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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to the Irrigon boys basketball team, state 2A champions for the second straight year.

Fredy Vera was named player of the game in the state title match, but it was a season-long team effort that pushed the top-seeded club to go 26-1 on the year and defend their title.



The Knights were led by first year coach Mitch Thompson, who inherited the senior-laden team and earned a title of his own along the way. With the win, Thompson became — as far as we and OSAA historians know — the youngest coach to win an Oregon state basketball title.

Congrats to all, and the city of Irrigon, who brought a bleacher-overflowing crowd to Pendleton for the tournament. The squad will have to replace four graduating starters, but winning begets winning. The Knights know what it takes to reach the top.

A kick in the pants to the swift death of an Oregon Senate bill that would have removed non-medical vaccine exemptions.

It was abandoned by state Sen. Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, a physician herself, before it could have started to move through the senate.

Obviously, the government should not be mandating medical decisions for its citizens. Every body is different! But demanding a reasonable medical excuse for opting out of one of the great advances of our day seems reasonable.



Steiner Hayward said the pushback was not about personal choice or freedom, but about the effectiveness of the vaccines itself. It's disappointing there are people that are so unable to be swayed by facts and scientific inquiry. But it's just as disappointing that politicians easily give in to a vocal but clearly outnumbered minority. The proposal had its supporters — including Governor Kate Brown — so it was not a doomed enterprise.

Obviously the anti-vaxxers and the anti-Agenda 21ers or the chemtrails-are-going-to-kill-us-all-ers are a loud and angry and confident bunch. They are passionate, but that doesn't make them right. The well-informed have to be able to stand up for science and reason and do the right thing.

You know, like the more progressive states of West Virginia and Mississippi, which have removed such inane arguments for not vaccinating a child.

A tip of the hat to the Port of Morrow, which offered to buy 640 acres of the former Umatilla Chemical Depot from the Army for \$1 million, which they hope will help facilitate transfer of nearly 9,000 acres to the local development group.

The port, just one member of the Columbia Development Authority, decided to shoulder that \$1 million burden on its own. With so much on the line, Port of Morrow General Manager Gary Neal told the *East Oregonian* it was important not to let negotiations slip away.



A million dollars is a million dollars. It's nothing to throw around willy-nilly. But it is a great investment at this point, and the simplest and most direct way to get a large chunk of valuable real estate

into local hands.

Remember that at first, the Army said they would donate the land free of charge, but recently began backpedaling. Apparently a country that has a defense budget of more than \$500 billion a year wanted to quibble over peanuts in the Eastern Oregon prairie.

But rather than argue over peanuts, the port put up the dough. It might be enough to avoid long, intractable negotiations and bring another economic punch to Umatilla and Morrow counties.

Bravo to the port, for taking a shot and taking one for the team.

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

Standardized tests infringe on parent/student rights

I offer this opinion as a citizen of the United States, member of the greater Hermiston community, parent of former Hermiston School District students and retired naval veteran.

I would like to bring to the attention of your readers a deception about state standardized testing that has been foisted upon the school boards, our districts, their educators and administrators and the families that fuel the enterprise. This deception comes in the form of the Oregon Department of Education, (OAR) 581-022-1910, granting the boards' and districts' administrative staffs the ability to grant permissions of already established rights of the individual. This is an overreach of the department. Individual rights of the person need no permissive authority. The unrestricted rights of the parent have been upheld by the U. S. Supreme Court at least four different times since 1940 to the present.

Oregon State Department of Education has presented guidelines by which a district may allow or grant permission to the parents of individuals to refrain from, or opt out of, state sponsored standardized testing if they fall into only two categories: those

with disabilities; and those who claim religious exemption. This is unjust and I call this paper's editor and staff to research and report on House Bill 2714, which seeks to make into law that districts must tell parents their rights about testing. Parents already have the right to tell a district that their child does not have to take a test; it is the same right parents use when they decide to go on vacation during the school year.

I also ask you and the paper you represent to call out the overreach that creates a deceptive environment that school districts have been required to put forth. Have we come to the point where we have to deceive parents in order to maintain our schools?

Parents, you have the final say over whether your child is to take this standardized test, and don't let the districts bully you or use soft-spoken terms to change your mind about it. If enough of you say no to this, our teachers will begin to focus on what they are supposed to teach, rather than teaching how to do well on a certain type of test.

Please contact your state representative about HB 2714 and encourage them to add it to the current statutes.

Robert R. Smith
Hermiston



OTHER VIEWS

President Hillary Clinton would be secretive, too

News that Hillary Clinton exclusively used a private email account to keep secret her communications as secretary of state should surprise no one. She came to Washington more than 20 years ago determined to keep secrets, and she's still at it.

In 1993, the newly inaugurated President Bill Clinton chose his wife to head his administration's most important domestic initiative, health care reform. Hillary Clinton proceeded to create a task force that seemed more determined to keep secrets than to restructure health care.

"The culture of secrecy is such that the White House refuses to provide a full list of consultants brought in to aid in the effort," the *New York Times* reported in February 1993, just after the first lady got started. Clinton later went to court rather than reveal the most basic details of the effort. Story after story about her work used phrases like "wall of secrecy" and "shrouded in secrecy" and "frantic, secretive process."

When the task force collapsed in defeat, columnist Maureen Dowd wrote that "it was the first lady's secrecy and righteousness in trying to push through her 1,364-page bill that doomed the effort."

By the end of the Clintons' first year in Washington, the new White House became ensnared in the first of the scandals that would last through Bill Clinton's presidency. Hillary Clinton was deeply involved, sometimes in the original offense, like Travelgate, and sometimes in the legal and political pushback, like the Lewinsky scandal.

The Clinton trademark was withholding information from investigators.

Given that, Clinton's email secrecy today sounds familiar to the investigators who spent the 1990s trying to pry information out of her office. "This sort of behavior is all fully consistent with what we dealt with a few years ago," says Jackie Bennett, a prosecutor who served in the independent counsel's office investigating the Clintons. "There was almost always a delay or some insufficient production of some document or discovery request."

For example, as part of the Whitewater investigation, a grand jury subpoenaed Clinton's billing records from her days in Arkansas. The White House insisted the records could not be found. Two years passed, with no documents. And then one day, the White House announced that — surprise! — the records had been found on a table in the White House residence, virtually in plain sight.

Mrs. Clinton pleaded ignorance. "I do not



BYRON YORK
Comment

know how the billing records came to be found where they were found," she said after testifying before a grand jury in January 1996. "I, like everyone else, would like to know the answer about how those documents showed up after all these years."

As the Clinton White House years progressed, the first lady became a pro at confounding investigators. A veil of secrecy covered much of what she did, from responding to criticism to dealing with subpoenas — even to organizing her own thoughts about events.

In May 1996, when Clinton appeared on "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer," she was asked if she planned to write a book someday about her experiences in the White House. "Are you keeping a diary?" Lehrer asked. "Are you keeping good notes on what's happened to you?"

"Heavens, no!" Clinton responded with a laugh. "It would get subpoenaed. I can't write anything down."

People around her didn't write anything down, either. "I don't put anything down in writing," Clinton loyalist Sidney Blumenthal told the *Washington Post* during the scandal years. (That policy eventually changed; Blumenthal was one of the first discovered to be sending emails to Secretary of State Clinton's private address, clintonemail.com.)

Others in the Clinton White House followed the first lady's example. Top aide George Stephanopoulos, for example, told investigators he did not keep a diary and never made notes about work at the White House.

Later, when Stephanopoulos published a highly detailed memoir of those years, he explained that he used a friend, the liberal journalist Eric Alterman, to help him record his thoughts away from prying subpoenas.

In more recent years, Hillary Clinton created an atmosphere of secrecy around her presidential campaign. By late 2007, her Democratic rivals were "attacking her as overly secretive," according to a *Times* report. (In that case, she wanted to keep documents from her White House years a secret.)

So now, as prosecutor Jackie Bennett suggested, Clinton's obsession with secrecy as secretary of state, whether it broke any law or not, is entirely consistent with her performance in public office for decades. And that leads to one obvious lesson: If Hillary Clinton is elected president, the patterns of a lifetime won't change.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for *The Washington Examiner*.

A veil of secrecy covered much of what she did as First Lady, from responding to criticism to dealing with subpoenas.

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