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OUR VIEW

# Damage continues at western ports

Word that Hanjin Shipping Company will stop doing business at the Port of Portland is bad news for farmers and processors throughout the Columbia Basin who export products to Asia.

Ongoing labor trouble at the port is cited as the primary reason for the company's decision.

The South Korean shipping company is the Port of Portland's largest container carrier. It handles nearly 80 percent of the container volume at the port's Terminal 6.

It will terminate its service with the city March 9, but it will continue to use rail and truck transportation, port officials said.

The company has been unhappy with the operation of the port for some time. Two years ago it said it would pull out, but port officials sweetened its deal and it stayed on. Apparently the port's inability to quickly offload and reload ships made Hanjin's Portland operation unviable.

In recent years farmers have benefited greatly from the export market. The growing Chinese middle class is hungry for U.S. farm products, as are South Korea and Japan. These are markets West Coast producers are ideally situated to serve.

The trans-Pacific container ships sailing from Portland have been a boon to farmers and processors, not just in the Willamette Valley and other adjacent areas, but also up the Columbia River Basin and the Port of Lewiston on the Snake River.

Raw farm commodities — hay, onions, peas, grass seed, potatoes, Christmas trees — and processed products, such as french fries, are barged downriver and transferred at the port for shipment to Asia.

A slowdown at West Coast ports in recent months as part of a labor dispute between port operators and longshoremen have disrupted this trade, causing farmers and processors to lose sales. Still, some shipments are getting through. Over the weekend, President Obama waded in, sending his secretary of labor to determine what, if anything, can be done to expedite an agreement.

> Hanjin's decision will effectively eliminate export opportunities for some agricultural products

But Hanjin's decision will effectively eliminate export opportunities for some agricultural products, experts say. While ports in Seattle and Tacoma remain viable options for some ag exporters, the extra cost of shipping to those sites will be prohibitive to others.

Those producers and processors will have to look for other markets, other commodities. Some won't survive.

We agree with Bill Wyatt, the port's executive director, who described Hanjin's decision as a "very devastating blow."

The port and its operator, ICTSI Oregon, blame work slowdowns by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, while longshoremen claim inadequate equipment and safety concerns are causing the problem.

Potayto, potahto. The damage is done. If the ongoing slowdowns at the other ports aren't soon addressed, we fear far more devastating blows.

**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.**

YOUR VIEWS

## More support for Requa at Brownfield Park

Pendleton has a rich and diverse history to look back upon. One man, Don Requa, left his mark on Pendleton's fine history by turning out highly successful football teams and young men who were fortunate enough to play for him. Don was an outstanding citizen, teacher and coach over his 36-year career at Pendleton High School.

I truly believe Brownfield Park would be a great location for the statue of Don Requa — a place that would allow Pendleton citizens as well as tourists a view of a man that had a significant positive impact on Pendleton's rich and diverse history.

**Ray Patrick**
**La Grande**

Statues of a person are useful in recalling the noble qualities of that person and to inspire others to make valuable contributions to their communities, states, nations religions, etc.

I, and many others, feel Mr. Requa was such a person. Placing his statue in a location where it will be seen by many people seems more appropriate than at our old high school where few young people could be inspired by it.

**Bill Wright (PHS Class of 1958)**
**Coos Bay**

I was a resident of Pendleton, Pendleton High School assistant football coach and PHS biology and PE teacher from 1966 to 1970. I knew Don Requa, coached the Buckaroos with him, taught at the high school with him. I know the impact that he had on many kids at PHS, especially those who were there from 1966 to 1970. Many of them are your city leaders today. They help run the Round-Up. They are veterinarians and doctors. They are owners of sporting goods stores, ranchers, and voices of local radio programs. Requa had a huge impact on all of them, including me.

I left Pendleton in 1970 and went on to Portland to coach other high school teams. No one in Portland was as important to me as Req. A few years ago I got involved with the Pendleton Linebackers Club. The club has given scholarships to many Pendleton kids in the name of Don Requa. I have given to the club for many purposes and I support the placement of the Requa bronze in Brownfield Park.

**Ketil Moksnes**
**Sacramento, California**

## Local decision should be locally made

I find it interesting that the majority of people supporting placement of the Requa statue at Brownfield Park are people who live out of town. They can visit the statue once a year while people who live here will have to look at it every time we drive down Main Street.

**Judy Malcolm**
**Pendleton**

I read with some amusement the letters from so many people that no longer live in Pendleton supporting the statue of Coach Requa on Main Street in Brownfield Park. I wonder if they would be receptive to people that don't live in their towns trying to dictate how they organize or place art in their downtowns?

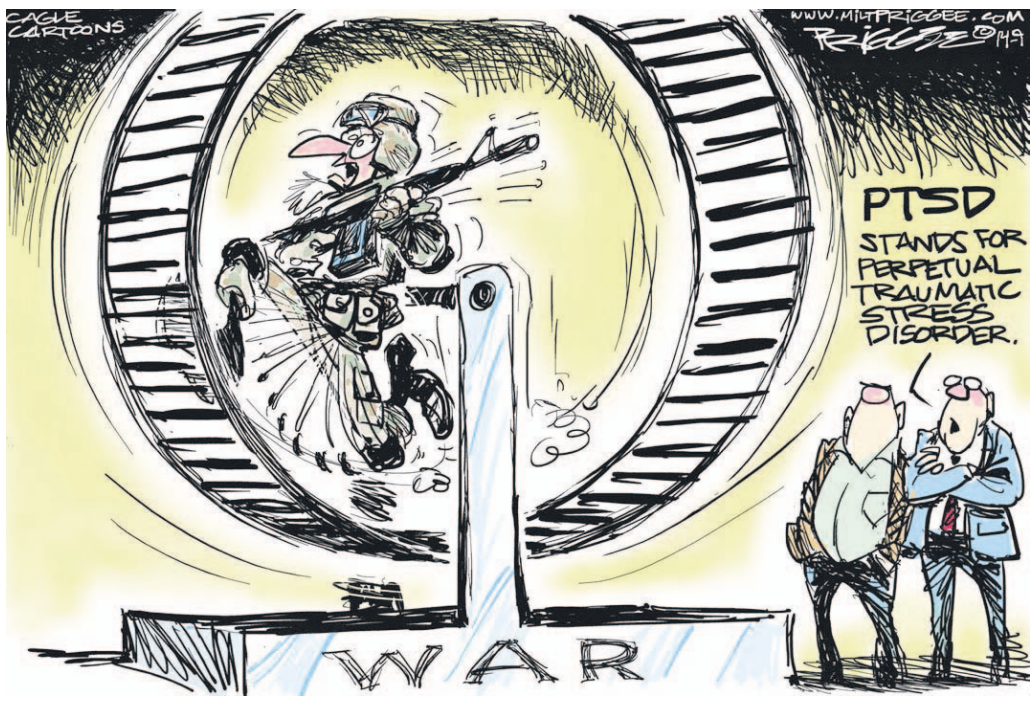
I don't have a lot of passion one way or another for where the Requa statue is placed, but since he was a high school coach, it seems fitting to put it at the high school where he touched the lives he did. There is a tradition at several schools and colleges across the country to touch a bronze of a famous coach or other school icon before a game for good luck. It would be a neat tradition to start here. Since the PHS football team walks to the Round-Up Grounds before each home game, I would suggest the Requa statue be placed at PHS across from the Bedford Bridge near where the reader board is now on the team route to the Round-Up Grounds. I think it would be a much more fitting tribute to a great coach than to be located in a downtown park.

**Mike Navratil**
**Pendleton**

LETTERS POLICY

**The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Submitted letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send letters to Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.**

OTHER VIEWS




# The moral injury

DAVID BROOKS
**Comment**

David J. Morris returned from Iraq with a case of post-traumatic stress disorder. The former Marine turned war correspondent was plagued by nightmares. His imagination careened out of control; he envisioned fireballs erupting while on trips to the mall. His emotions could go numb, but his awareness was hypervigilant. Images and smells from the war were tattooed eternally fresh on his brain, and he circled back to them remorselessly.

"Trauma destroys the fabric of time," Morris writes in his book, "The Evil Hours." "In normal time you move from one moment to the next, sunrise to sunset, birth to death. After trauma, you may move in circles, find yourself being sucked backwards into an eddy or bouncing like a rubber ball from now to then to back again. ... In the traumatic universe the basic laws of matter are suspended: ceiling fans can be helicopters, car exhaust can be mustard gas."

Morris' book is so good because it relies on literature, history and psychology to communicate the reality of PTSD, both to those who live with it and those who never have. But this book is also important because it's part of a broader re-evaluation of trauma.

Most discussion about PTSD thus far has been about fear and the conquering of fear. But, over the past few years, more people have come to understand PTSD is also about exile — moral exile.

We don't think about it much, but in civilian life we live enmeshed in a fabric of moral practices and evaluations. We try to practice kindness and to cause no pain.

People who have been to war have left this universe behind. That's because war — no matter how justified or unjustified, noble or ignoble — is always a crime. It involves accidental killings, capricious death for one but not another, tainted situations where every choice is murderously wrong.

Many veterans feel guilty because they lived while others died. Some feel ashamed because they didn't bring all their men home and wonder what they could have done differently to save them. When they get home they wonder if there's something wrong with them because they find war repugnant but also thrilling. They hate it and miss it.

Many of their self-judgments go to extremes. A comrade died because he stepped on an improvised explosive device and his commander feels unrelenting guilt because he didn't go down a different street. Insurgents used women and children as shields, and soldiers and Marines feel a totalistic black stain on themselves because of an innocent child's face, killed in the firefight. The self-condemnation can be crippling.

The victims of PTSD often feel morally tainted by their experiences, unable to recover confidence in their own goodness, trapped in a sort of spiritual solitary confinement, looking back at the rest of the world from beyond the barrier of what happened. They find themselves unable to communicate their condition to those who remained at home, resenting civilians for their blind innocence.

People generally don't suffer high rates of PTSD after natural disasters. Instead, people suffer from PTSD after moral atrocities. Soldiers who've endured the depraved world of combat experience their own symptoms. Trauma is an expulsive cataclysm of the soul.

We now have a growing number of books and institutions grappling with this reality, including Phil Klay's novel "Redeployment," which won the National Book Award; Nancy Sherman's forthcoming "Afterwar: Healing the Moral Wounds of Our Soldiers"; and therapy programs like the one on moral injury found at the San Diego Naval Medical Center. These writers and therapists suggest that there has to be a moral reckoning, a discernment process that doesn't whitewash what happened but does lead to merciful judgments about how much guilt should be borne; settled and measured conclusions about how responsibility for terrible things should be apportioned.

Sherman, who is a philosopher at Georgetown University, emphasizes that most of the work will have to be done at the micro level — through individual conversations between veterans and civilians that go beyond the cheap grace of "thank you for your service." The conversations have to deal with the individual facts of each case. The goal is to get veterans to adopt the stance of a friendly observer, to make clear how limited choices are when one is caught in a random, tragic situation, to arrive at catharsis and self-forgiveness about what was actually blameworthy and what wasn't.

The civilian enters into the world the veteran actually inhabited during those awful crowded hours and expands his own moral awareness. The veteran feels trusted, respected and understood — re-integrated into the fabric of his or her homeland.

We live in a culture that emphasizes therapy, but trauma often has to be overcome morally, through rigorous philosophical autobiography, nuanced judgment, case by case.

■

*David Brooks became a New York Times Op-Ed columnist in September 2003. He has been a senior editor at The Weekly Standard and a contributing editor at Newsweek and the Atlantic Monthly.*

# Out of touch, out the door

*The Corvallis Gazette-Times, Feb. 14*

Gov. John Kitzhaber, victim of love?

In the wake of Kitzhaber's resignation on Friday, prompted by allegations that his fiancée and decade-long companion, Cylvia Hayes, had used her position as first lady for personal profit, that will be one of the story lines bandied about as Oregonians take stock after the shockingly sudden end of an era in state politics.

There's another way to look at this, though, and it's borne out by the governor's third term. Kitzhaber styled himself as a visionary, a leader who was focused on the big picture. But time and again, he stumbled on the details — the smaller pieces that were essential to the big picture. Sometimes, he picked the wrong people to handle those details. Other times, he just couldn't be bothered with them.

Kitzhaber's failure to come to grips with the deepening scandal surrounding Hayes may be an extreme example of that tendency: Imagine what would have happened if Kitzhaber had come clean about Hayes' dealings immediately after the *Willamette Week* newspaper first broke the story back in October.

Instead, as we know, Kitzhaber denied that anything was amiss. He issued a statement saying that Hayes' private work had been reviewed. That statement read, in part: "In an abundance of caution, the governor's office established a proactive, rigorous review of her professional contracts to avoid any potential conflicts of interest."

Abundance of caution? Proactive, rigorous review? If that really had happened, Kitzhaber would be governor today.

"As far as I can tell," *The Oregonian* quoted a Seattle public relations consultant as saying, "there was a complete failure to come to grips with the seriousness of the situation."

What's not typical (and what, in retrospect, still is stunning about this affair) is the series of boneheaded moves by Kitzhaber, arguably the state's most successful politician, over the last couple of weeks.

Start with his dreadful performance at a Jan. 30 press conference, at which Kitzhaber sought to defuse the growing controversy but seemed befuddled by reporters' questions.

Add to that Kitzhaber's bizarre behavior earlier in the week, when he apparently decided to resign — but then changed his mind, even after Secretary of State Kate Brown left a conference in Washington, D.C. to fly back to Oregon. By Brown's telling, when she reported to Kitzhaber's office on Wednesday afternoon, the governor wondered why she was there.

As a topper, consider the report from *Willamette Week* that Kitzhaber's office two weeks ago requested that all emails from Kitzhaber's personal accounts be removed from state servers. Surely any kind of experienced public official would know how such a request would look — and would know that the request would become public, sooner rather than later. State officials declined the request.

It will take time to fully assess Kitzhaber's legacy. In the meantime, it seems to us, his stunning fall is a result not so much of being blinded by love, as a reporter suggested at the Jan. 30 press conference, but of consistently turning a blind eye to those pesky details.