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**OUR VIEW**

# Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

**Tip of the hat to the Hyphen District**, Milton-Freewater's new plan to unite and revitalize its downtown district(s).

We're in favor anytime a city chooses to embrace its quirks instead of run from them, and we're also in favor of a good name. The Hyphen District, that's just between SoHo and TriBeCa right? And building off wine from the nearby Rocks District, the city has marketed itself as a fun and intriguing place.



The plan suggests restoring the main streets of both Milton and Freewater (they were two different towns before the hyphen arrived) while turning the land between the two towns into a mixed-use commercial and residential common area dubbed the "Hyphen District." The Portland firm, SERA, that came up with the name, also proposed resurrecting Milton-Freewater's dormant railroad for trips through wine country. In keeping with the train theme, SERA

suggested a fare-free, trolley-style bus, a pedestrian pathway by the river and converting an old cannery into a community center.

They're all great ideas — and they all cost money — but the Hyphen has plenty of opportunity to succeed, grow and become vibrant.

Wine-wealthy Walla Walla is just across the state line, and bringing some of that growth into Umatilla County is a benefit for the two towns separated by a hyphen, and the county and state to which we belong.

**A kick in the pants to the city of Pendleton** for their increasingly outlandish rules about marijuana.

Earlier this week, they added the scent of marijuana, whether growing or drying, to the list of offensive odors on the city's nuisance ordinance. Still not on the list: tobacco, curry chicken, dog vomit and diapers.

The strange rule has already attracted regional media coverage, and a story about the ordinance made the website Reddit for an online discussion as harsh as you might imagine it would be. Nearly all commenters, both locally and nationally, have mocked the ordinance for being unfair and foolish.

We guess the city will have to purchase a roughly \$1,500, comically ridiculous "field olfactometer" that has the ability to measure smells. Similar devices were purchased by Colorado agencies in the lead up to legalization. Though there have been dozens of "smell complaints" in the city, it's hard to find anyone who has been fined for it. There is one thing an ordinance like this — however unenforceable — does: It allows the government to come sniffing around your property.

"You do have people who just object to the whole idea," Ben Siller, a code enforcement officer with the Department of Environmental Health in Denver, told *USA Today* back in 2014. "(The smell) is discernible. It's there, but you get used to it, just like any odor."

That seems so obvious, but for some reason it wasn't to a majority of Pendleton city council members.

The defense has been made that it's another tool on the officer's belt, a way to make persistently annoying neighbors knock off an offensive behavior by threat of a fine. But the reason marijuana has been singled out — and why it more offensive than rotting walnuts — is beyond us.

**A tip of the hat to Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.)**, who teamed up with Republican presidential hopeful Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) in a filibuster to block the mass collection of phone records under the Patriot Act.

Both senators, despite their seats on opposite sides of the aisle, have been opponents of the NSA bulk surveillance techniques. Paul used the filibuster to block fellow Kentucky Republican Senator Mitch McConnell's attempt to renew the Patriot Act rather than letting the House vote on a bill to stop the data collection.

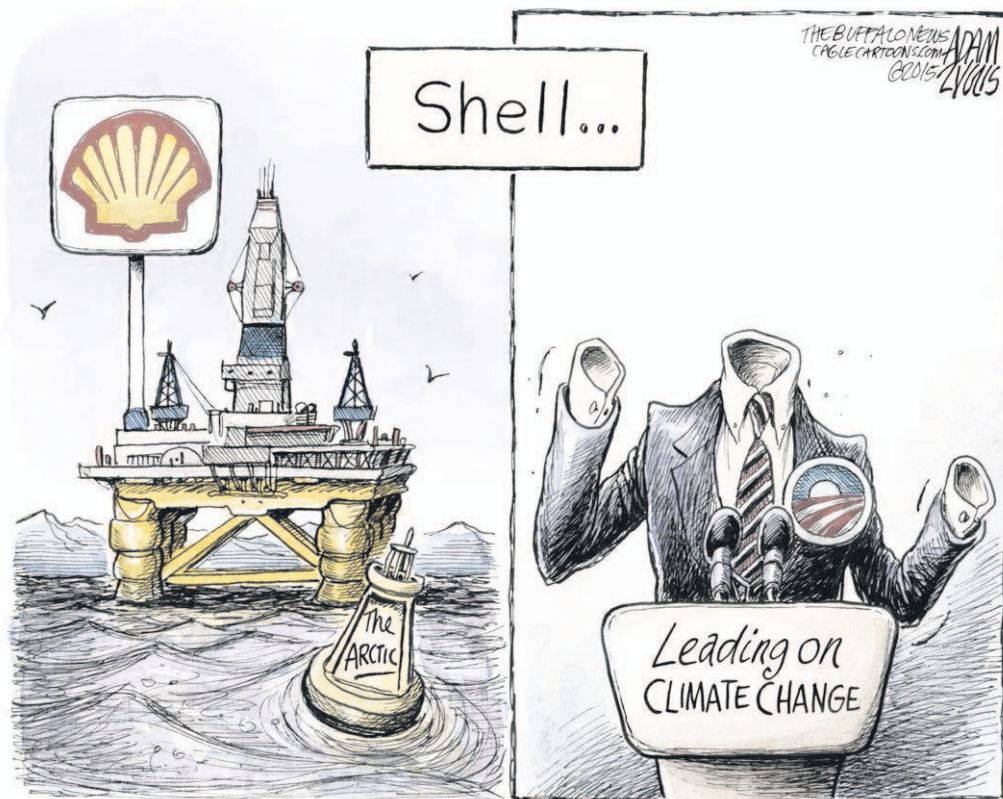
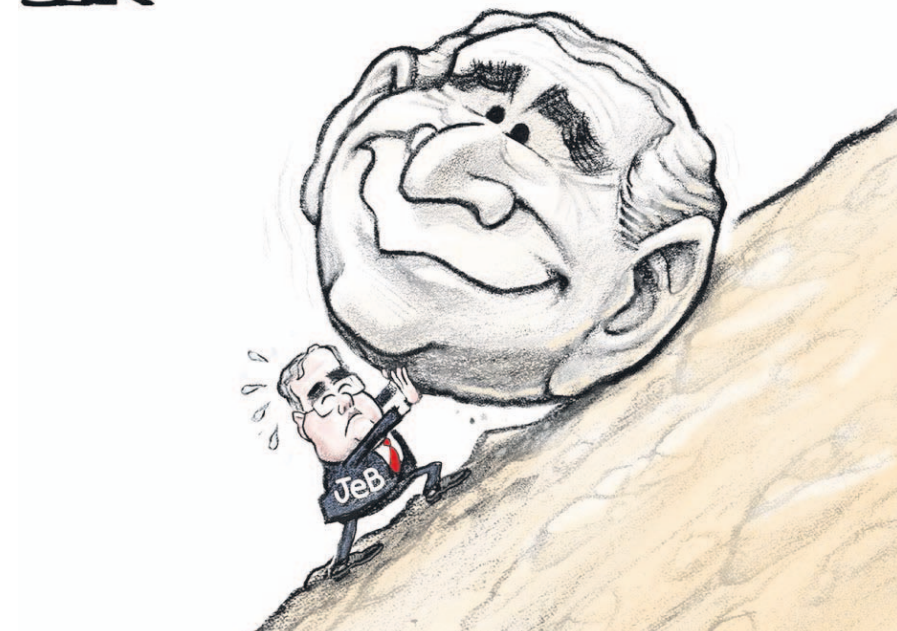
"There comes a time in the history of nations when fear and complacency allow power to accumulate and liberty and privacy to suffer," Paul said in the early afternoon to begin a 10-and-a-half hour speech that included several senators. "That time is now. And I will not let the Patriot Act, the most un-patriotic of acts, go unchallenged."

Wyden joined the effort at about 3:45, spoke for 45 minutes, then returned in the evening.

The whole thing was a bit of a show, as politics at all levels tend to be, but it made a strong statement of bipartisan support for eliminating a harmful practice of the NSA.

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.

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**OTHER VIEWS**

## Iraq war history ensnares Hillary Clinton and Jeb Bush

In January 2007, shortly after entering the race for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, Hillary Clinton traveled to Iowa, where one of the first questions she faced was about her vote to authorize the war in Iraq.

"If we had known then what we know now, there never would have been a vote," Clinton said, "and I never would have voted to give (President George W. Bush) that authority."

Clinton had been saying that since 2004. As she ramped up her campaign, she said it more and more. "If I had known then what I know now, I never would have voted to give the president authority," Clinton said at a Democratic debate in June 2007. "Obviously, if I had known then what I know now about what the president would do with the authority that was given him, I would not have voted the way that I did," she said on "Meet the Press" in September 2007.

It didn't work. Democrats, and some in the press, demanded more. They wanted Clinton to acknowledge that she had made a grievous error that went far beyond simply believing intelligence that turned out to be false. They wanted Clinton to say she had made a huge mistake and deeply regretted her actions. They wanted her to grovel.

"She uttered the most irritating and disingenuous nine words in politics: 'If we had known then what we know now,'" wrote *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd of Clinton during that 2007 Iowa visit. "(Democratic Sen.) Jim Webb knew. Barack Obama knew. Even I knew, for Pete's sake. The administration's trickery was clear in real time." Dowd's conclusion, and that of many on the left, was that Clinton didn't have the guts to stand up to a popular president.

Still, Clinton resisted a full-scale confession. She ended up paying a heavy price, losing the nomination to Obama, who had not been in Congress at the time and had the luxury of saying he opposed the Iraq war all along.

But Clinton knew she had to confess sometime. In her 2014 book "Hard Choices," she wrote that she not only regretted her vote, she regretted not regretting it earlier:

"While many were never going to look past my 2002 vote no matter what I did or said, I should have stated my regret sooner and in the plainest, most direct language possible. I'd gone most of the way there by saying I regretted the way President Bush used his authority and by saying that if we knew then what we later learned, there wouldn't have been a vote. But I held out against using the

word 'mistake.' It wasn't because of political expediency. After all, primary voters and the press were clamoring for me to say that word. When I voted to authorize force in 2002, I said that it was 'probably the hardest decision I have ever had to make.' I thought I had acted in good faith and made the best decision I could with the information I had. And I wasn't alone in getting it wrong. But I still got it wrong. Plain and simple."

In recent days, Jeb Bush has struggled to answer the if-I-knew-then-what-

I-know-now question about Iraq. Bush stumbled through three or four tries before finally saying that if he had known what would happen, "I would not have gone into Iraq."

That should be enough. Unlike Hillary Clinton, Jeb Bush did not vote to authorize the war. Unlike Clinton, he was not privy to the secret intelligence used

to justify invading Iraq. Unlike Clinton, he did not give a speech from the Senate floor in support of authorization.

Jeb Bush faced intense questioning on Iraq mostly because it was his brother who started the war, and many voters quite reasonably want to know how a President Jeb Bush would be different from President George W. Bush. Jeb really could not get away with not answering.

Now that he has answered, it seems likely that criticism he received from conservatives will subside. But attacks from the Left will increase.

Just moments after Jeb's final statement, the liberal writer Josh Marshall wrote: "It won't end there. Because with a consensus in place that the Iraq War was a bad idea, the whys and hows of just how we made this decision are up for discussion in a very new way." An hour or so later, the Democratic National Committee announced a conference call to "hold Jeb Bush accountable on Iraq."

In other words, Bush's I-would-not-have-gone-into-Iraq answer immediately transformed the debate into a partisan one. Conservatives who criticized Jeb's earlier flubbed answers will likely say he's done enough. The Left will keep pressing for more — just like they pressed Clinton. But of course, Jeb has no Iraq vote to regret.

Besides, in the end it seems unlikely the public is interested in a full replay of the 2002-2003 Iraq war debate. Bush made a commonsense statement. That's probably enough for most voters.

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



BYRON YORK  
Comment

**Unlike Hillary Clinton, Jeb Bush did not vote to authorize the Iraq War.**

**YOUR VIEWS**

### Texting and driving a plague invading our communities

I want to warn Pendleton residents of a terrible plague that has invaded our community. Across our country it kills and injures thousands more than the horrible Ebola virus. Americans panic at the mention of Ebola, but pay little attention to this much more dangerous problem. What is it? Talking or texting while driving.

This deadly habit has become so accepted and so universal that police departments are overwhelmed with the staggering number of people who think this activity is okay and ignore the law. Sometimes I think they just throw up their hands and give up on citing these lawbreakers. On my evening walks through downtown Pendleton I see an average of three drivers talking on phones.

Recently I tried to be nice to a young lady by the Dairy Queen who was headed west and waiting for a long string of traffic. I held off going through the intersection to give her time to turn in front of me. She was looking at me, but she was also talking on her cellphone. She just sat there talking on her phone. It was obvious her small brain couldn't process both tasks at once. I waited a few seconds then,

with lots of cars waiting behind me, I went on through. Only then did her brain finally recognize the opportunity, and she rushed across in front of me missing me by inches. I yelled for her to get off her phone and drive, but was only met by a string of obscenities. The phone was still glued to her ear.

The minimum fine for breaking this law in Oregon is \$142. Police departments who are worried about budgets could get filthy rich if all the illegal callers were stopped and fined. I should state that I think the Pendleton Police Department and city council are dedicated and hard working folks. Both entities have many issues and challenges to deal with. I am convinced, however, that only much larger fines and a commitment to a zero tolerance policy will change the usage of cell phones in the car.

And what about the latest wonderful hi-tech gadget by Apple? The new wrist watch computer/cell phone will increase wrecks and deaths even more. Can you just picture someone twisting their wrist around to look at their "watch" then manipulating the buttons with the other hand while they negotiate through traffic? The worst is yet to come.

David Burns  
Pendleton

**LETTERS POLICY**

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