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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

Tip of the hat to the fantastic (if far-fetched) idea to bring a drone rodeo to the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds.

For starters, it’s a hilarious thought. And as strong supporters of hilarity, we are willing to stop right there. But in addition, it’s also the kind of thing that can help get a city full of slightly suspect residents on board with drone development.

The city and state have been investing in the airport, trying to change it from an under-used money pit into an engine of economic change for Pendleton. But until those investments begin to pay dividends, residents are wary. And they are wary not just of the gamble on a drone economy, but on drones themselves.

Drones have made international news this week for killing hostages in Pakistan, flying contraband into prisons in South Carolina and, coated with radioactive material, landing on the Japanese prime minister’s roof. Not really a great string of publicity for trying to win over public support.

But Pendleton loves a rodeo. And there is something very modern about watching new technology in our traditional competitions. So we think something as fun and absurd as this just might work.

Still, it seems like regulatory hurdles will be too heady a horse to break. But a drone rodeo is the outside-the-box thinking that is necessary to make a cowboy town comfortable with flying robots.



A kick in the pants to kids these days, the wind, gas prices, allergies, Canada, kale, neighbors who don’t mow their lawn, neighbors who mow their lawn before 8 a.m. on a Saturday, injuries to Trail Blazers, pickle jars with lids screwed on so tight you can’t open them, Fuller House, typos, Farmville requests, the cost of ordering the Mayweather-Pacquiao fight, the beginning of the 2016 presidential campaign, climate change, stubbed toes and how long it takes to bake a potato.

Whew. We feel better.



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

Congress should pass Trade Promotion Authority

Washington gridlock has plagued communities across the country, including right here in the Beaver State. However, one issue stands out as a commonsense area for bipartisan agreement that will have a positive impact on our communities: trade.

Ensuring that trade routes continue to grow and remain open is vital to the long-term growth and stability for our communities. More than 1 in 5 Oregon jobs rely on trade, and Oregon exported nearly \$28 billion in goods in services in 2013. We should be proud that our state continues to rank among the top 5 state exporters in 13 different industries. This highlights the diversity of our economy, and shows that, as we know, Oregon truly is a great place to live and work.

All of these are reasons why Congress needs to pass Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), which allows Congress to have insight into trade negotiation processes and the ability to vote on a final deal. Additionally, it allows the executive branch the ability to negotiate in good faith with other countries to finalize trade deals.

Currently, the President and his administration are working on two deals, one in the Asia-Pacific region and one in Europe. Passing TPA is critical for the success of these trade deals, which will open Oregon small businesses across the state up to new customers and consumers, and unleash a new era of growth and prosperity for our state.

Neil Brown
Pendleton city councilor

feel impossible to concentrate in.

As a student in an engaging community, I hope to see the bond pass, giving us more reasons to want to come here and achieve a degree while gaining experience in the workforce towards a career. I believe more students in Pendleton can encourage the community here to grow with educated, hungry young adults prepared for more opportunities to better serve the Eastern Oregon area and lead them towards a prosperous future.

A vote of yes for the BMCC bond is not just a vote for the college but to better the community as well.

Jason Lange
Pendleton

BMCC a lifelong education experience

Since its inception, we have been fortunate to benefit from classes and activities at Blue Mountain Community College. In our early years we took advantage of the farm management program and education classes taught by visiting EOC professors from the La Grande campus.

As we reached our middle years, computer literacy, Spanish and art appreciation classes were our interests.

Now in our golden years we are still enjoying the EO Forum, the theater productions, the Feves Gallery exhibits and the BMCC pool. There are classes for everyone, either for credit or to audit.

Now it’s time to update the facilities so join us and vote to pass the BMCC bond, handing this bargain on to the next generation.

Ben and Nora Lee Holdman
Pendleton

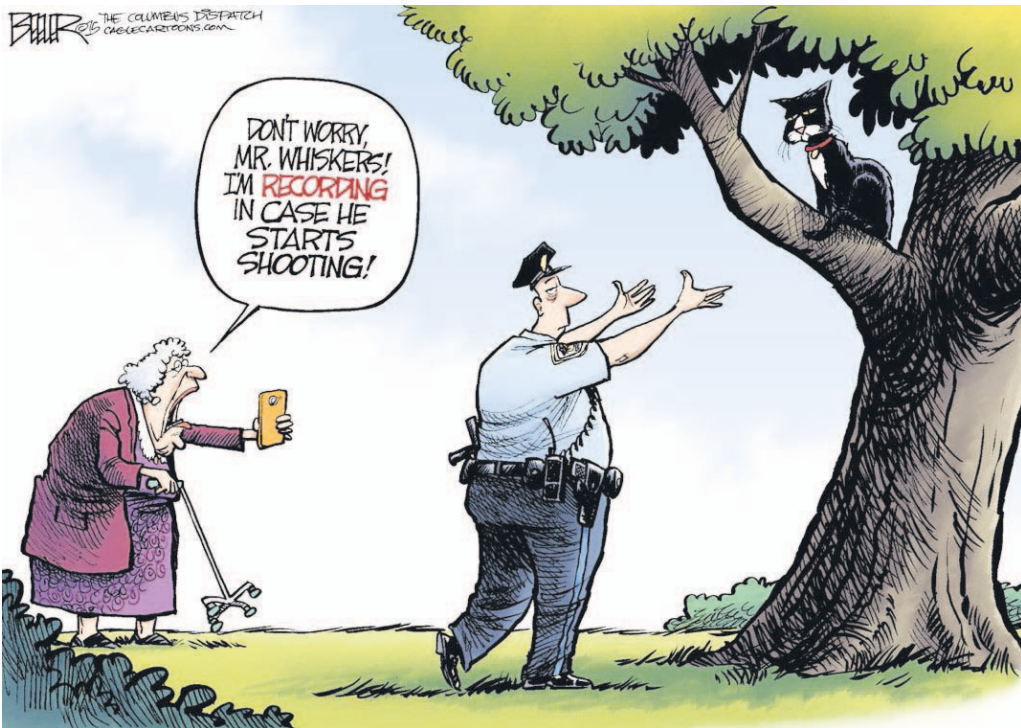
Plass prepared for BMCC board duties

I am writing this letter in support of Susan Plass for the position on the BMCC Board of Education.

BMCC plays a vital role in multiple counties in Eastern Oregon. BMCC impacts our lives and it certainly has had a positive impact on the economy in our area. I have known Susan for several years and I know she will work diligently to ensure that the college and students are well represented. I have served with Susan on many projects. She is not a person who puts off doing what is asked of her. She does her homework and is well prepared.

Let’s put a strong, smart and capable person on the BMCC Board of Education. Vote for Susan Plass.

Buffy Farber
Pendleton



OTHER VIEWS

Why is the 2016 Democratic field so old?

There are five Democrats who have either declared or are thinking about running for president. Three — Joe Biden, Bernard Sanders and Jim Webb — will be over 70 years old on Inauguration Day 2017. Front-runner Hillary Clinton will be nine months short of 70. Only Martin O’Malley, who will turn 54 a couple of days before the 2017 swearing-in, has not reached retirement age already.

In 2008, Democrats had a 47-year-old candidate who mesmerized the party and ran away with the votes of Americans aged 18 to 29. Republicans, meanwhile, ran a 72-year-old man whose reputation was based on heroism in a war 40 years earlier. Youth won.



BYRON YORK
Comment

In addition, any Democrat running against Hillary Clinton today would face the question of whether to aggressively attack the front-runner, which, after a losing campaign, could result in dreaded recriminations from the powerful Clinton camp. If, on the other hand, those politicians sit this one out, they might have a chance for a real shot someday.

The non-Clinton Democrats thinking about running today are past all that. “They’re just a bunch of old farts who don’t have a future,” says the party strategist. “They’re at the end of their road, not the beginning. Their future is right now, so they’re not afraid of the Clintons.” (The exception is O’Malley, young enough but now out of office with no other path immediate available.)

The elderly field is dismaying for some Democrats, but not overwhelmingly so. They believe, rightly, that if a Republican wins in 2016, then everything Barack Obama has accomplished in eight years will be endangered. To protect those achievements — most notably, national health care — a Democrat must keep the White House. If that is Hillary Clinton, fine.

The Democratic party has gone from the party of youth to the party of age.

This time, the situation is reversed. The average age of the Republican field is far below the Democrats, with every candidate younger than Clinton. The most senior is Jeb Bush, who will be 64 on Inauguration Day. Scott Walker will be 49; Marco Rubio will be 45; Ted Cruz, 46; Rand Paul, 54; Chris Christie, 54; Mike Huckabee, 61; Bobby Jindal, 45. Although Bush is in the older range, they’re all in the career sweet spot to win the White House.

What accounts for the Democrats’ dramatic change from the party of youth to the party of age?

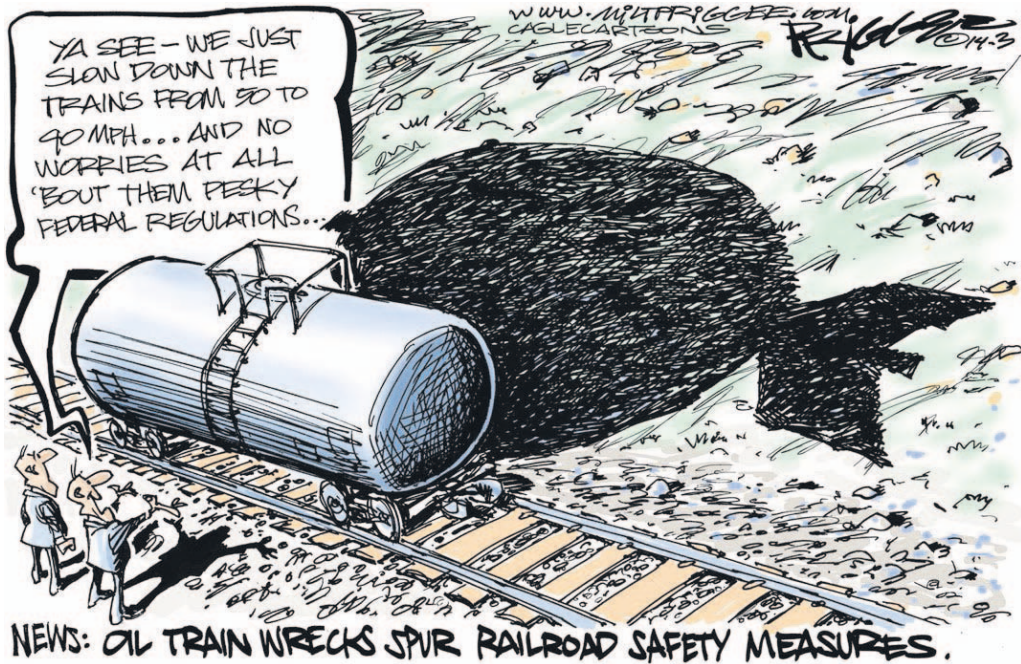
“It’s the snuffing out of young talent by the strength and size and sheer velocity of the inevitable nominee,” says a well-connected Democratic strategist. “The Clintons took all the air out of the collective Democratic room. There are a lot of people who would be running who are much younger, but they’ve got their future in front of them, and they don’t want the Clintons to ruin it, in this campaign or after this campaign. So they’re waiting for a moment when there is enough oxygen to run.”

“If Hillary Clinton weren’t running, we’d have a field that looks like the Republican field — young and vibrant and diverse.”

If there were no Clinton campaign, would Democratic Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, who will be 50 on Inauguration Day, be exploring a run? Would Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who will be 56, be thinking about it? Would New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who will be 59, be preparing to run? They’d all be considering it.

If any of them ran today, however, they could find themselves unable to gain any traction at all in a Clinton-dominated primary race. That could make it more difficult for them to mount a credible run in the future.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.



BMCC bond benefits more than the school

Voting yes for the BMCC bond not only affects the college and its campuses but the community around those as well. Being a student at the Pendleton BMCC campus, I’ve heard many great ideas as well as wishful ones towards how the campus can improve. But unfortunately there is not enough funding for these proper changes to be made. New technology, better wireless internet for online students, and fixes to classroom heating and cooling seem like small improvements but can make a big difference for students at BMCC.

I’ve personally experienced the older technology used here at the campus and it is in definite need of an upgrade. Cooling and heating in classrooms is important for a suitable learning environment for students. Without proper temperatures, some classrooms

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