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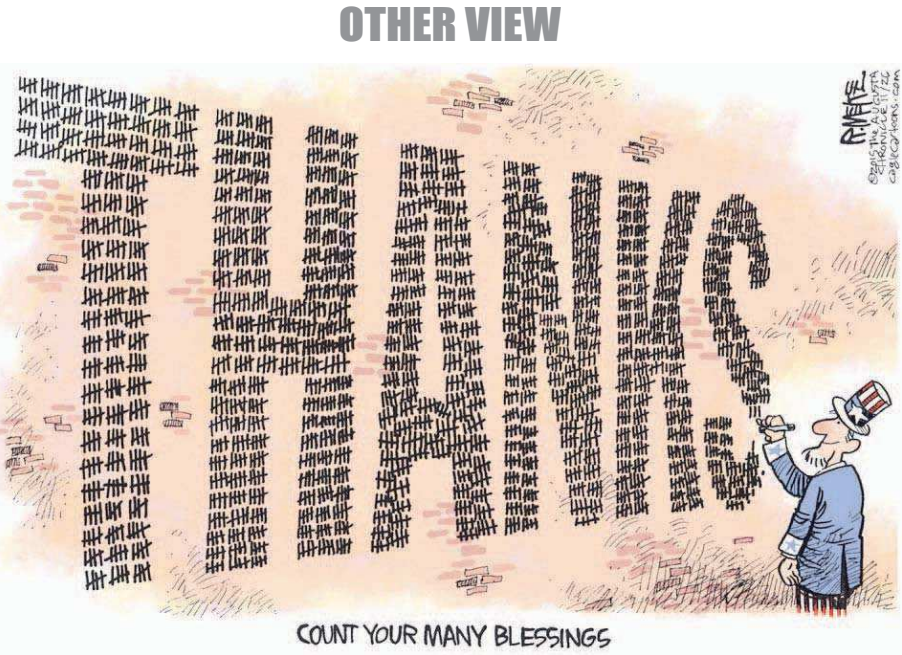
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The Thanksgiving Proclamation of 1789

By **GEORGE WASHINGTON**
Issued by the president, at the request of Congress on October 3, 1789

By the President of the United States of America, a Proclamation.

Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; and—Whereas both Houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me “to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness;”

Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal and manifold mercies and the favor, able interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty which we have since enjoyed;

for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted; for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and, in general, for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations, and beseech Him to pardon our national and other transgressions; to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually; to render our National Government a blessing to all the people by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed; to protect and guide all sovereigns and nations (especially such as have shown kindness to us), and to bless them with good governments, peace, and concord; to promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us; and, generally, to grant unto all mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows to be best.

Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

Go. Washington

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

Mormon doctrine hasn’t changed on LGBT issues

On Nov. 13, the *East Oregonian* printed an Associated Press article about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and its doctrine and guidelines concerning LGBT issues. A reader not familiar with the doctrines of this church would be left with many misunderstandings from this article.

The doctrines of the LDS church are not secretive and are readily available at lds.org and newsroom.lds.org for anyone who wishes to have an accurate understanding of the church’s beliefs. Church doctrine states that “marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God and that the family is central to the Creator’s plan for the eternal destiny of His children” (The Family: A Proclamation to the World).

Doctrine also states that, consistent with Biblical beliefs, any sexual relationship outside of a legal marriage between a man and a woman is a sin. Doctrine emphasizes that every person on the earth is a child of God and as such deserves to be treated with respect, love and kindness.

As in biblical times, the Church of Jesus Christ is led by a Prophet and a Quorum of Twelve Apostles. That body of leaders recently added clarification, not new doctrine, to church leadership handbooks concerning LGBT issues. These statements have been very misinterpreted by some of the vocal LGBT organizations and the

press. I urge anyone desiring accurate information to go to lds.org or contact local church leaders for clarification.

JoAnn Huntsman
Athena

Thankful to live in state that welcomes refugees

I am very proud to live in a state that has reaffirmed its commitment to accepting refugees from Syria and Iraq. I am dismayed at the vote in the House of Representatives to interrupt acceptance of refugees while seeking tighter screening procedures so as to weed out terrorists posing as refugees. I view that vote as reducing our security rather than increasing it. It provides excellent recruitment narrative for Middle East extremists seeking to create more terrorists.

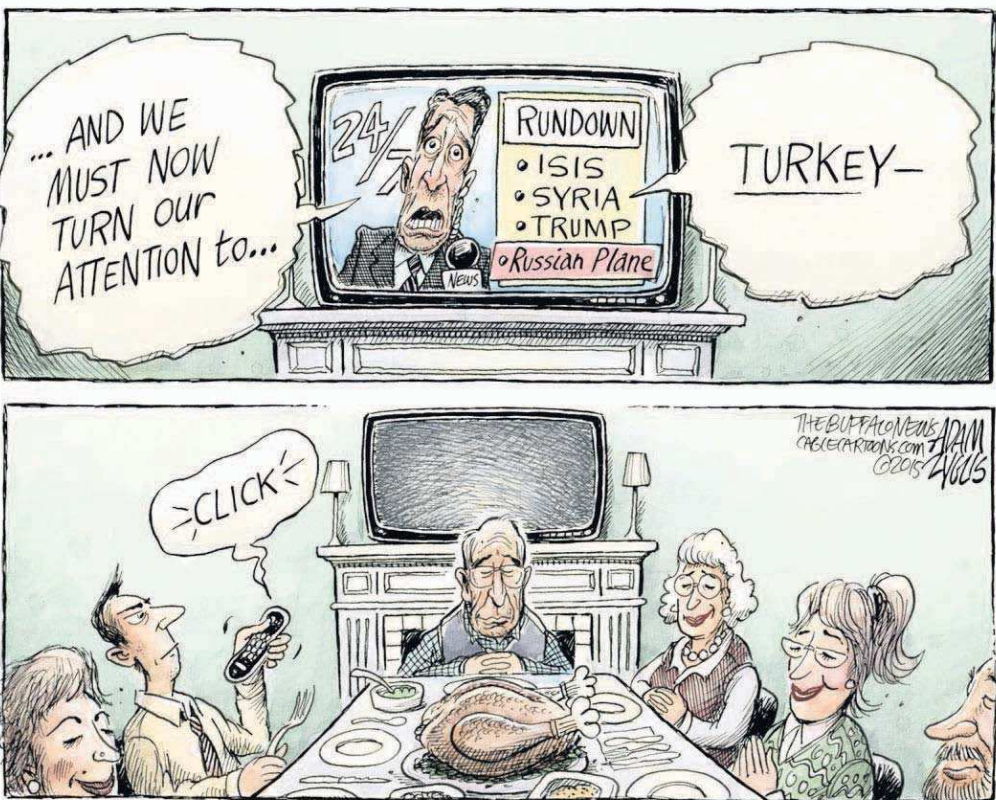
We can never guarantee that a terrorist won’t get into our country — if not as a refugee, then as a student or guest worker or ordinary visitor. There is no perfect security. Yes, we should examine the credentials of those attempting to enter our country, and a review of our current procedures is appropriate. But to interrupt, even for a short time, our historic welcome to those fleeing war and persecution is shameful and futile.

We need to put aside our fear, pick up our courage, and get on with living in the home of the brave.

Lindsay Winsor
Milton-Freewater

Be heard!

Comment online at eastoregonian.com



OTHER VIEWS

The gift of reading

The list of what a child needs in order to flourish is short but nonnegotiable. Food. Shelter. Play. Love. Something else, too, and it’s meted out in even less equal measure. Words. A child needs a forest of words to wander through, a sea of words to splash in. A child needs to be read to, and a child needs to read. Reading fuels the fires of intelligence and imagination, and if they don’t blaze well before elementary school, a child’s education — a child’s life — may be an endless game of catch-up.

That’s a truth at the core of the indispensable organization Reading Is Fundamental, a nonprofit group that provides hundreds of thousands of free books annually to children age 8 or younger, in particular those from economically disadvantaged homes, where books are a greater luxury and in shorter supply.

I shine a light on Reading Is Fundamental, or RIF, for several reasons.

We’re in the midst of giving thanks, and this group deserves plenty. It has distributed more than 410 million books to more than 40 million American children.

We’re on the cusp of the year-end holiday season, during which many people turn their attention to charity, making the most generous of their yearly donations. I urge everyone to think about literacy, books, early childhood education and organizations, like RIF, that support them.

And we’re a texting, tweeting, distracted country in which too many children don’t read at grade level, too many forces conspire against any improvement in that and too heavy a price is paid.

RIF just began its 50th year of work — it was born in November 1966 — and is marking that milestone with some new approaches and a fresh determination to spread its message despite budget challenges. With the clampdown on federal spending over recent years, it lost about \$24 million in annual funding that it had come to rely on. That represented more than two-thirds of its budget, which now leans harder on private contributions.

Consequently, RIF gives away fewer books in a given year than it once did. It was down to 1.8 million last year from a high of about 17 million more than a decade ago.

But RIF has signed on as a partner with ustyme — a digital platform that enables multiple users to read or play video games together — to make sure that underprivileged children in particular take advantage of ustyme’s Billion e-Book Gift, which will



FRANK BRUNI
Comment

provide access to a digital library of 50 previously selected children’s titles, many in Spanish as well as English. Those titles can be downloaded, starting Dec. 1, by visiting RIF.org/50ebooks.

The ebook reflects RIF’s determination to get kids to read in whatever manner best accomplishes that. The goal is to develop a muscle, nurture a habit, maybe even spark a passion. You never know where a little reading might lead.

Ellen Halliday, the RIF coordinator for the Brooklyn Public Libraries, recalled a mother who worried that her 8-year-old son was wasting his time with easy, breezy, frivolous books.

“Then one day,” Halliday told me, “when he was about 9 or 10, he said to me, ‘You know, I got this book, and this author — I can really see what he’s talking about when he talks about the shire or the hobbit. I think this Tolkien guy is an excellent author.’”

RIF was the brainchild of Margaret McNamara, whose experience as a teacher convinced her that for many poor kids, one of the main

barriers to proficient reading was simply access to books.

The group became known for its Bookmobiles, trucks that pulled up to schoolhouses to dispense books the way a Good Humor or Mister Softee truck dispenses ice cream — only for free.

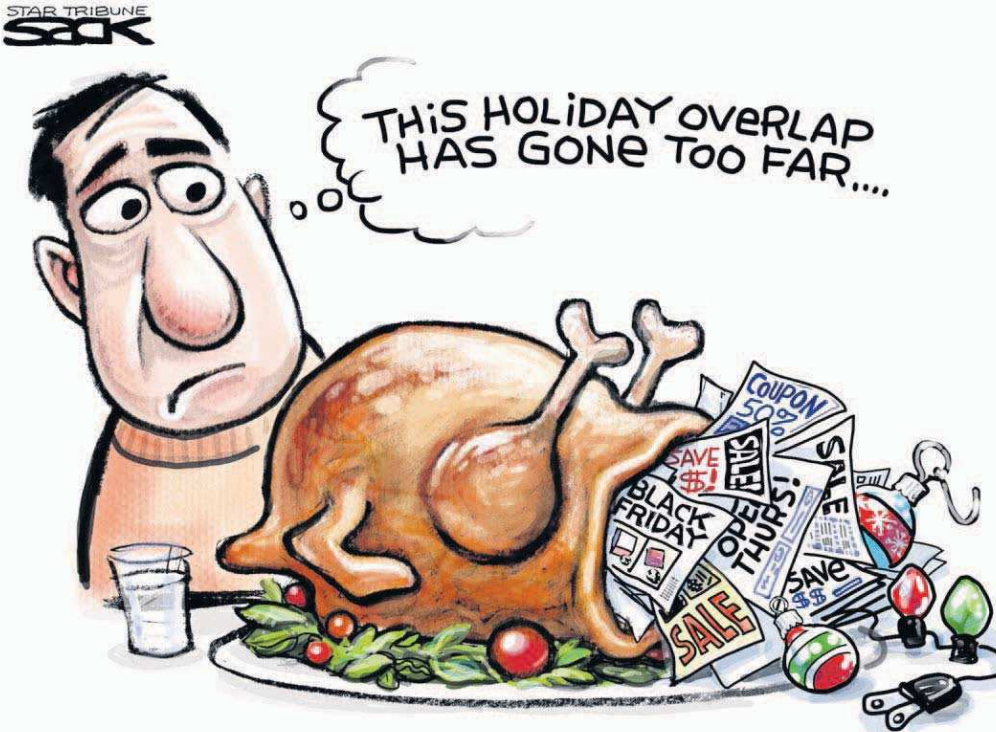
It’s vital nourishment. Research suggests that during their earliest years, kids from disadvantaged homes don’t hear as robust a variety of words as kids from privileged ones, and that’s the prelude to a series of other gaps with bearing on their success in school and beyond.

Early reading is one of the remedies. “Reading follows an upward spiral,” said Daniel Willingham, a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia and the author of “Raising Kids Who Read,” which was published earlier this year.

“Kids who read more get better at reading, and because they are better at reading, it’s easier and more pleasurable so they read still more,” he said. “And kids who read well don’t just do better in English class — it helps them in math, science and every other class, too.”

I’d go even further. Reading tugs them outside of themselves, connecting them to a wider world and filling it with wonder. It’s more than fundamental. It’s transformative.

Frank Bruni, an Op-Ed columnist for The New York Times since June 2011, joined the New York Times in 1995. Over his years, he has worn a wide variety of hats, including chief restaurant critic and Rome bureau chief.



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.