

# EAST OREGONIAN

Founded October 16, 1875

**KATHRYN B. BROWN**  
Publisher

**DANIEL WATTENBURGER**  
Managing Editor

**JENNINE PERKINSON**  
Advertising Director

**TIM TRAINOR**  
Opinion Page Editor

## EO MEDIA GROUP

East Oregonian • The Daily Astorian • Capital Press • Hermiston Herald  
Blue Mountain Eagle • Willowa County Chieftain • Chinook Observer • Coast River Business Journal  
Oregon Coast Today • Coast Weekend • Seaside Signal • Cannon Beach Gazette  
Eastern Oregon Real Estate Guide • Eastern Oregon Marketplace • Coast Marketplace  
OnlyAg.com • Farmseller.com • Seaside-Sun.com • NorthwestOpinions.com • DiscoverOurCoast.com

**MIKE FORRESTER**  
Pendleton  
Chairman of the Board

**STEVE FORRESTER**  
Astoria  
President

**KATHRYN B. BROWN**  
Pendleton  
Secretary/Treasurer

**TOM BROWN**  
Bigfork, Mont.  
Director

**JEFF ROGERS**  
Indianapolis, Ind.  
Director

## OUR VIEW

# Can recently divorced districts still be friends?

The headline of our last editorial on the Hermiston School District and their plan to leave the InterMountain Education Service District was “Breaking up is hard to do.”

So now that the relationship is officially kaput, we ask: Can we still be friends?

Because that is the key to keeping the education community humming along smoothly in Eastern Oregon. And it's important that administrators from both organizations let bygones be bygones and start to find out how best to coexist in the new environment.

We appreciated the sentiment from IMESD director Mark Mulvihill, who said: “It's time to move on. We've done it, and we've had the emotion, and Hermiston is moving forward and we respect that.”

For most students and teachers in school districts from Hermiston to Baker, they won't notice the difference in the new arrangement. And that's a good thing. If you're a student with special needs in the Hermiston district, or an administrator trying to schedule services, maybe things got a little better for you. If you're a special needs student outside that district, things probably got a little worse.

But as we said back in October, the Hermiston school board's responsibility is to the students in their district. And while it's great to take a step back and see the big

picture on many issues, that's not what they nor superintendent Fred Maiocco were tasked to do.

But enough of that. Those bygones are long gone by now.

Our advice is no different now than it was in that first editorial.

As with most adult relationships that come to an end, the most important thing to remember is that the kids have to come first.

There is still plenty of collaboration that can happen between the school districts, even though they're not all under the same

ESD umbrella anymore. Hermiston students still will use Eastern Promise as a pathway to secondary education. Political alliances will need to remain strong in Salem. And Hermiston, in its oft-stated mission of being the premier school district in Oregon, must lead by example and be willing to share what's working and what's not.

Yet it's hard to ignore an underlying issue at play here, too.

A decade ago Pendleton was the largest city in Eastern Oregon. It was the home of a U.S. Senator, a state representative and a state senator. None of the above are true anymore. Hermiston leaving the ESD is just another sign that the natural balance of power in Umatilla County — and the larger region — is heading west.

As that power shifts, there are bound to be these tectonic shudders that rattle the establishment. But they shouldn't keep us from building anew.

As with every adult relationship that comes to an end: the kids have to come first.

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

# Let's rethink hemp ban

The Albany Democrat-Herald

The pieces of the puzzle are starting to come together to possibly allow Oregon's farmers to stake their claim on what could become their next cash crop: industrial hemp.

It's about time.

In fact, it's well past time. Now that Oregon has moved forward with medical marijuana and its voters have approved a measure allowing the use of recreational pot, it seems silly to leave industrial hemp tainted by its long-time association with the drug.

We're not alone in believing this. In fact, this might well be the only issue on which Oregon's Democratic U.S. senators, Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, agree with their two Republican colleagues from Kentucky, Rand Paul and Mitch McConnell.

The four senators this week said they were co-sponsoring a bill, the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2015, which would remove federal restrictions on the domestic cultivation of industrial hemp. The bill would remove hemp from the federal Schedule I controlled substance list — a frankly ludicrous designation in the first place — and would define it as a nondrug as long as it contained less than 0.3 percent tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC is the active ingredient in marijuana.

Once you eliminate the THC, it turns out that hemp itself has a number of uses, including as a fiber. A number of farmers are positively high (sorry; couldn't resist) on prospects for

industrial hemp, including a Salem-area enthusiast who told The Oregonian this week that it “could save America. I am talking about everything from biodiesel fuel to food to health care products to paper. It's endless. There are thousands of applications.”

A couple of problems remain: For starters, if you're a farmer in one of the 20 states that has defined industrial hemp as being distinct from marijuana (the list includes Oregon and Kentucky), you still must seek a waiver from the federal Drug Enforcement Administration to grow the crop or risk raids by federal agents. You

could see how the prospect of having DEA agents tromping around the back 40 might have a chilling effect. The Wyden-Merkley-Paul-McConnell bill (and, yes, it's weird to place those names in the same sentence) would fix that.

Another piece of the puzzle started to fall into place this week in Salem, where the state Agriculture Department held a public hearing on draft rules that could allow farmers to plant industrial hemp crops as early as this spring. The state rules aren't perfect — it's not clear, for example, why the state is asking producers to pay a \$1,500 fee for a three-year license — but they appear to be a solid step forward.

Progress to clear the way for planting of industrial hemp may not in itself be sufficient to save America, as some proponents hope. But these developments do seem to be small victories for common sense, and those are rare enough to be worth celebrating.



## OTHER VIEWS

# Dropouts and politics and cats

Let's talk about governors. Or college dropouts.

Wow, we've only been together for a few seconds and already I sense a strong preference for college dropouts. Lucky I didn't say, “Let's talk about governors. Or cats.”

A number of our governors are nursing presidential ambitions. Why not? They have experience running things and dealing with cranky legislators. Also, they look at the herd of presidential hopefuls and think, “Clearly, I could do better.” This is true of every elected official down to and including members of the zoning board of appeals, but we tend to take governors more seriously.

The most brazen prospective candidate, Chris Christie, prepared for his State of the State speech this week with a special off-the-record news conference to which only national journalists were invited. Honest — he barred the state reporters from his discussion of the state of the state. Maybe the governor was afraid they'd distract him with small-bore questions about New Jersey's eight credit downgrades.

Then it was on to the speech, during which Christie talked about America's world leadership (“called into question”) and the state of the nation (“beset by anxiety”). And if you don't believe that last part, he had a story about a little old lady he met in Florida.

Meanwhile, Gov. Mike Pence stuck pretty much to Indiana. ...

Whoops, I feel you drifting away at the words “Mike Pence.” Well, he appears to have presidential ambitions as well. Plus two cats named Pickle and Oreo.

Now that I've regained your attention, let's consider Scott Walker, the governor of Wisconsin. Walker really, really wants to run for president. His State of the State speech was about opposing terrorism and shrinking the government, plus 10 billion mentions of the Green Bay Packers. He's already hired a political consultant for his run. The consultant's claim to fame is having helped oversee the presidential campaign of Rudy Giuliani, but nobody's perfect.

If Walker was elected, he'd be the first president without a college degree since Harry Truman. Yes! This is the college dropout connection. How important do you think it is for a president to have a college degree? If Walker gets traction I am looking forward to digging into this a lot. Perhaps it will give me a chance to explain why William Henry Harrison quit medical school in 1791.

Walker went to Marquette University in Milwaukee. I went to Marquette, too. Had a great time. Unlike Walker, I got a degree. Only



**GAIL COLLINS**  
Comment

one of us is a governor, so there's a point for the dropouts right there.

His early departure may have had something to do with disappointment over an unsuccessful career in campus politics. Or just not being very into school. Apparently, Walker was a mediocre student. By the way, how much do we care about presidential prospects' college grades? Not much — these are middle-aged people, for heaven's sake. Actually, we just need to be sure that if the grades were bad,

the candidate has gotten over it.

John Kerry's presidential campaign in 2004 was hobbled by outrageous attacks on his war record, which Kerry might have been able to bury by releasing all his Navy records. He wouldn't, until long after the race was over.

Then reporters discovered that everything about his military career was exactly as Kerry had portrayed it. The only news was in his

college transcript, which was included in the file and pretty dismal. I've always wondered if the entire course of modern American history would have turned out different if Kerry had not wanted to conceal the fact that his academic performance at Yale was worse than George W. Bush's.

As far as quitting school goes, Walker left during his senior year to take a marketing job with the

local chapter of the American Red Cross. This doesn't seem totally unreasonable. He obviously wasn't into school. And in many lines of work, it's only the job history that matters.

However, we want to make sure that when students of the future are making decisions like this, they're grounded in reality. Walker claimed that he was about to get the rest of his credits while he was working, but then he got married. (Actually, as PolitiFact Wisconsin reported in a stupendously thorough investigation of this matter, he had several years of potential night school time before he wed.) Then he was going to go, but he was county executive and too busy. And it keeps going on.

“Maybe in the next few years,” he told reporters in 2013.

This is a bad sign. I think I speak for all of us when I say we do not want to hear any arguments that we should elect Walker president so he'll have time to finish his senior year credits.

But at least he didn't hug the Dallas Cowboys' owner.

Gail Collins joined *The New York Times* in 1995 as a member of the editorial board and later as an Op-Ed columnist. In 2001 she became the first woman ever appointed editor of the *Times*'s editorial page.

## YOUR VIEWS

### City councilors get guff, but much of it is undeserved

I have been reading the *East Oregonian* for almost 20 years now after moving to Pendleton. There have been many articles, comments, letters, editorials, etc. Many I have agreed with, some I didn't. Some I thought were, well, completely wrong. I have been on the Pendleton City Council for four years and previously on the Planning Commission. Being in the public eye, you can expect comments both good and bad toward you and the job you are doing. If you are thin-skinned, may I suggest that you not run for a public position?

Recent letters to the editor are way out of line. It saddens me, my fellow councilors and the mayor. Yes, the mayor and councilors are elected officials, elected by you. We are expected to perform our duties for the city of Pendleton with the information, training, funding and laws provided by our great city, county, state and federal government. The constant ridicule by some people of our fine city, for the most part, is undeserved.

You could say being on the council is similar to volunteering to umpire a Little League baseball game. If you call little Billy out at home, everyone on the home team is ready to tar and feather you. So guess what happens when you need a volunteer for the next game — no takers. Recently, three other

councilors and I were sworn in for a four-year term, one for her first term. I had no intention to run for a second term and waited for people in my ward to put their name in the hat for the position. Guess what — no takers.

I praise our mayor and council for the countless hours put in with the best intent for the city of Pendleton. There are hours of personal time taken away from families and jobs, vacation time, as well as expenses not always being reimbursed. We do receive a small stipend for each month; a lot of Pendletonians spend more on lattes per month than we receive.

It is a thankless job; we don't do it for the money, the glory, or the power. We do it for the city of Pendleton. I am sure this letter will be taken by some as a pity party; others may take it as it is truly meant. Just a simple reminder that we do our best with the means given to us.

In closing, it would be wonderful if, before judgment is made, you might get involved, ask questions, and come to some open to the public meetings. Basing your information on what is printed in the paper may not always be correct — unfortunately, negativity always gets the headlines.

Sometimes the correct call is: little Billy was out, even though it isn't the call you were hoping for.

Neil W. Brown,  
president, Pendleton City Council