

**EAST OREGONIAN**  
Founded October 16, 1875

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**OUR VIEW**

# Picture yourself at Eastern Oregon U.

As a northeast Oregon mother or father, you may dream of watching your son or daughter — decked out in Duck green or Beaver orange — walk across a stage to collect a college degree. You might wake up from that dream, however, when you realize that means your little baby is more than five hours away from you for four years or more, soaking up all that valley culture and reducing the chances they will come back home to drop their roots in the same place you did.

It's possible that more moms and dads should picture their children collecting a degree from Eastern Oregon University. But so far, the school has been unable to penetrate many Eastern Oregon minds outside Union County.

If the university is going to survive and thrive, that needs to change. And Tom Insko, Eastern Oregon University's new president, knows it. He visited this newspaper's editorial board this week to listen as much as talk, and find out how EOU can become a more integral part of Eastern Oregon. Insko is an EOU graduate and most recently in upper management at Boise Cascade. This is his first job in education.

It's hard to overstate what the university could mean to our region. Imagine a booming natural resources school, finding niches between Blue Mountain Community College and Oregon State University. Imagine professors and programs that compete with those in the valley, and those in Boise or Pullman, and attract students from across the region. Imagine that stopping the brain drain of our best and brightest to nearby urban areas. Imagine a nearby university that offers a comparable but cheaper, closer opportunity for a degree. Imagine La Grande as a storybook college town, booming with culture and ideas and energy and giving Eastern Oregon a shot of regional pride. Imagine a place mid-career Eastern Oregonians could go on nights and weekends to meet like-minded go-getters and further their careers.

The university has a lot going for it. If you're a Portland high school

student who wants to be a forester or a farmer, doesn't four years in La Grande make sense? If you're from this neck of the woods and want a bachelor's degree, to stay in-state and stay close to home, doesn't EOU make all the sense in the world?

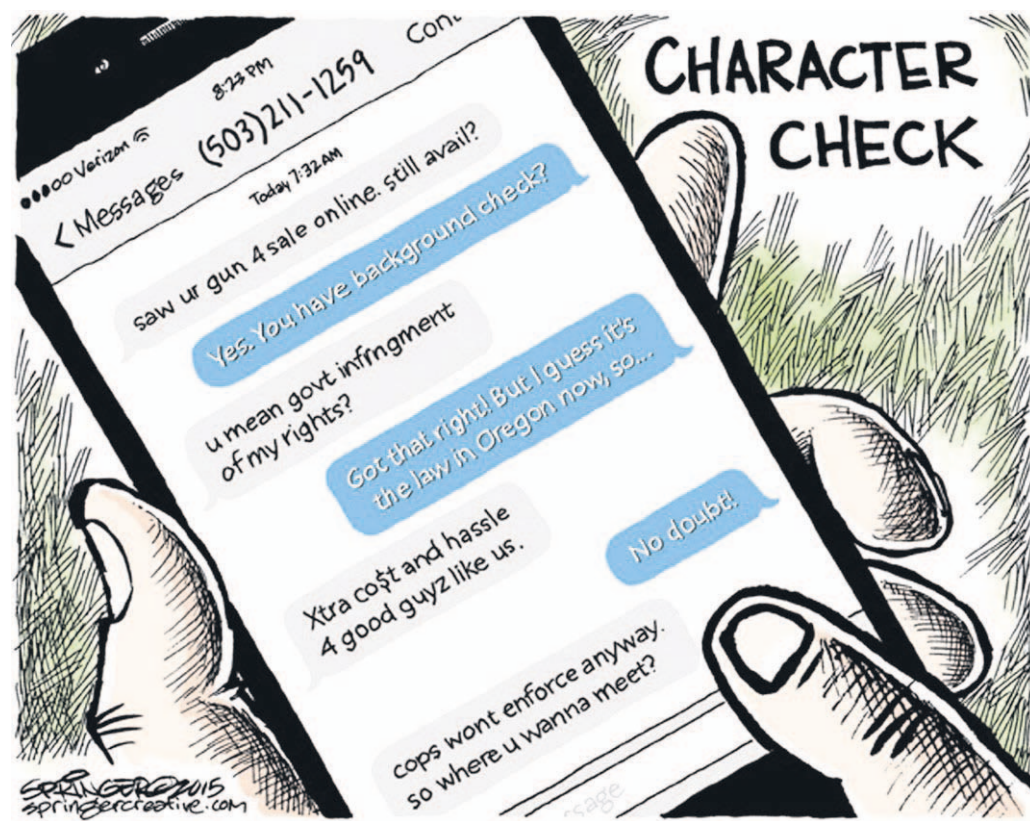
**A focus on online degrees and distance learning has left the campus experience feeling hollow.**

This is no advertisement for the university. All those uses of the word "imagine" above mean right now EOU isn't operating at its full potential. The last decade, EOU has burned through multiple administrations, all of whom left before their visions came to fruition. The university does a poor job of marketing itself — both with top-of-mind visibility and deeper, more substantive positioning on what sets it apart from its competitors. A focus on online degrees and distance learning has left the campus experience feeling hollow.

Eastern Oregon is currently ground zero for some important issues. Take wolves, for instance. It's disappointing that the school has failed to become a scientific, unbiased voice for a Western problem that is loping through their campus grounds. Why isn't EOU part of the discussion when we are debating the forest plan, or drones, or growing canola, or the minimum wage?

From those of us in Umatilla County, the school is just one hill away. But something over there has to call us. The school needs to improve the campus experience, create an interesting, diverse, challenging and comforting place where young people can see themselves living for a few years, or maybe longer. It needs to improve and expand its relationship with the city of La Grande. We're never going to hear the roar from Autzen Stadium, but that doesn't mean smaller athletic programs can't thrive. It doesn't mean arts and culture offerings can't be a benefit to campus life, with lectures and musicians and comedians bringing the world to Eastern Oregon. And it doesn't mean that EOU has to be "Plan B" for Oregon students looking for a degree. It needs improvement, and we need to give it a chance.

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.



**OTHER VIEWS**

## Arguments to try for Iran deal

It would be a catastrophe for American influence in the world if Congress killed the Iranian nuclear deal.

Perhaps because the stakes are so high, the debate has become poisonous. Critics are (ludicrously) accusing President Barack Obama of appealing to anti-Semitic tropes. And Obama (petulantly) suggested that some opponents were "alarmist," "ignorant," "not being straight" and "making common cause" with Iranians who chant "Death to America." Obama's rhetoric was counterproductive. As former Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, a Texas Republican, told me, "At this point, the president has made it impossible for a Republican to vote for it." Constituent calls to congressional offices are overwhelmingly against the deal, and with Sen. Chuck Schumer defying the White House by opposing it, the opposition is more bipartisan than the support is. That's tragic, for killing the deal would infuriate many allies, isolate America rather than Iran and ultimately increase the risk of ayatollahs with nuclear weapons.

I've already explained why I'm strongly in favor of the deal, and I urge Obama to start over with his sales job and focus on three points.

— First: Sure, the deal is imperfect, but it's the best way to achieve a goal we all share passionately — preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

The great majority of arms experts support the deal, some enthusiastically, some grudgingly. They recognize shortcomings, but, on balance, as 29 of America's leading nuclear scientists and arms experts wrote in an open letter last week, it has "much more stringent constraints than any previously negotiated nonproliferation framework."

Likewise, three dozen retired American generals and admirals released a joint letter declaring the deal "the most effective means currently available to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons."

Iran would go from maybe a few months from a bomb to a year away. The agreement doesn't solve the underlying problem, but it may buy us 15 years.

Yes, it would be nice if Iran gave up all its enriched uranium. But isn't it better that it give up 98 percent of its stockpile than that it give up none?

Everyone knows Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel opposes the deal, but not everyone realizes other Israelis with far more security expertise support it. Ami Ayalon, former head of Israel's Shin Bet security service, describes it as "the best possible alternative." And Efraim Halevy, former head of the Mossad, says, "What is the point of canceling an agreement that distances Iran from the bomb?"



**NICHOLAS KRISTOF**  
Comment

— Second, it's true that Iran may try to cheat, but it's easier to catch and stop the cheating with the deal than without. Critics sometimes note that President Bill Clinton reached an agreement on nuclear weapons with North Korea in 1994, only to see North Korea cheat. The lesson they draw is that it's pointless to negotiate with untrustworthy rogue regimes. I've covered North Korea since I was a young reporter in Asia in the 1980s, and the lesson is actually more like the opposite.

That 1994 agreement was indeed flawed, and North Korea violated it. But even so, in the eight years the agreement was in place, North Korea made zero nuclear weapons, according to American intelligence estimates. After the deal collapsed in 2002, the Bush administration turned to a policy of confrontation, and North Korea then made perhaps nine nuclear weapons.

— Third, if all goes south, or if Iran is stalling us and after 15 years races to a weapon, we retain the option of a military strike.

I asked David Petraeus, retired four-star general and former head of the CIA, about that. "I strongly believe," he told me, "that there will continue to be a viable military option should Iran seek to break out and construct a nuclear device after the expiration of many of the elements of the inspections regime at the 15-year mark of the agreement."

To me, this deal is ugly and flawed — and infinitely better than the alternatives. The criticisms of the deal strike me as reasonable, but the alternatives that the critics propose seem unreasonable and incoherent.

So Obama should hit the restart button. He should acknowledge that the deal has shortcomings but also emphasize that it must be judged not by a referendum on its terms but rather as a choice: deal or no deal.

He can also take steps to reassure doubters. We could boost funding for the International Atomic Energy Agency to make oversight more effective. We could do more to speak up for human rights in Iran and to counter Iranian meddling in the region, especially in Syria.

Gen. Brent Scowcroft, the patriarch of Republican security experts, tells me that he supports the Iran deal in part because it exemplifies American leadership on a crucial global issue. I agree, and for Congress to kill it will not just set back American leadership, it will also increase the odds that Iran gets the bomb.

*Nicholas Kristof has been a columnist for The New York Times since 2001. He grew up on a farm in Oregon, graduated from Harvard, studied law at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, and then studied Arabic in Cairo.*

**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.

**YOUR VIEWS**

### Pendleton road woes dire, not unfixable

The "Pendleton City Council owes us honesty" editorial of August 6, 2015, thoroughly covered the issue regarding Pendleton city streets. It is also time for honesty from Jerry Cronin and Rex Morehouse and other city naysayers, the should-haves, would-haves, could-haves in our city to come forward with a reasonable, feasible course of action.

With this issue the naysayers have a big opportunity to be proactive instead of finding their apparently perverse pleasure in other's misery.

Unlike naysayers, the city council must deal with reality. Unfortunately, they have tried to please everyone and now find themselves having pleased no one. They themselves, busy competent people that they are, now find they are even in conflict with each other. Mayor Phillip Houk shares

some responsibility in this and has some responsibility in the resolution.

There is enough blame to go around. By no means does the Pendleton voter have a clean slate in all this. The voter too often has remained uninformed and equivocal, characterized by a mixture of opposing feelings and open to misconception. Because of this the city voter must share in the responsibility for any conceived mistakes or mismanagement over the years.

What now is to be done? The EO editorial stated the reality of this dire situation, and the fact that not everyone can be served at once.

Are we to withhold our help to our long-suffering neighbor in need while believing that we will not be helped also, and then in our denial continue to go deeper in debt as cost of street repair and replacement mounts, or are we going to pull together to find and follow the best course of feasible

action?

Councilman Neil Brown has appealed to the public at a recent city council meeting to stay patient during the process of creating new charges and raising existing ones.

"Nobody wants to be scaring people to death," he said. "We're talking gas taxes. We're talking about system development charges, water rates going up, sewer rates going up. There's a lot to absorb." Brown could also have said there is likely a \$5 million bond issue request in the not too distant future for a new fire station. So there is much to be considered and reality must play a critical part.

Everyone uses the city streets and benefits from them. A 5 cent per gallon fuel tax paid by the out of state visitor, the out of city resident, the city resident, is the fairest way and the least egregious way to the city resident to take care of the city streets.

Pendleton is a hidden jewel. Tourism is underdeveloped here and could bring in much-needed

gas tax dollars. Other cities (you can bring to mind your own favorite), to their advantage, have successfully engaged in this.

**Ron Gavette**  
Pendleton

### Pendleton Downtown Association asking for feedback

In March of this year the Pendleton Downtown Association was reorganized and expanded to serve the downtown area. The Pendleton downtown area is defined as six blocks east and six blocks west of Main Street, from the railroad tracks on the south and the Umatilla River on the north.

On July 31 the PDA mailed out a survey to the downtown area. The purpose of the survey is to give those in the downtown area an opportunity to share information on issues that are important to them. The results of survey will form the basis of future PDA planning

sessions designed with the goal of serving the best interest of businesses in the downtown core. The names of those responding to the survey are kept confidential and the survey tally is performed by an out-of-town entity. If you have not already returned your survey please do so; if you need a survey please contact us.

The PDA meets every first Thursday of the month from 7-8 a.m. at the city of Pendleton community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave. All are welcome to attend and we encourage you to do so. This organization is dedicated to serving the interests of the downtown business community. If you would like to join the PDA or volunteer to serve on a committee please contact us.

The PDA mailing address is: PDA, 257 S. Main St., Pendleton, OR 97801. You are also welcome to contact us by email at fbradbury@yahoo.com.

**Fred Bradbury, president**  
**Angela Thompson, secretary**