who was famously shot in the head at age 16 for daring to question the Taliban's efforts to deny her right to an education. In addition to becoming the first recipient of her country's peace prize, being named one of Time magazine's most influential people, and receiving the United Nations Human Rights Award, she is the world's youngest Nobel laureate. Malala has earned global acclaim for championing education for girls around the world, including Nigeria, and after completing her studies at Oxford University will return to her native Pakistan to continue those efforts.

It is my hope that the Chibok girls, some of whom met with Malala this summer, will be inspired to follow her path, one on which tragedy is turned into triumph.

Frederica Wilson represents Florida's 24th congressional district, including parts of Miami-Dade and Broward counties. You can follow Rep. Wilson on Twitter @RepWilson.