

Quick takes
Voters will have say on pot

Glad to see they will leave it up to the voters. They have a right to say what is in their town.

— Anne Farley Dirkes

Democracy? I’m shocked but also happy. If it is banned anyway at least the voters decided, not some the good ol’ boys.

— Phil Stoaks

Nah, much better to push our young people and tourists to the bigger cities on the west side to spend their money.

— Molly Van Wagner-Petersen

Bronzes on Main Street

Why not include both Poker Jim and Chief Burke in one bronze? It would honor both men and the significance of descendants becoming chief.

— Janice Harper

I feel that Mark Leach, “Pendleton’s #1 Fan” should be considered as a candidate for a statue. Mark Leach has had a tremendous impact on thousands of local residents, both young and old alike. He continues to be an inspiring memory for many of us who grew up here in Pendleton.

— Arne Swanson

Let’s just build statues of all our pioneers and place them downtown so it will look busier after 5 p.m.! How about cardboard cutouts and then they could be replaced every month to boost someone else’s ego?

— Patti Lewis

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.

Don’t try to scam the sheriff

I received a very interesting phone call recently. A person by the name of Mary Elizabeth called me and said she was from Publisher’s Clearing House. She notified me that I won the first place prize of \$2.5 million.

She spoke with an accent in broken English, and was very difficult to understand. The number she called from was from Jamaica, which I didn’t initially catch at first. Mary Elizabeth asked me how I felt about winning that much money, and what this meant to my family.

She provided me with a claim number and followed that by asking me to call her manager to make arrangements for the delivery of the \$2.5 million. She said there was some urgency, and I needed to call her manager as soon as I hung up with her. She provided me with a phone number and told me to give her manager the claim number.

I attempted to call the number she provided twice, but it went directly to a very unprofessional-sounding voice mail. Moments later, Mary Elizabeth called back and said the number she provided was having difficulties receiving phone calls. She then provided me with another phone number.



TERRY ROWAN
Comment

I called the number and reached a man who called himself John Baker. He asked me to provide my claim number so he could look me up and verify my prize. I gave him the claim number and he started speaking when the phone went dead. He called me back from another number and said they were having trouble with the public line. He said he was now calling from a private line. John Baker told me I was the first place winner of the Publisher’s Clearing House sweepstakes. Initially, he said I won \$550,000 and a 2016 Mercedes Benz.

I asked how I would receive the winnings. He said the delivery manager, Mary Elizabeth, who I spoke to earlier, was 45 minutes to an hour away from me. He verified my address several times, which of course is the address to the sheriff’s office. He told me I would have to register my claim and show receipt to the delivery manager prior to claiming my prize. I asked him if my prize was coming via the PCH van, with the big check and balloons. He confirmed, and said my new Mercedes Benz was on a tow truck behind the van.

John Baker asked if I was married, divorced, employed or retired, nothing terribly

personal. He asked me if there was a Walmart nearby. I said there was one just ten minutes away. He said that was great, and he would stay on the line while I drove to Walmart so he could verify that I paid the \$499 registration fee. John Baker said it was urgent that I go to Walmart immediately and obtain the receipt for the registration fee. He said the delivery manager was nearby, but could not deliver my prizes unless I paid the registration fee and had the receipt.

Throughout the conversation, I asked John Baker where he was. He would initially only say that the delivery manager was nearby with my prize. Finally, he told me he was calling from the PCH claims office in Las Vegas, Nevada. I told him how much I enjoyed going to Las Vegas, and that I’ve went there during this time of the year for the National Finals Rodeo. I also informed him that sometimes I go to Las Vegas in the spring for the Western States Sheriff’s Association Conference, which is held there annually.

Knowing this to be a scam from the very beginning, I explained to Mr. Baker that I am a sheriff. I told him if he checked my address, or searched the Internet, he would have learned that the address belongs to the Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office, and that I am

the head of the organization.

I tried to get personal information from Mr. Baker and let him know that I would make every effort to locate him and his partners in crime to put a stop to their scamming. The phone went dead before he gave any information. I called his phone numbers but — surprise — no answer.

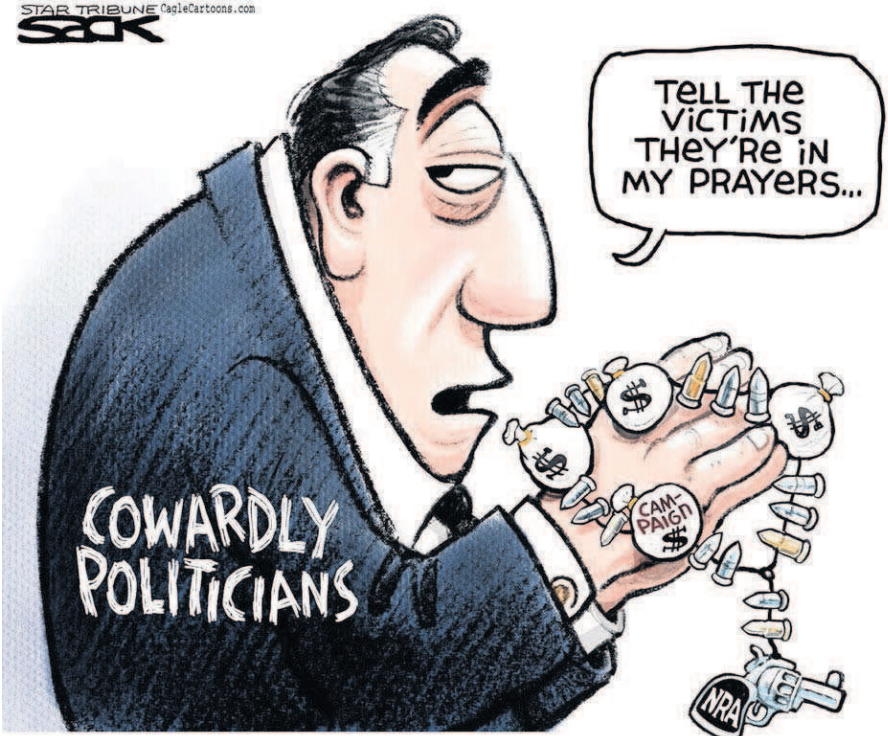
I want to let everyone know not to fall for this or any other type of scam.

If you are notified that you have won a “prize” and are asked to do anything, or pay anything to claim it: It is a scam. Please protect your personal information and do not provide the scammer with anything. If they claim to be from your bank and ask for your account number and Social Security number: it is a scam. Hang up and call your bank directly. If you receive a call from the IRS saying you owe taxes and if you refuse to pay they will come and arrest you: It is a scam. If it can happen to me, it can happen to anyone.

Please report any suspicious calls or activity to your local police. If this happens, you can also file a complaint with the FBI by going to www.ic3.gov, or the Oregon Attorney General’s Office at <http://www.doj.state.or.us>.

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Terry L. Rowan is the Umatilla County Sheriff



United Way doesn’t have funding to satisfy all requests

“If we don’t get it, we can’t give it” is my short answer when I get asked why United Way decreased funding to 10 local programs last year. Not receiving the money to distribute was the bottom line.



KRICKET NICHOLSON
Comment

Joe Zoske, board chairperson of United Way of Umatilla and Morrow Counties, sums it up: “Most of our local nonprofits are relatively small and operate on shoestring budgets, with a minimal staff or volunteer force. They don’t have the resources to do constant fundraisers in order to keep going, they just need to concentrate on providing quality services. That’s where United Way comes in — it’s our job to raise money for them.”

Despite a “down” campaign in 2014, United Way still distributed \$94,402 to local nonprofits in 2015. We took a lot of flak from folks who were disappointed that we couldn’t do more. We weren’t punishing any of the programs. Deciding where the limited funds would go was a long and tedious process, based on many factors.

As Zoske says: “It was a lot easier to make funding decisions when we had \$350,000 to distribute than when we had \$94,000.”

United Way of Umatilla and Morrow Counties’ sole purpose is to raise funds so local charities can continue to

provide much-needed services. Those funds are raised through an annual fundraising campaign each fall.

We ask once a year, but those donations work all year around.

When giving to United Way you can specify what kind of services you want to support (emergency assistance, successful kids or tools for independence). You can even specify the exact organization you want your donation to support.

Participating in the annual campaign is easy. You can send a check, or set up a monthly bill pay or sign up for the payroll deduction plan through your human resources department at work. Or you can go to our website, umatillamorrowunitedway.org, and click on ‘donate.’

It doesn’t matter how you give, it just matters that you give in order to keep these services available in your community. Please help us meet our \$300,000 goal so we can do more this year.

A list of organizations that received funding from last year’s United Way campaign can be obtained by sending an e-mail to united-wayumco@eoni.com with ‘Funding List’ in the subject line. Call 541-276-2661 for more information.

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Kricket Nicholson is the executive director of United Way of Umatilla and Morrow Counties

It doesn’t matter how you give, it just matters that you do.

Rodeo. Inclusion. Tolstoy on war.

In late 19th century America, if the railroad came through your town, you knew it would prosper. In the 20th century, air service led to prosperity.

In the 21st century, something a bit more elusive drives the prosperity of Western towns. At the dawn of the Internet, it became possible for a class of professionals to work virtually anywhere. That allowed talented men and women to live in places that formerly were inaccessible. Astoria, for instance.

The game right now is to lure young professionals. Because the usual urban magnets — such as Portland, Seattle and San Francisco — are increasingly congested and cost-prohibitive for housing, small rural towns have become a good option.

There are other nuances to luring new people to our small towns. Joe Cortright, the Portland economist, mentioned one of those during his November talk to Columbia Forum. What Cortright calls “permeability” seems to be a key factor for talented people. Thus towns with more open political and social culture seem to do better than ones with a reputation for exclusion.

I thought about this recently during a trip to two of our company’s newspapers in Eastern Oregon: in Hermiston and Pendleton. With a diverse and sometimes explosive



STEVE FORRESTER
Comment

economy, Hermiston has become the growth engine of Umatilla County. It has surpassed Pendleton in population.

As we approached Hermiston, our chief operating officer told me an anecdote about a woman who chose to leave Pendleton for Hermiston: She found Hermiston to be more welcoming.

There is no bigger institution in Pendleton than the Pendleton Round-Up. The Round-Up grandstands are of a magnitude you won’t find in more than a few small towns in the West. As the 20th century drew to a close, it became painfully obvious that the Round-Up’s governing board had not adapted to changing times. It was the preserve of white men. Women were missing, and so were Native Americans.

The Indian tribes of the Umatilla Reservation (Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla) have been a major ingredient of the Round-Up since its 1910 beginning.

Last weekend was a landmark in the Round-Up’s history. The board added a second woman and a Native American. In the words of Cortright, the Round-Up became a bit more permeable.

Pendleton is where Astoria was some 20 years ago, in that it is attracting professionals who can be anywhere. Like here, there is new blood. The next step is to involve the

new blood.

Barely a day passes that someone on the presidential campaign trail offers a new, simple solution to ISIS and its terrorism. Especially daunting are the suggestions that U.S. troops be dropped into Syria. Too many armchair generals lack an appreciation for what can go wrong and what already has been tried.

In *War and Peace*, Leo Tolstoy offers a wonderful digression on how mistakes are magnified during warfare. It comes just as Napoleon prepares to invade Moscow.

“A good player who loses at chess is genuinely convinced that he lost because he made a mistake, and he goes back to the opening gambits to find what the mistake was, forgetting that his every move throughout the whole game involved similar errors, no move being perfect. The mistake that he concentrates on attracts his attention only because it was exploited by his opponent. How much more complex than this is the game of war, which has to be played out within specific time-limits and where there is no question of one man’s will directing events through his control of soulless machinery, because everything develops from the interplay of infinitely varied and arbitrary twists and turns!”

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