

## Quick takes

### Pot taxes just might pay off

Pendleton is denying a tremendous amount of money for not expanding and allowing any new business to come in. I don't know what they are so afraid of. Growth is a good thing. Time for a little change.

— Jessica Lyons

Here is a novel idea: Rather than the council deciding, what if we put it on a ballot and let voters decide.

— Crystal Cortazar

I don't smoke marijuana so it's no convenience for me, but I think Pendleton and Hermiston both are complete fools for not allowing the sales of marijuana. We'll be losing out on so much money!

— Tiah Estabrook

### Urban/rural gun divide

And unfortunately for us whatever (urban Oregon) wants we're stuck with.

— Levi Raber

If I have a concealed weapon permit I know what businesses to not enter and how to behave in public. Props to this man for standing up for his legal rights but using caution.

— Janice Martin

I'll be all for universal background checks to own a firearm, as soon as someone provides me with all the background check info the Obama administration ran to green-light airdropping 50 ton of ammo and guns in Syria.

— Nick Ritzer

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# The name of a lake is a name that matters

By GLENN NELSON  
Writers on the Range

In central Washington, one of Jonathan Rosenblum's favorite fishing holes is a lake near the foot of 8,122-foot Mount McGregor, where the Pacific Crest Trail snakes past the North Cascades. A union organizer from Seattle, Rosenblum loves to hike to the lake with his young daughters and ply them with the history of the region. One of his favorite stories is about Wilson Howard, a black gold miner, who braved the elements and unknown landscape to file a late-1800s mining claim in the area and named the lake after himself.

Because of Rosenblum's 2007 petition, Washington state now officially calls the lake by what is believed to be its oldest known name, Howard Lake. The federal government, however, recognizes the lake by a name that causes the jaws of most people of color to drop: Coon Lake. Rosenblum's research shows that some white locals began calling the lake "Coon Lake" in the early 1900s, after Howard's departure; further sleuthing uncovered no raccoons in the area.

The federal government did not follow the usual course of supporting the state's action, mostly because of opposition from the National Park Service, which manages the area that contains the lake.

Rosenblum is quick to recognize the irony of the situation. Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, who is white, calls the place Howard Lake, after the black miner who named it. President Barack Obama, who of course is black, is supposed to call it by a term often used as a racial slur and tantamount to fighting words.

The Park Service, acting on research from its North Cascades unit, originally defended its stance by claiming that there

was ambiguity around the use of the term "coon."

"At the time, no evidence was found that the name was intended as a pejorative term or racial slur; if we had found such evidence, we would have recommended changing the name immediately," said Craig Dalby, a spokesman for the Pacific West Region of the Park Service. "The National Park Service is re-examining its position because of ongoing community concerns and will provide feedback to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in the near future."

In the years leading up to its 2016 centennial, the Park Service has done a lot of talking and writing about the need for diversity and inclusiveness. But it has done little to address the issue: Its own ranks remain 82 percent white, as does the estimated percentage of park visitors, according to the agency's 2011 survey. The controversy over Howard Lake gives the agency the opportunity to correct a historic wrong and send a much-needed signal about diversity.

Seattle Democratic Sen. Pramila Jayapal has written a letter urging the state's congressional delegation, as well as Interior Secretary Sally Jewell, to press a federal name change to Howard Lake. Fifty of her fellow state legislators, including six Republicans, have signed it. Another local activist, Eddie Rye Jr., whose daughter Angela is the former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus, says he has been enlisting caucus members to "help in getting rid of this racist name."

By following the Park Service's lead on "coon," the federal board on geographic names butted up against its own policies, which say that the board "will not adopt a name for federal usage that is determined by the board to be derogatory to a particular racial or ethnic group, gender, or religious

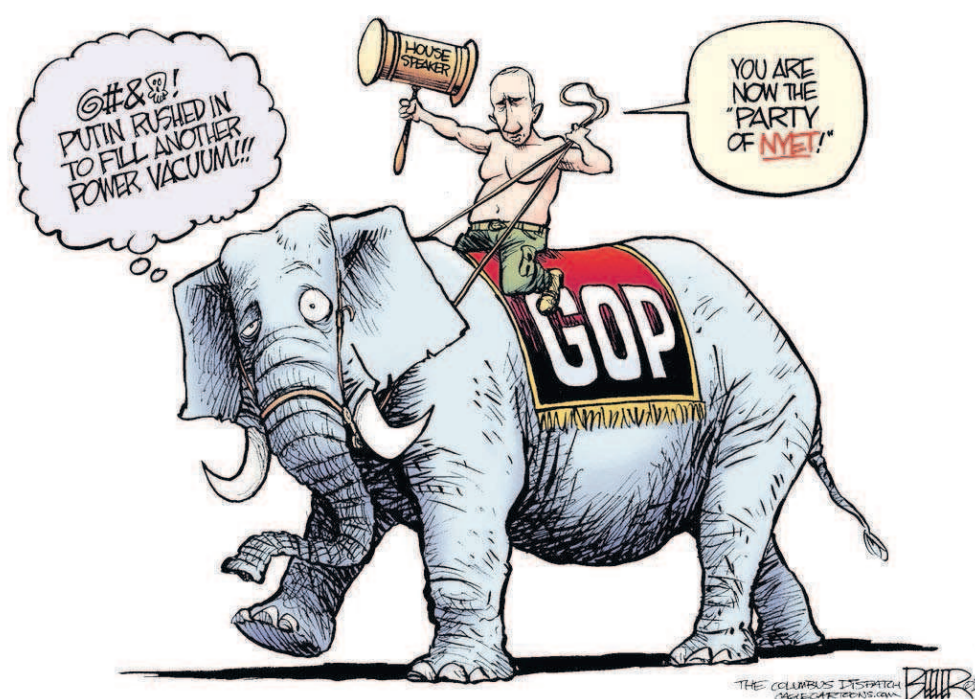
group."

The National Park Service seems irrationally resistant to the idea of honoring Howard. It filed a competing request in 2007 for the lake and a nearby creek to be named after William McComb, a member of the first road-clearing crew in Stehekin Valley. The proposal was rejected. Rosenblum strongly believes that changing the name to McComb would not have been an acceptable compromise. Removing the homage to Howard, the African American miner, was a form of what Rosenblum calls "eracism."

Times change. The issue of Coon Lake's name gained new steam following the Obama administration's recent decision to change the name of North America's tallest mountain from Mount McKinley to Denali. The state of Alaska had been petitioning for such a change for 40 years, and the dispute was resolved by the stroke of Secretary Sally Jewell's pen. A similar secretarial order could avoid a repeat of what already has been years of filings hearings, and also prevent a dispute over a 15-acre lake that, in this country's current racial climate, could get ugly.

Such an order also might save the National Park Service from itself. A projected nonwhite U.S. majority that is hostile to our national parks spells doom for the already resource-strapped agency. It's past time for the Park Service to back away from its misguided opposition, encourage Secretary Jewell to come to its rescue, and allow another black life to matter.

Glenn Nelson is a contributor to Writers on the Range, the column service of High Country News. He is an Asian-American journalist in Seattle who founded The Trail Posse to encourage diversity and inclusion in the outdoors.



## Reorganized downtown association has new priorities for Pendleton

By FRED BRADBURY

Pendleton Downtown Association President

The Pendleton Downtown Association reorganized this year.

The PDA represents the downtown business district area, which is defined as six blocks west and six blocks east of Main Street from the railroad tracks to the Umatilla River, including the Pendleton Arts Center.

In April 2015 the PDA elected new officers and board members. The new board established bylaws, a PDA logo and conducted downtown business district survey. From survey results the organization developed a mission statement and a two year strategic plan. The strategic plan was shared with the Pendleton Development Commission in late September to identify areas of common interest.

Over the summer, the board established six staffed subcommittees: publicity and communication, Main Street flower project, vacant storefront exhibit boards, surveys, membership coordination and the Main Street incentive program. To encourage community partnerships: created and filled ex-officio positions on the PDA board for the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce, Umatilla County economic development, Main Street Cowboys and the city of Pendleton.

In August, a downtown business district survey was conducted and the results were tabulated. PDA board members also paid one-on-one visits to many in the district. Of the 250 entities identified within the business district, we received a 25 percent district-wide survey return and a 40 percent survey return from Main Street. The PDA gathered a great deal of valued responses on an array of issues from this process.

In brief, the survey reflected downtown businesses' opinions as follows:

1. Review district-wide infrastructure improvement and maintenance needs.
2. Partner with the city to develop a parking plan to provide additional customer parking and methods to provide for code enforcement of current parking areas. Review options for a transit or shuttle system and advocate for off-street

parking requirements for all 6 x 6 block upper-story residential occupancy.

3. Pedestrian safety calling for additional marked crosswalks, lighting, sidewalk repairs, and enforcement of the 20 mph speed limit.

4. Partner with the PDC to develop a building enhancement and improvement plan.

5. Business provided a favorable response to the flower basket project and suggested possible expansion and a built-in watering system.

6. The district overwhelmingly expressed support for the continuation and expansion of tourism.

7. Supported business signage methods directing tourist and local shoppers to shop location by category, similar to the "you are here" mall directory and/or brochures and maps conveniently located throughout the business district.

8. Partner with Farmers Market on their plans to relocate this popular event.

9. Request sufficient advanced notification of street closures and develop a year-round calendar of district events.

10. Identify 6 x 6 block support and level of participation in providing seasonal lighting, decorations, displays, promotions and special events.

11. Need to provide more benches, trees, landscaping, bathroom facilities, and restaurant sidewalk customer usage.

What comes next? The PDA is in the process of establishing nonprofit status, developing a vision statement, implementing a work plan and searching for project funding. With these components completed, the PDA will be eligible to apply for the Oregon Main Street Program. Membership in the program qualifies the district for assistance in reaching established goals.

The PDA meets the first Thursday of each month at the community room of city hall at 7 a.m. Feel free to come to these meetings to continue the dialogue.

Fred Bradbury is president of the Pendleton Downtown Association. Email him at fbradbury@yahoo.com for more information.

### Downtown business owners want the Farmers Market to relocate.

## The war on millennials

By JARED MEYER  
Manhattan Institute for Policy Research

Tens of millions of Americans are between the ages of 18 and 30, and achieving success will be more difficult for these so-called Millennials than it was for young people in the past. This is because politicians and bureaucrats in Washington have put in place policies that restrict economic opportunity for the young.

It does not have to be this way. Washington's expansion of entitlement benefits and other government services places a major future financial burden on the young — one that many did not even vote for. The federal government has a debt of \$18 trillion, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. Unfunded liabilities driven by Social Security and Medicare push the total federal fiscal shortfall to more than \$200 trillion.

As if this were not enough, the Affordable Care Act has raised health insurance premiums for the young in an effort to pay for older Americans' health care. Now, even though people under 30 only spend an average of \$600 a year on health care, young people cannot pay less than one-third of what older people pay.

In elementary and secondary school, ineffective teachers are protected from being fired. This serves the interests of older teachers and their unions, but it harms those who would benefit from high-quality teachers.

Common-sense reforms to improve education outcomes such as vouchers and charter schools are consistently opposed by teachers unions.

In their college years, young people are encouraged to attend a university even though four in ten college freshmen fail to

graduate within six years. The current system of excessive federal student aid raises the cost of college tuition, which forces students to take on mountains of debt.

As if this were not enough, after high school or college graduation, Washington and state governments prevent young people from entering the job market. Occupational licensing requirements are meant to protect public safety, but often they mostly protect established businesses and workers. This comes at the expense of everyday consumers, entrepreneurs, and young workers, as unnecessary licensing makes many promising career paths too prohibitively expensive or time-consuming to enter.

Minimum wage laws, though they may seem well intentioned, make it more difficult for young and low-skilled workers to acquire valuable experience. Again, the government is telling young people that they are not free to work. Destructive labor-market laws need to be scaled back so that the first step on the career ladder can again be within reach.

Some think that if government were larger and gave more handouts, and taxes were raised to pay for these programs, then young people would do better. However, this would only make matters worse. Government tends to pick winners and losers, and the politically unorganized young are ineffective at lobbying for their interests. The key to restoring Millennials' lost economic opportunity is for government to get out of their way.

Washington is robbing America's young. Our country is facing a crisis, and change is essential for young people to achieve the future they deserve.

Jared Meyer is a fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.

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