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**OUR VIEW**

# Kitzhaber gives news media an endorsement

Newspapers and investigative reporters able to expose governor's misdeeds

The death of a political leader is sometimes an inauspicious circumstance. President Abraham Lincoln's death was the most coincidental of all. He was assassinated on Good Friday. That forced clergy across America to rewrite Easter Sunday sermons.

Sen. Henry Jackson of Washington — one of the Northwest's most significant lawmakers — unexpectedly succumbed to a heart attack at the age of 71, some hours after learning that his archenemy, the Soviet Union, had shot down a Korean passenger jet, in what appeared to be cold blood.

Gov. John Kitzhaber became Oregon's first modern governor to resign. His appointment with history occurred on Friday the 13th.

In his resignation statement, Kitzhaber took an obligatory swipe at the media. Maudlin as it was, the resigning governor's rant is something that we in the print press should accept with gratitude.

Our Legislature had nothing to do with shining a light on the influence peddling that went on down the hall in the governor's suite. Neither did the Secretary of State's Audit Division. Nor did state prosecutors.

It was newspaper reporters who sniffed the stench and doggedly pursued clues. Nigel Jaquiss of *Willamette Week* was the prime mover. I am proud to say that Hillary Borrud of our company's Capital Bureau also played a pivotal role, reporting Cylvia Hayes' \$118,000 payment from a clean fuels interest group. *The Oregonian* was late to the hunt, but broke a piece of significance.

The new aspect of this story is that it all broke online. Each news organization posted the stories to their websites while



STEVE FORRESTER  
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between print editions. That added to the velocity of events. Notably absent from all this was our state capital newspaper, the *Statesman-Journal*. In a strange column published Sunday, *SJ* executive editor Michael Davis berated *The Oregonian* for its Feb. 4 editorial urging Kitzhaber to resign.

The *OJ*'s editorial was hardly the main show. The heart of the bat was revelation after revelation about how the Kitzhaber administration had put its office up for sale through Cylvia Hayes. That's what sank the ship.

Among hard-core liberal Portland Democrats there no doubt is some mourning over Kitzhaber's demise. But they are weeping over John Kitzhaber of the first and second terms. The third term John Kitzhaber was exceedingly poorly served in that third administration. I don't think I've encountered a more inept political press secretary than Kitzhaber's in that term. State Sen. Betsy Johnson regularly told

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me how the governor's staff was not up to the task during those four years.

Moreover, if a governor's wife or companion had taken money in six figures from the Koch brothers, do you think urban liberals would see no evil?

The essence of the crime committed in the state capital was captured by Brent Walth who told an Astoria Columbia Forum audience in November: "I didn't think we'd ever see, in my life, the office put up for sale, but that's exactly what we've seen."

— Steve Forrester is publisher and editor of *The Daily Astorian*, sister paper of the *East Oregonian*. He is also president and CEO of *EO Media Group*, the *East Oregonian's* parent company.

**YOUR VIEWS**

## Requa isn't the issue — the city's statue process is

Why does it take 14 letters (current count) from the out-of-towners writing society to tell us stuff about Req that we already know?

Req isn't even the issue. Never has been. In my opinion the real issue is about the manner in which statues have popped up all over town as a result of the flawed, dysfunctional process allowed by the city.

There is apparently no real criterion for the permitting process. Is there? What is not being answered is the what (size) and the where (location) in conformity with what?

I do hope the writers association of out-of-towners will find some other topic to lobby us with while the city fathers wrestle with solving the problem before any more statues pop up!

Larry O'Rourke  
Pendleton

## Statue opponents should have spoken up sooner

During the Hall of Fame fundraiser in 2012 the idea of a bronze statue of "Req" was initiated by a couple of former Buckaroos. With the positive response from the attendees, the Pendleton Linebackers solicited pledges to see if there was enough financial support to move forward.

In 2013 the Pendleton Linebackers followed protocol by getting approval from the Pendleton Art Commission, and then by vote of the city council, it was approved to be sited at Brownfield Park.

The Linebackers formed a committee made up of former Buckaroos from Pendleton and around the Northwest to tour the studios of bronze sculptor Rip Caswell in Troutdale, Oregon. After the tour the committee voted that Rip

Caswell was the right person to do the statue. The Linebackers worked to get donations and foundation grants of over \$93,000 (even one from The Pendleton Art Commission for \$5,000).

The bronze segments are being cast at this time with an unveiling during the July 2015 Hall of Fame Weekend.

Shouldn't this effort be approved instead of derailed at the last minute? Where were the opponents in 2012 and 2013? The project was not a secret.

Bill Largent, PHS Class of 1968  
Forest Grove

## Requa was a war hero and a great teacher

Requa, as a member of the Greatest Generation, participated in WWII in the U.S. Fifth Air Force. As co-pilot of a B-24 "Liberator," his crew was credited with sinking two Japanese navy vessels in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea. If we can't put a war hero on Main Street, where can we put one?

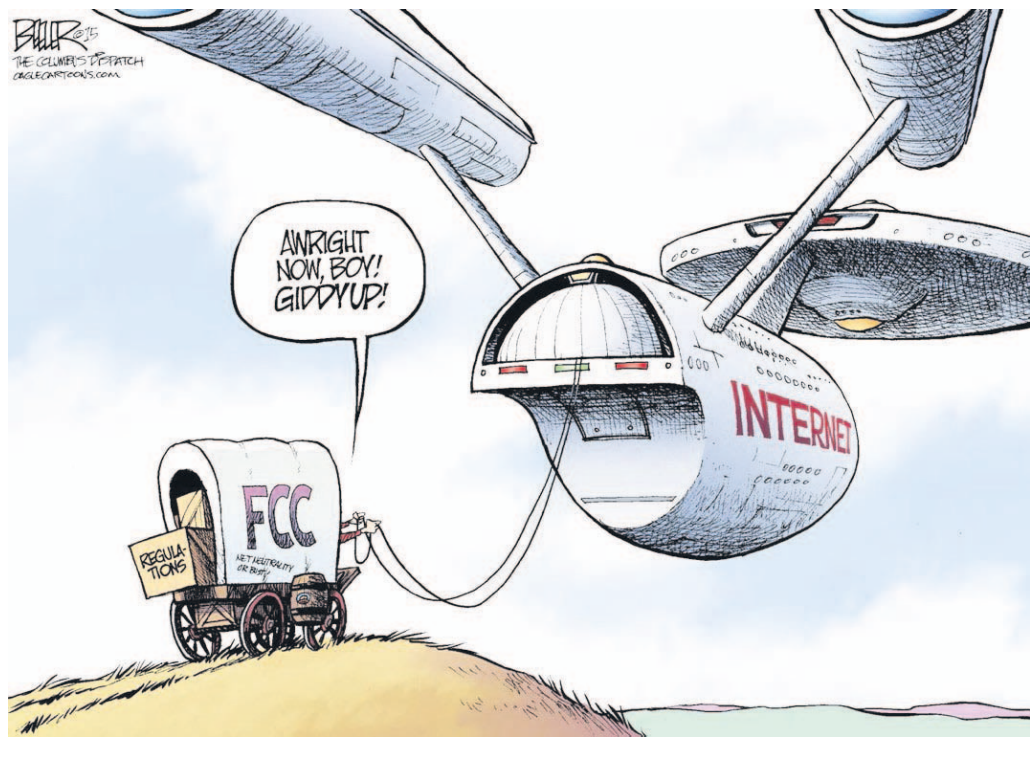
Requa was also an exceptional math teacher and devoted his life's work to helping students succeed in school and life. The lessons in his classroom taught them not only how to solve math problems but gave them a strategy to solve life problems.

The fact that he was so good at what he did and was able to garner so many awards demonstrates how much his students and athletes believed in him.

Don Requa's life and legacy represents the best of all who live in Pendleton and throughout Eastern Oregon.

For that reason his monument belongs prominently on Main Street, where those who live in Pendleton and all who pass through Pendleton will be able to see it and be inspired to be the very best that they can be as well.

Larry Purchase, Vancouver, Wash.



**OTHER VIEWS**

# Islam and the West at war

After a Danish movie director at a seminar on "Art, Blasphemy and Freedom of Expression" and a Danish Jew guarding a synagogue were shot dead in Copenhagen, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, the prime minister of Denmark, uttered a familiar trope: "We are not in the middle of a battle between Islam and the West. It's not a battle between Muslims and non-Muslims. It's a battle between values based on the freedom of the individual and a dark ideology."

This statement — with its echoes of President Barack Obama's vague references to "violent extremists" uncoupled from the fundamentalist Islam to which said throat-cutting extremists pledge allegiance — scarcely stands up to scrutiny. It is empty talk.

Across a wide swath of territory, in Iraq, in Syria, in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, in Yemen, the West has been or is at war, or near-war, with the Muslim world, in a failed bid to eradicate a metastasizing Islamist movement of murderous hatred toward Western civilization.

To call this movement, whose most potent recent manifestation is the Islamic State, a "dark ideology" is like calling Nazism a reaction to German humiliation in World War I: true but wholly inadequate. There is little point in Western politicians rehearsing lines about there being no battle between Islam and the West, when in all the above-mentioned countries tens of millions of Muslims, with much carnage as evidence, believe the contrary.

The Danish filmmaker Finn Norgaard was killed a little more than a decade after another movie director, Theo van Gogh, was slain in Amsterdam for making a film critical of Islam's treatment of women.

The Islamists' war is against freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, freedom of the press, freedom of blasphemy, sexual freedom — in short, core characteristics of democracies seen by the would-be rebuilders of the Caliphate as signs of Western debasement.

Do not provoke them with cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, some say, show respect for Islam, the peaceful faith of some 1.6 billion people. But what, pray, was the "provocation" of Dan Uzan, the Jewish security guard outside the Copenhagen synagogue?

Islam is a religion that has spawned multifaceted political movements whose goal is power. Islam, as such, is fair game for commentators, caricaturists and cartoonists, whose inclination to mock the depredations of theocracy and political Islam's cynical uses of the Prophet cannot be cowed by fear.

Over the more than 13 years since al-Qaida attacked America on 9/11, we have seen trains blown up in Madrid, the Tube and a bus bombed in London, Western journalists



ROGER COHEN  
Comment

beheaded, the staff of Charlie Hebdo slaughtered, Jews killed in France and Belgium and now Denmark. This is not the work of a "dark ideology" but of jihadi terror.

On the right of Europe's political spectrum, anger is rising against Islam, against marginalized Muslim communities, who in turn feel discriminated against and misrepresented, with cause. Several thousand young European Muslims troop off to join the Islamic State.

Europe's Jews are on edge, with cause. Israel calls them home. In the United States, three Muslim students were killed this month by a gunman in a possible hate crime denounced by Obama as "brutal and outrageous." A tide of retaliatory menace rises.

Who or what is to blame? There are two schools. For the first, it is the West that is to blame through its support for Israel (seen as the latest iteration of Western imperialism in the Levant); its wars (Iraq); its brutality, (Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib); its killing of civilians (drones); its oil-driven hypocrisy (a jihadi-funding Saudi ally).

For the second, it is rather the abject failure of the Arab world, its blocked societies where dictators face off against political Islam, its repression, its feeble institutions, its sectarianism precluding the practice of participatory citizenship, its wild conspiracy theories, its inability to provide jobs or hope for its youth, that gives the Islamic State its appeal.

I find the second view more persuasive. The rise of the Islamic State, and Obama's new war, are a direct result of the failure of the Arab Spring, which had seemed to offer a path out of the deadlocked, jihadi-spawning societies of the Arab world.

Only Arabs can find the answer to this crisis. But history, I suspect, will not judge Obama kindly for having failed to foster the great liberation movement that rose up in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria and elsewhere. Inaction is also a policy: Nonintervention produced Syria today.

I hear the words of Chokri Belaid, the brave Tunisian lawyer, shortly before he was gunned down by Islamist fanatics on Feb. 6, 2013: "We can disagree in our diversity but within a civilian, peaceful and democratic framework. Disagree in our diversity, yes!"

To speak of a nonspecific "dark ideology," to dismiss the reality of conflict between the West and Islam, is also to undermine the anti-Islamist struggle of brave Muslims like Belaid — and these Muslims are the only people, ultimately, who can defeat the black-flagged jihadi death merchants.

Roger Cohen joined *The New York Times* in 1990. He was a foreign correspondent for more than a decade before becoming acting foreign editor on Sept. 11, 2001, and foreign editor six months later.

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**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.