

Quick takes

Boardman turkey volunteers

Both of these ladies are the rock of this town. They have given and expect nothing in return. What a blessing they are.

— Kathy Draper Hyder

Jane is an amazing person. Truly a blessing to Boardman.

— Jessica Calderon

Athena woman gives thanks

Way to go I'm a thyroid cancer survivor as well! Hugs your way.

— Christina Sullivan

Wonderful article Riann. You are an incredible woman! I'm fortunate to be your coworker and I'm proud to call you my friend. I look forward to seeing you back at work very soon.

— Gloria Corona

Hermiston re-runs fire levy

Please vote yes. City residents will only see an increase in staffed stations and available paramedics and firefighters for emergencies. No increase in taxes!

— Matt Fisher

We need this. They are grossly understaffed.

— Trish Rossell

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.

Pendleton's airport may soon be profitable

Recently one of our pundits who doesn't live here anymore wrote about the airport. The airport is a huge infrastructure project that has been worked on since World War II. The airport has the infrastructure to facilitate commercial air travel, private airplanes, some industrial businesses and, currently, the drone project. It has always been the goal of Pendleton to attract business to the airport area — business that would employ large numbers of workers.

In order for that to happen it takes infrastructure and that is expensive. A lot of the pieces to the puzzle have been put in place. Do you abandon that now or finish? There have been some leases signed recently that lend hope and fruition to all the efforts. An extension of water and sewer is the most recent project.

The airport derives revenues from many sources. Real property leases, of which there are four general categories, include aviation land and facilities rental, terminal space rental and concession fees, commercial land and building rentals, and farmland operation (contracted out).

Residential has been completely phased out. The buildings were beyond their financial life and have been demolished. The UAS range — one of only three on the west coast — is anticipated to become a large revenue generator for the industrial park. The airport receives grants and entitlement funds from the Federal Aviation Administration for airport capital improvements. The FAA pays 95 percent of improvements with the city covering the



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remaining 5 percent. The airport also receives \$4.50 per passenger ticket sold. The airport was awarded a \$1.6 million grant/loan package by the state of Oregon for the purpose of constructing facilities to lease. All new lease revenue will go to the industrial park/airport. The Pendleton UAS range is currently part of a \$3.5 million grant request for the state's 2015-16 biennium.

If awarded, Pendleton is slated to receive \$800,000 for range operations.

Government revenues for fiscal year 2015-16 are \$2.2 million. Aviation rent, UAS range rent, commercial rent, landing fees, terminal rent, farmland operations, fuel flowage fees and passenger facilities charges are \$400,000.

Inter-fund loan proceeds are \$2,341,000. Total airport and business park income is \$5,038,000.

The airport fund provides funding for staffing, administration, business management, operation maintenance, planning, development, regulation, security and promotion of the airport/industrial park. Administrative and business management operations include short- and long-term leasing of properties.

The department also operates and maintains the airfield itself. The airfield consists of over 100 paved acres of runways, taxiways and aprons, lighting systems, the terminal building and parking areas. There

are 36 other city-owned buildings located on the airport property. There are 14 pieces of major equipment including rolling stock, several hundred acres of non-farm areas and vacant lots. The objective of the airport fund is to contribute to the growth of the community economic base through industrial development.

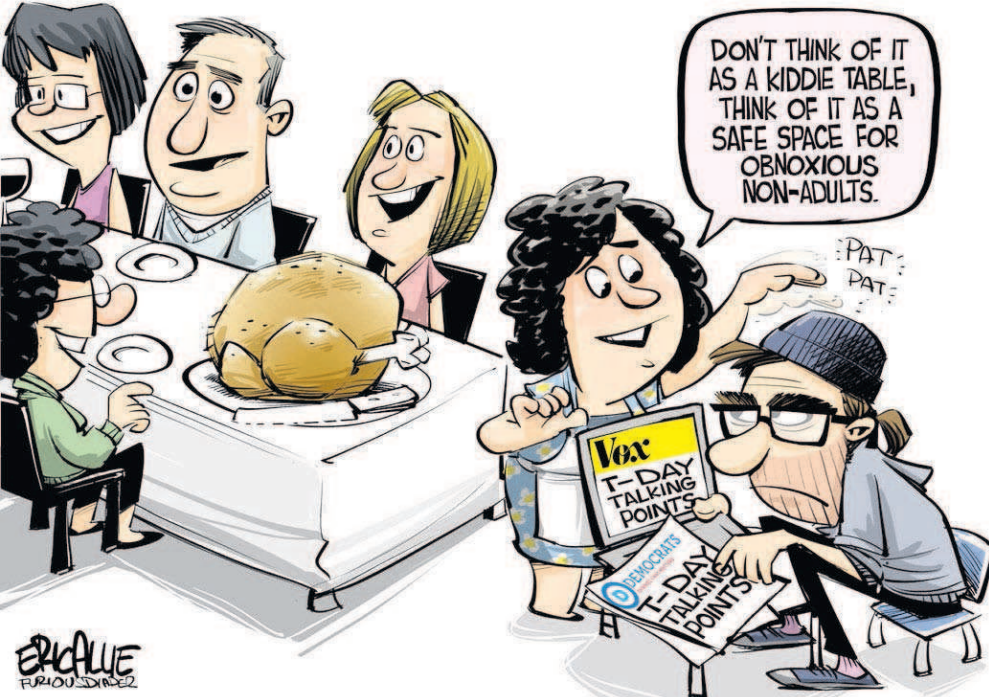
Expenses for 2015-16 are:

Personal — \$264,000;  
Materials & Services — \$293,830; Capital outlay — \$2,253,240; Debt Service — \$2,323,000.  
Total Expenses — \$5,150,000.

Taking out capital outlay and debt service means the general budget must subsidize approximately \$112,000. This is actually getting better than it was in previous years and could break even in two years. It could be profitable by the year 2019-2020.

We have several leases that have been signed recently with delayed payment schedules. Progress has been made and the trend is now in a positive direction. We have invested several million dollars over the last decade, but it looks as though we will start receiving a return on investment relatively soon. None of this takes into consideration deferred maintenance on infrastructure. In addition, there are the industrial buildings and hangars. It is going to take more time to address these issues, but we are making progress.

Al Plute is a Pendleton city councilor.



Trump: Meet a Syrian refugee named Heba

LESBOS, Greece — Ben Carson has compared Syrian refugees to rabid dogs. Donald Trump says that he would send them back.

Who are these Syrian refugee monsters who terrify U.S. politicians?

Meet Heba, a frightened, desperate 20-year-old woman who dreams of being an artist and has just made a perilous escape from territory controlled by the Islamic State in northern Syria.

She was detained two months ago with her sister by Islamic State enforcers because her sister's baby girl had too short a skirt — even though the baby was just 3 months old.

Heba says she and her sister argued that infant girls should have a little leeway in showing skin, and eventually the family was let off with a warning.

But Heba, strong-willed and self-confident, perhaps had been too outspoken or too sarcastic, and the police then cast a critical eye on her clothing. She was covering even her hands and face, but the authorities complained that her abaya cloak wasn't loose enough to turn her into a black puff that concealed her form. The police detained her for hours until her family bailed her out by paying \$10.

Heba was lucky, for other women have been flogged for violating clothing rules. Her sister saw a woman stoned to death after being accused of adultery.

"If I were wearing this," Heba told me, pointing down at the tight jeans she was wearing as we spoke, "my head would come off." She offered a hollow laugh.

I spoke to her after she left her mother and siblings behind in Syria and fled with a handful of relatives on a perilous journey to Turkey, then on a dangerously overcrowded boat to this



NICHOLAS KRISTOF  
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Greek island. I took Heba and her relatives to a dinner of pizza — Western food is banned by the Islamic State — and as we walked to the pizzeria she made a game of pointing out all the passers-by who would be decapitated by the Islamic State for improper dress, consorting with the opposite sex or sundry other offenses.

"It's a million percent difference," she exulted of life in the West. "Once you leave that area, you feel so good. Your whole body relaxes."

Americans are understandably afraid of terrorism after the Paris attacks, and that fear is channeled at Syrian refugees. So pandering politicians portray the refugees as menaces whom the vetting process is unable to screen out, and Americans by nearly 2 to 1 oppose President Barack Obama's plan to admit 10,000 Syrians over a year.

In fact, despite the impressions left by U.S. politicians and by the Islamic State, Syrians are in general more educated and middle class than many other people in the region, and the women more empowered. Heba's aspirations to be an artist aren't unusual.

Security concerns are legitimate, but the refugee screening is a rigorous two-year process. It would be far simpler for the Islamic State to infiltrate the U.S. by dispatching European passport holders (like those who carried out the Paris attacks) on tourist visas, or just use supporters who are already U.S. citizens. In person, Syrian refugees are less scary than scared.

Donald Trump, when you said of Syrian refugees, "If I win, they're going back," do you really intend to deport Heba back to the Islamic State to be flogged or decapitated?

Nicholas Kristof writes for the New York Times.

Can roads designed for cars be safe for bikes?

By TIM HAUSERMAN  
Writers on the Range

Pam Jahnke was riding her bike on a section of Highway 89 near Lake Tahoe, in an area where Caltrans, California's road and bridge department had just installed a new storm-drainage system.

"The minute my tire hit the drain, I was air-bound and smacked down on the pavement in the middle of the road," she says. The crash broke her collarbone and left the rest of her body so terribly bruised that for a while her skin resembled a garish sunset.

Truckee, California, resident Larry Sage was rolling swiftly down Donner Pass towards Donner Lake when he hit an unseen bump in the highway. It sent him flying off his bike, too, and his injuries were so extensive that he died in the hospital. He was just one of the more than 700 bicyclists who die in accidents on California roads each year.

Riders confront a series of challenges every time they get on their bikes. Many roads are built too narrow for both bikes and cars, and bike lanes on the edge of roads tend to get covered in debris or overgrown by vegetation, or else get blocked by unexpected construction signs. On some roads, traffic lights only work when cars reach the intersection; then they don't stay green long enough for riders to pass through before turning red. What's worse, storm drains are designed for the width of car tires, not bike tires, and what might appear like a small imperfection in a road to a car driver can prove a deadly obstruction to someone on a bike.

There are local government agencies that make a concerted effort to account for bikes in their

maintenance decisions, but too many others tend to focus only on cars. Truckee bicycle advocate Paco Lindsey says, "With Caltrans especially, it seems like the needs of cyclists are not ever addressed

until forced onto them. They talk about safety and inclusiveness of the cyclist, but seem to not practice it unless pressed."

Truckee Town Manager Dan Wilkins disagrees. "We are looking edge of pavement to edge of pavement. We recognize that the shoulder of the road is used by bikers." He says one problem caused by fast-moving trucks and cars is that they blow debris from the center of the road to the shoulder, where the bikers are.

Wilkins says he has changed the traffic lights in town to camera-video lights, which do a better job detecting a biker waiting for the signal. "From the town of Truckee's standpoint," he says, "our goal is to provide equal thought into our maintenance practices for vehicles, bikes and pedestrian travel."

It is undeniable that some cyclists need to learn better road manners. I ride a bike more than I drive a car, and from spending hours on the road I've come to understand the resentment and anger some drivers exhibit toward bikers. Too many bikers, for example, ride two abreast on busy narrow roads, and even when a driver is clearly trying to pass, they are slow to single-file. They also run through stop signs, though this is not a legal option except in Idaho. And sometimes bikers wander and fail

to stick to the right side. So it's not surprising that we annoy and alienate many of the folks who might be our natural allies.

The bummer is that biking serves everyone's interest. It lowers the consumption of fossil fuels, reduces car traffic, helps keep the air clean, and improves the physical condition of riders. There needs to be a concerted effort by bikers and biking organizations to make bad biking behavior unacceptable. It's going to be a continuing challenge to get government agencies to respond to our needs as long as too many bikers are perceived as inconsiderate jerks.

On the other hand, there needs to be an across-the-board government effort to provide more separation between bikes and vehicles, and a change in attitude from all levels of government toward bike riding. While many officials like Wilkins have begun taking bikes into account, other transportation officials haven't a clue what the biking experience is all about.

They need to ride the roads they're maintaining and find out what they're like from the ground up. If they rode over debris and broken glass, or had to swerve to avoid an overhanging tree limb, you bet they'd be ready to pass on instructions to maintenance crews to make sure roads are safer for riders.

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