

Quick takes

Wind, dust wreak havoc

It was absolutely zero visibility in places out there last night. I took an alternative route home to Pendleton from Hermiston, and it was terrifying.

— Kate Chastain

That high of wind can reduce the visibility to absolute zero feet. Meaning you're literally driving blind. Unless you're one of the few that can afford infrared view (see in the dark) option for your vehicle.

— Glen Robertson

Celebrating quitters

Quit at least 10 years ago, now I can't believe I smoked for 30 before I quit. What a huge waste of health and money.

— Cindy Haugen

Already did — 13 years ago. Best thing I ever did for myself, and once I got serious about quitting it was easier than I ever thought. Haven't fell off the wagon even once. My pride would never allow it.

— Marcia Raines

I quit about four months ago. Can already breathe better and I love it.

— Derrik Klimp

Snow means winter driving

Slow and easy, once the snow actually starts to accumulate on the roadway. Leave early so there is no rush to get to your destination. Just like in the spring and summer, take time to smell the snow!

— Pam Peterson

One of the great lessons of the Twitter age is that much can be summed up in just a few words. Here are some of this week's takes. Tweet yours @Tim_Trainor or email editor@eastoregonian.com, and keep them to 140 characters.

Wind, whine and weed in Umatilla County

By TOM BAILOR

On Nov. 4, 2014, marijuana was legalized in Oregon. The Oregon Control, Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana and Industrial Hemp Act is the result of a statewide democratic election. The notion being promoted in Umatilla County by elected leaders and other officials and regurgitated by everyday people that "we didn't vote for it around here," that "it's because of the west side" is based in denial of the results of a democratic election and prolific change in American culture. Living in a democracy requires compromise. That is why we vote, and to deny the results of an election, by the people, devalues the significance of democracy and our political process.

Umatilla County has about 76,705 residents, with about 57,000 over the age of 18, potentially eligible to vote. There are about 31,684 people actually registered to vote. In that election, 19,576 people voted, 61 percent of registered voters in our county. That number, however, only represents about 34 percent of adults living here. 12,122 (62.8 percent) voted against Measure 91 and 7,181 (37.2 percent) in favor. That's a 60/40 split, against. In Pendleton there were two districts where it won. If you consider that the medical marijuana community advocated against the initiative and some ballots were discarded without signature, the number in our county is probably closer to 50/50, or likely closer to state percentages of 56 percent in favor and 44 percent against, or 60/40 for.

Culturally we need to change the behavior of learning to smoke marijuana and drink during adolescence. Teaching our children about risks in the world, as best we can, is all any parent can ever do. Children are already surrounded by an adult world,

and without the simple rule of providing an ID for age verification for a controlled substance that is no more dangerous than alcohol, cigarettes, gambling, pornography, or guns, which do require identification, we are just irresponsibly propagating a vicious adolescent cycle. Right now we have conflicting social rules that encourage experimentation at a young age. This is where, if we can change our habits, we can get the best long-term physical and mental health benefits.

It will take time, because the problem is in part due to the underground secretive nature of a counterculture and generational bias fueled by a failed drug war. Marijuana is being sold as medicine, food, and fabric legally, and it's hard to say exactly how much is sold illegally. In Oregon any household can grow four plants and an individual can possess 1 ounce on their person, away from home. Employers in our state and in our county are changing their policies about cannabis use because they can't find employees.

Wasting energy by fighting the results of democracy is futile. Working to figure out how to transition the results of the election in our community is what leaders do. Under current leadership without legal marijuana, Umatilla County ranks 26 out of 36 counties in Oregon for health and 31 in both health behaviors and quality of life. Numerous shops in our county are selling paraphernalia and we border Washington state. Prohibition of cannabis is a façade and the prohibition mentality demonstrated by elected leadership and staff is a farce. Elected leaders are denying the results of a state election, which is obstructive to both

democracy and capitalism.

Legal or illegal, marijuana is in our local economy. The big picture of marijuana in U.S. economy is in the skyward trillions of dollars. Even illegal, it's a top cash crop in the United States. It's impossible to say and harder yet to draw a line around what the real economic aspect both positive and negative is, especially if you consider beyond smoking and look at results in terms history, art, music, science and technology. It is unknown how many associated jobs,

Wasting energy by fighting the results of democracy is futile.

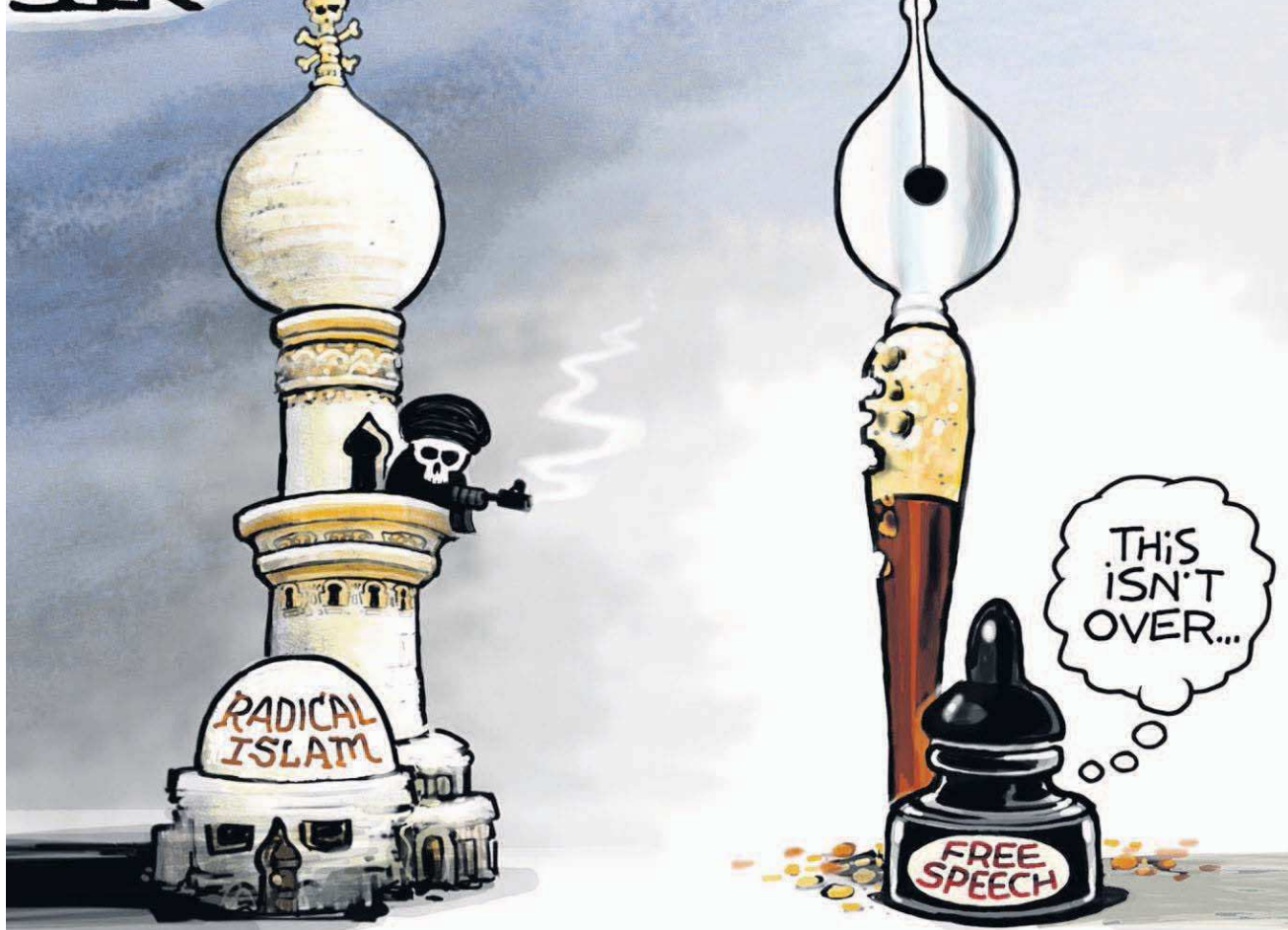
or what innovations in areas of agriculture, textile, fuel and pharmacy will emerge.

The Marijuana Prohibition Tax Act of 1937 made it illegal to tax products made from cannabis. It wasn't passed to keep you from becoming a jazz musician. The act ended the U.S. hemp industry, which was under attack from the paper, pulp, textile, and oil industries. A few years later during WWII Congress had to relent, to help in the effort to win the war because of shortages in oil, fiber, pulp and textiles.

The Oregon Control, Regulation and Taxation of Marijuana and Industrial Hemp Act is an effort to move forward in our state. It does not mean all things are perfect but it does change the lenses through which we are now able to look at the issue. There will be changes in both public safety and public health. We will see taxes, new revenue streams, and new opportunities. To vote it out of town just passes the buck, and provides a legal or illegal opportunity for someone else.

Tom Bailor lives in Pendleton works for the CTUIR and teaches Tai Chi.

STAR TRIBUNE EagleCartoons.com



Fight ISIS with cartoons

Pundits like to complain that there are few voices from the Islamic world that condemn terrorist attacks by Islamic extremists. I run a small business that distributes editorial cartoons from around the world. With every major attack, including the recent attacks in Paris, I see a chorus of cartoons from Arab countries condemning the terror. The pundits must not be looking at the cartoons.



DARYL CAGLE
Comment

Editorial cartoonists are typically the most influential voices in newspapers throughout the Middle East, reflecting the views of their readers. Newspapers remain important in everyday life in the Middle East. Editorial cartoons grace the front pages throughout the Middle East. Arabic language cartoonists are typically anti-American and anti-Semitic, but on issues of terrorism they are largely voices of reason.

I often hear politicians complain about how the war with Islamic extremists is a battle for hearts and minds and we need to step up our role in an information war that we are losing. Editorial cartoons could be a weapon on the front lines of that battle. By now Americans should see how powerful cartoons can be; clearly the terrorists see this, as cartoonists are among their primary targets. It is difficult for Americans to comprehend that editorial cartoons are important

Editorial cartoonists are typically the most influential voices in newspapers throughout the Middle East.

and effective in the Middle East because we view cartoons as trivial jokes, leading us to miss many opportunities.

Until recently, the U.S. State Department had programs that brought American cartoonists on speaking tours to the Middle East to meet their colleagues, and had reciprocal programs to bring Arabic language editorial cartoonists to America. The programs sought to spread common values to countries where persecuted and influential cartoonists typically are barred from drawing their own presidents. These effective State Department speaking programs for editorial cartoonists were dropped at the time of the "sequester" budget cuts. USAID-supported journalism education initiatives in the Middle East ignore and exclude cartoonists.

As international respect for America has plummeted, respect for many of our institutions still runs high. American cartoonists are respected around the world, like American jazz musicians and basketball players. Middle Eastern cartoonists are eager to have their work appreciated by American readers and by the star American cartoonists who they respect and emulate. The Arab cartoonists push back against the restrictions imposed by their regimes and envy America's press freedoms.

Every act of terror brings new recruits to the Islamic extremists

in ISIS. They seek glory, selling an image of bravery, striking back against the arrogant infidels in the West. Brandishing a gun demands a kind of respect. Fighting for religious values, no matter how twisted, demands a kind of respect. ISIS craves respect. What they can't bear is ridicule. Islamic extremists who are widely seen as the butts of jokes won't find many eager converts.

Cartoonists are masters of disrespect and are a continuing threat to the Islamic extremists. It is no surprise that editorial cartoonists are prime targets for terror. Along with other websites around the world, my own editorial cartoon site, cagle.com, is suffering hacker attacks that appear to originate with terrorists and despotic regimes who fear cartoons. Terrorists and despots have a weakness in common: They can't take a joke.

America needs to wake up, deploy and support the world's best soldiers in the modern information war, American cartoonists.

President Obama recently claimed that he is already doing most of the things that his political opponents demand in the war with ISIS; he called on his critics to contribute new and constructive ideas on what should be done.

My recommendation is inexpensive and powerful: bring back and greatly expand the State Department's shuttered editorial cartoon programs around the world.

Daryl Cagle is the editorial cartoonist who runs the EagleCartoons.com newspaper syndicate, distributing editorial cartoons to more than 850 newspapers around the world, including the East Oregonian. Comments to Daryl may be sent to editor@cagle.com.

Big issues in short session

With the 2016 Legislative Short

Session a few months away, I want to take a moment and thank everyone who responded to my "End of Session Survey." The survey was attached to my end-of-session mailer and it asked my constituents which issues were most important to them and their families. The options I listed on the survey were: education, helping small business, agriculture and trade, lowering taxes, public safety, and health care. It also allowed for constituents to share their thoughts on these subjects, or any other subject they found important. I received over fifty responses and results showed the three issues most important to District 29 are: agriculture and trade, lowering taxes, and helping small businesses.

During the 2015 Legislative Session, the Legislature passed — on strictly party line votes — numerous new regulations harming small businesses across the state. For example, the 18 majority members in the Senate passed legislation requiring every business with six or more employees to offer paid time off as well as a retirement account.

These are expenses many small businesses cannot afford. Small businesses are the backbone of not only our local communities, but our state as a whole. I have been told businesses have already started closing down and relocating outside of Oregon. I believe we need to help the small businesses in this state thrive, stay in Oregon, and provide jobs in our communities. We need to help them navigate through all of the red tape and stop



BILL HANSELL
Comment

piling on regulations that harm them. I want to work with employers and the business community to hear what they need to help keep their businesses prosperous and competitive.

Lowering taxes also received a large response in the survey. A constant increase in taxes harms families and makes it difficult to stay afloat in their daily lives.

We need to stop taking money out of the pocketbooks of Oregonians.

During the last session the majority party passed many fee increase bills on which I voted no. This included a hidden gas tax through the low carbon fuels bill and an increase to hunting and fishing licenses, to

simply name a few. We need to stop taking money out of the pocketbooks of Oregonians. We need to get state spending under control and stop passing new laws that require more and more money to implement and enforce.

Because the short session is only 35 days long, it is designed for budget fixes and new bills that have already been fully vetted. These survey results will help shape the bills I introduce during the 2017 session. My goal is to work toward bettering the lives of people across Eastern Oregon.

Thank you for giving me the privilege of representing you in the Oregon State Senate. I take the responsibility seriously and look forward to continuing to represent you.

Please feel free to continue to share your priorities and contact me at my office email at Sen. BillHansell@state.or.us. I look forward to hearing from you.

Senator Bill Hansell is in his first term representing Senate District 29.

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. Send letters to 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

Be heard!

Comment online at eastoregonian.com or visit our Facebook and Twitter pages.