

EAST OREGONIAN
Founded October 16, 1875

KATHRYN B. BROWN
Publisher
JENNINE PERKINSON
Advertising Director

DANIEL WATTENBURGER
Managing Editor
TIM TRAINOR
Opinion Page Editor

OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to the people who showed up and made the case for stopping the decoration of Pendleton statues, most notably that of Jackson Sundown.

Deep down, we're not sure we agree with them or the council decision. But we are much more pleased that people got involved in local politics, made their position known and got what they wanted from city government than we are disappointed that a little harmless fun is now off the table.

Despite the admirable desire to be culturally sensitive, we struggle to get past the fact that art shouldn't come with such narrow laws and rules.

And art financed by the people should spur interaction and consideration, even playfulness. Those are the benefits we preach when we try to support and expand public art projects.

Except, of course, that nobody in Pendleton sees the Main Street statues as art. They are viewed as a municipal project, which is why city council has gotten so much guff over erecting them while the city's infrastructure remains in substandard condition. They were admittedly built with the sole goal of

spurring commerce, and there is nothing more antithetical to art than that.

So the anti-decorators are right. Think of the statues from here on out like the wastewater plant or a departmental filing cabinet — hands-off city property.

Residents will just have to go back to what they were doing before this latest flap: ignoring the statues completely.

A tip of the future hat to the people who will stand up and make their position known Saturday at the Joint Committee on Ways and Means in Boardman.

We hope that this newly revived civic voice continues this coming weekend and lots of people show up and speak.

Sure, the name is daunting. Think of it as an open door to the Legislative floor. Because this isn't just sitting around listening to state legislators divvy up dollars and cents. This is an opportunity to testify. To talk directly to state senators and representatives, including local representatives Greg Smith (R-Heppner) and Bill Hansell (R-Athena.)

Whatever is top of your mind: gun background check bills, forest plans, statue decoration, the culture of state government, all the good things happening in Eastern Oregon, the need to raise the speed limit or the need to keep the speed limit the same.

We know — public speaking is most everyone's worst fear. Stepping up to the microphone and addressing not just a legislative committee but your neighbors and friends is a scary thing. But take a few minutes beforehand to jot down your thoughts. Read them out loud. Try

them out on a family member (who's used to hearing you rant anyway).

Whatever you have to say, some important people will be listening. You don't get that chance very often so don't miss it.

The meeting is at the SAGE Center in Boardman, Saturday at 12:30, and is expected to last two hours. You'll be back in time to mow the lawn.

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

Marine predators should be killed to protect fish

When I view pictures of sea lions massing at the mouth of the Columbia River waiting for the return of salmon and steelhead, I have to ask myself: Why? In May of 1955, I was part of a field biology trip from Garibaldi, Oregon to Astoria. During that day-long study we observed zero seals, zero sea lions, one Caspian tern, zero pelicans and a few double-crested cormorants. As a fisheries biology major, I felt pretty good. The errors of my thinking were brought to my attention when our professor stated there were only a few thousand seals and sea lions on the West Coast and when a population fell this low the potential for extinction is very real. I buy that.

In 1972 Congress passed the Marine Mammal Protection Act. It stated that all species and population stocks of marine mammals are in danger of extinction or depletion due to human activities and they should not be permitted to diminish below an optimum sustainable population and measures should be taken to protect essential habitats.

An estimated population of 300,000 sea lions does not represent a population in danger of extinction. Starving sea lion and seal pups washing up on the shore in record numbers does represent a population that has exceeded the carrying capacity of their habitat. A 2014 study done on the survival of endangered salmon and steelhead stocks in the Columbia River found that 45 percent of fish tagged at the mouth of the river, and after accounting for fish caught by fishermen, failed to reach Bonneville 145 miles upriver. It is believed that these missing fish were taken by sea lions and seals in the river.

Allowing 45 percent of endangered salmon and steelhead to be eaten by seals and sea lions when the population of sea lions has expanded well beyond

the numbers that will remove them from any danger of extinction would seemingly amount to a violation of the Endangered Species Act.

The National Marine Fisheries Service administers both of these acts. This may account for all of the "hand wringing" they are seemingly doing. The "Greatest Generation" were not so conflicted. They shot them, which resulted in very few seal and sea lions being observed in the river until the 1980s. Lets face it, we have a unique situation in the Columbia River and if we don't manage the predators we are going to lose most of the listed stocks.

**Carlisle Harrison
Hermiston**

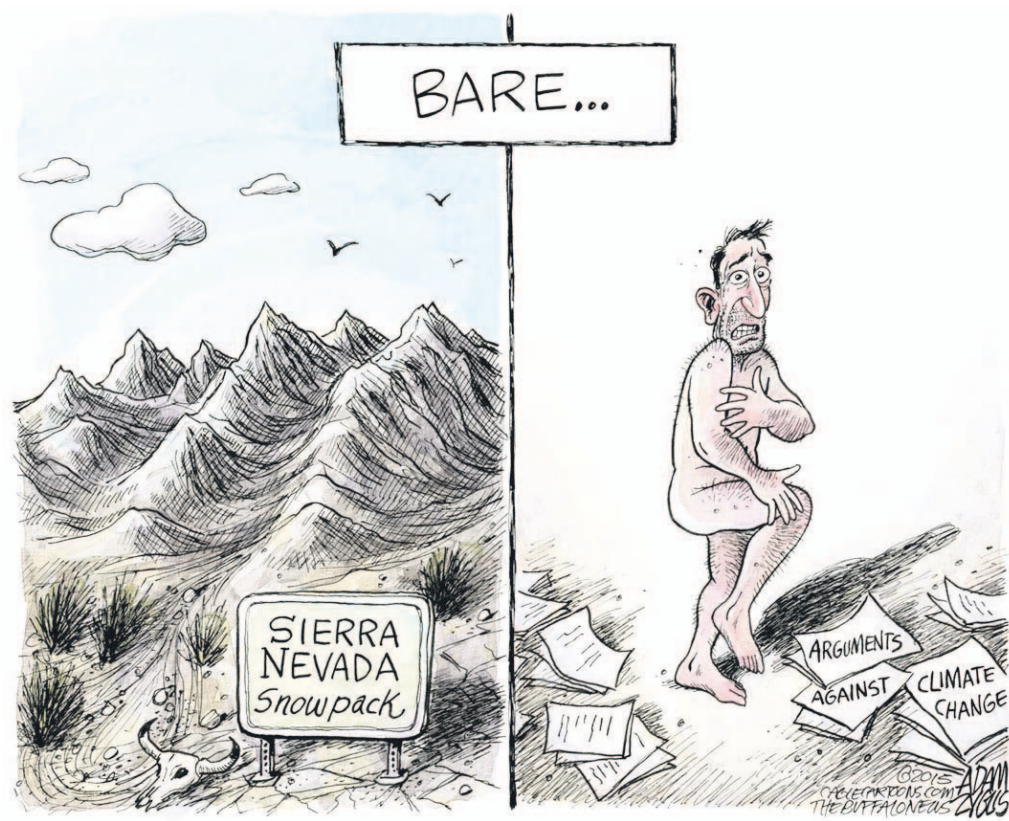
Walden comes through again on rural funding

It is great news that Congressman Greg Walden has delivered for us again by securing much needed funding for schools and law enforcement agencies. This money is like a life preserver for so many rural communities. Now a permanent solution to this issue is needed, so counties don't need to ask the federal government for a handout every few years.

Congressman Walden has been leading the way. He and Congressman Peter Defazio have been working to boost timber production on federal lands to provide certain revenue for our schools, roads, and sheriffs. His bipartisan plan has passed the House twice, but the Senate never voted on it under the leadership of Harry Reid (which is why the counties need emergency funding again).

Thank you, Greg Walden, for working to bring sanity to federal forest policy. I hope that Senators in both parties will join him in finding a permanent solution to this issue.

**Evan Bryan
Wallowa Lake, Ore.**



OTHER VIEWS

O'Malley target of Clinton machine

Recently, a representative from the Hillary Clinton camp delivered a message to Martin O'Malley, the former Maryland governor preparing to challenge Clinton for the 2016 Democratic nomination.

I have some good news and some bad news, the messenger said.

What's the good news? asked O'Malley.

The good news is we're taking you seriously, the messenger answered. And the bad news is ... we're taking you seriously.

The undertone of threat was unmistakable, but anyone who takes on Clintonworld has to expect that. And indeed, pro-O'Malley Democrats — there are some — are not at all surprised by the tone. "They are the most petty, vengeful people out there," says one Democrat of the Clinton organization.

"They hold a grudge for decades. I don't think he (O'Malley) expected them to welcome him with a fruit basket."

And Clintonworld has reason to be concerned. Yes, Hillary's lead is huge, and yes, she is at this point the presumptive Democratic nominee. But there are already emerging signs that the coronation might not go as planned.

It's early yet, but O'Malley's recent declaration — "The presidency of the United States is not some crown to be passed between two families" — is probably the best line of the campaign so far. If you

took a poll to gauge public opinion on that turn of phrase, approval would likely be very, very high.

"It was a very effective line," says another Democrat. "And it's the first time he's taken a swing — he's always deferred in the past."

No more. O'Malley is acting like a real candidate now, traveling, hiring staff and fashioning a message. Democratic insiders point to three factors that could help O'Malley turn a non-race into a race.

1) Even when she has the nomination race to herself, Clinton rarely rises above 60 percent with Democrats. (In the RealClearPolitics average of polls, she is currently just under 60 percent.)

"There is one-third to 40 percent of the Democratic electorate that wants a primary race," notes the second Democrat. "Even in a field where she doesn't have an opponent, Hillary doesn't get above 65 percent." The job of O'Malley, or any other Clinton challenger, is to connect with that 35 percent to 40 percent of Democrats who are hoping for a Clinton opponent.

2) The history of Democratic primary battles is that an insurgent almost always

puts a scare into the sure-thing front-runner.

"You can go back decades," says the Democrat. "There has always been a moment in the Democratic primary in which the overwhelming, conventional, odds-on establishment favorite was vulnerable to an outsider challenge."

While that is truer of some years than others, there is a pretty long list of insurgents — Howard Dean, Bill Bradley, Jerry Brown and others — who created some nervous moments for the leading candidate. In 2008, of course, the outsider Barack Obama did a lot more than that. And the odds-on favorite he toppled then just happens to be the odds-on favorite now.

3) The press wants a primary. Republicans can complain that the media is in the tank for Hillary, but there seems little doubt that many voices in the press would like to see an actual contest for the Democratic nomination. *The Boston Globe*, for example, recently begged Sen. Elizabeth Warren to run.

"Democrats would be making a big mistake if they let Hillary Clinton coast to the presidential nomination without real opposition," the paper editorialized. The fact that some key voices in the press won't take Warren's "no" for an answer is an indication the Fourth Estate would like a fight. And if Warren stays out, they'll talk up any other credible challenger.

O'Malley is more than credible. He has the credentials of a two-term governor and the ability to position himself to the progressive left of Clinton. On Wall Street, LGBT issues, immigration, trade — on those and more, O'Malley can credibly cast himself as more progressive than Hillary.

"Hillary and Bill Clinton have been thick as thieves with Wall Street," says a pro-O'Malley Democrat. "She was very close with the financial industry, and she depends on them for money."

Years after the economic meltdown, many on the left are still angry that none of the big Wall Street players was punished, and it hurts Clinton to be associated with those players.

"This is a really, really, really big issue with progressives — that there was no accountability for Wall Street," says the Democrat.

The planets are aligning for a real Democratic race. That doesn't mean Clinton will lose (although anything can happen), but it does mean there will be no smooth, easy path to the crown.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.



BYRON YORK
Comment

"The presidency of the United States is not some crown to be passed between families."

— Martin O'Malley,
Maryland Governor,
possible challenger for
2016 Democratic nomination



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.