

# EAST OREGONIAN

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**KATHRYN B. BROWN**  
Publisher

**DANIEL WATTENBURGER**  
Managing Editor

**JENNINE PERKINSON**  
Advertising Director

**TIM TRAINOR**  
Opinion Page Editor

## OUR VIEW

# Welcome to our new neighbors

Where are you from? And what brought you out here?

From the workplace to the church pew to the bar stool, those are the questions that begin many a conversation for new residents of Eastern Oregon.

We're a small corner of a sparsely populated state, and even though Oregon is at an all-time high of incoming residents, newcomers are a bit more rare out here where the economy is still playing post-recession catch-up.

But we do see a fair number of new faces, and that's a good thing. Newcomers are essential, because they arrive without the burden of conventional wisdom. They don't necessarily accept time-honored barriers to change. Of younger entrepreneurs it is often said that they were too young to know they couldn't do what they accomplished. In other words, it is all about imagination.

New blood is also important because it brings experience and real-life lessons from other places.

We may pride ourselves in doing things the Eastern Oregon way, but there is great value in learning from others' successes and failures. New neighbors add to not only our tax rolls, but to our culture and way of thinking. They begin shaping our community from the day they move in.

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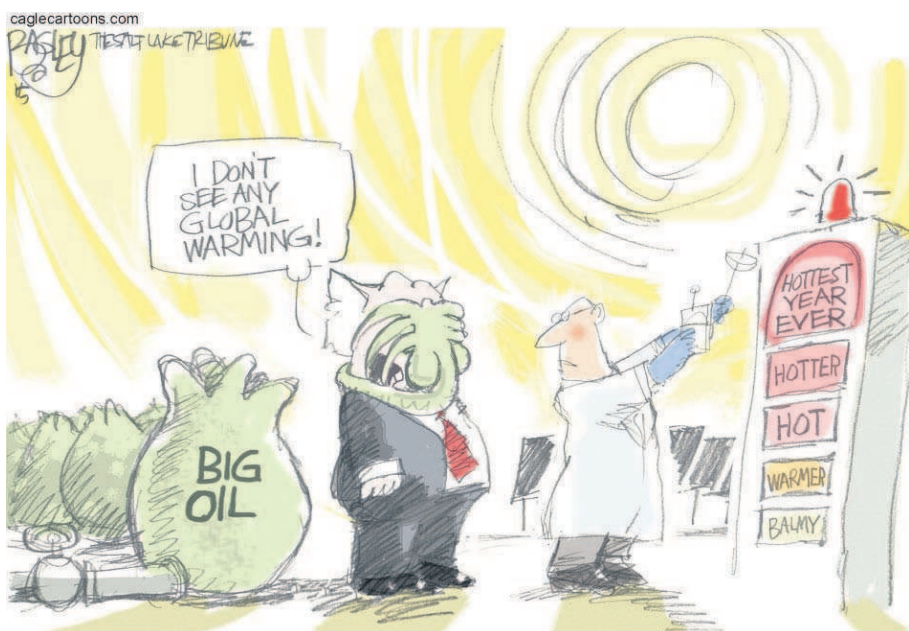
And that's a good thing, because if we're not busy growing we're going to stagnate and die. We like our corner of the world, and hope we can share what makes it special while

listening to input from outsiders.

As the year comes to a close and 2016 begins, we'll be featuring some of the area's newest residents in the "Our New Neighbors" series. We'd like to extend a warm welcome to anyone who decides to make Eastern Oregon their home and introduce them to our readers and friends.

If you know someone who moved to the area in 2015 that we should get to know, send their name and contact information to editor@eastoregonian.com.

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.



## OTHER VIEWS

# Terrorist hacking attacks are a serious threat

The Dallas Morning-News

We live in a scary world, as the attacks in Paris and San Bernardino, Calif., underscored recently. Now, imagine a scenario in which foreign actors can cripple our nation's critical infrastructure — electrical grids, data networks and air-traffic control, to name a few of the vulnerabilities — without exploding a single bomb.

The Associated Press reports that foreign hackers have wriggled their way into the networks controlling the U.S. power grid, obtaining engineering schematics and passwords. With a few keyboard strokes, they are capable of installing malicious code that can knock out electricity service to millions of American households.

The AP cited one case involving Iranian hackers, but remote breaches involving others have occurred about a dozen times in the last decade. The government's tendency is to keep these breaches secret. The effect is to lull Americans into a false sense of security but also to reduce public pressure to address this as the urgent threat it is.

Hackers have repeatedly proven their ability to penetrate secure government databases. In 2013, cyber criminals hacked into retail giant Target's credit card database and put the accounts of some 40 million customers at risk. A critical-infrastructure cyber attack, by contrast, could send the nation's electrical grid into a cascade of

shutdowns capable of blacking out entire cities or states.

The website of cyber security firm Norse (map.norsecorp.com), offers a live glimpse of the international hacking war that's already underway. In about a 20-minute span one recent afternoon, we watched as computer sites in Saskatoon, Canada, and Mersin, Turkey launched

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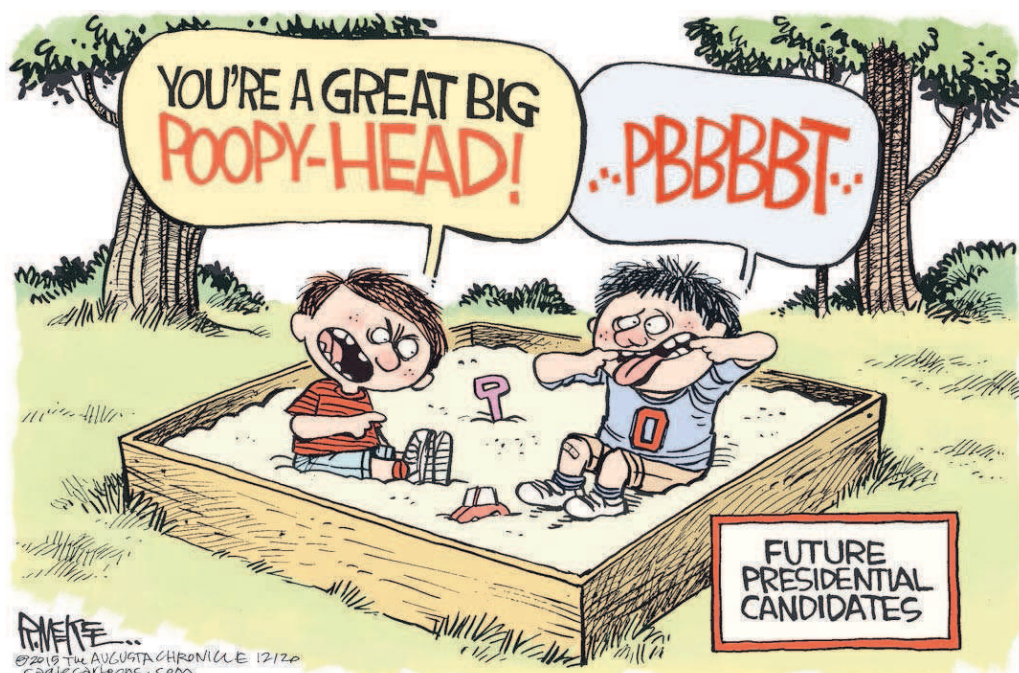
thousands of attacks on sites in California. More came from China. Still more from Russia.

Other sites were attacked in Washington State, New York, Dallas and Phoenix, to name a few. There's no way to tell what the goal is, but hackers normally are looking for weak spots to penetrate and exploit.

Experts say the U.S. power grid has been probed by hackers from various governments as well as the Islamic State. A Homeland Security Department report in 2012 noted 198 cyber attacks on critical U.S. infrastructure, with 41 percent targeting the energy sector.

What to do? Experts say the cost to secure the nation's power grid could reach \$7 billion by 2020. Customers ultimately will bear those costs, which must include establishing multiple firewalls across the country to ensure that an attack on one section of the grid doesn't prompt cascades of outages.

The government should come clean with the public about the magnitude of the threat instead of playing it down. We've seen what terrorists can do with guns and airplanes. The public needs to understand that this, too, is a serious and very real threat to our way of life.



## OTHER VIEWS

# A handful of Christmas miracles

Christmas, a time of hope in the murk of early winter, is the best occasion to bring some good news onstage. Here are some snippets of qualified joy:

- Jimmy Carter holds off cancer: He's 91. A few months ago, he was given a diagnosis of melanoma that had spread from his liver to his brain. But recently, the former president announced that his latest brain scan showed no sign of the disease. Carter is being treated with a drug that uses the immune system to battle cancer cells — another bright light, if the cost can be made affordable.

- No matter what you think of his presidency, Carter has been a force for global good since he left the White House, with energy that Jeb Bush should bottle.

- Alexander Hamilton lives, for now: This founding father is the rage on Broadway, with a smash musical. The man behind our financial system, the immigrant son of a single mother, Hamilton was killed in a duel. His handsome visage covers the \$10 bill.

- When Treasury Secretary Jack Lew announced that a woman would replace Hamilton, a wave of sensible outrage followed. Keep Hamilton on the 10, and bounce the slavery-defending, Indian-hating brute Andrew Jackson from the 20, putting a woman in his place. Earlier this month, Lew announced he would delay the \$10 redesign, giving time for the right thing to happen — for women, for Hamilton, for paper currency.

- Free Willies: SeaWorld said it would begin phasing out orca shows at its San Diego park. This is a good start for our fellow warm-blooded mammals. Orcas, any one of which is smarter than most of the Republican presidential candidates, should never be in circus-style shows, preening for food. Over the last six months, three of these whales have died at SeaWorld San Antonio. But with the California Coastal Commission banning the breeding of orcas in captivity, the days of enslavement for one of the world's most magnificent free-swimming creatures may be reaching an end.

- Literary fiction lives: You see a lot of Fox News-generated trash and formula fiction on the best-seller lists. American reading tastes have gone the way of the American diet. Yes, but. This year, "All the Light We Cannot See," Anthony Doerr's magical, World War II-era story of a blind French girl and a Hitler youth nerd continues to sell like tickets to "Hamilton." The prose is luminous, the characters unforgettable, the themes universal.

- This follows the great success of Donna Tartt's "The Goldfinch," 771 pages of delight. Both books won the Pulitzer Prize. A related Christmas miracle: Independent bookstores are resurgent, as e-book sales have leveled



TIMOTHY EGAN  
Comment

off. The obituary for the bound, printed word was written too early.

- Campus free-speech censors are on the run: Across the political spectrum, people have had enough of pampered college students who are afraid of words and ideas that offend them. Of late, a small but growing number of schools have eliminated the despicable speech limitation codes. And despite all the news generated by closed-minded kids with megaphones, the number of colleges with

restrictions on freedom of speech has fallen below 50 percent for the first time in years.

- "Education should not be intended to make people feel comfortable," President Barack Obama said the other day. "It is meant to make them think." Which leads to ...

- Obama finds his voice: Well, and then he lost it after the Paris attacks. Overall, the prez had a very strong year. His leadership was crucial in what could be breakthrough pacts to lessen climate change and keep Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. But I say "could be" because both agreements might still unravel. If they work, the world will be safer, and more livable.

- And it's a minor Christmas miracle that the U.S. economy continues to purr along, while those of Europe and China stumble. Over a 69-month streak of growth, the economy has added 13.7 million new jobs, while the unemployment rate has fallen to 5 percent. Bravo.

- Trump and Putin find each other: The bromance between two of the most odious, bullying, narcissistic tyrants has been building for some time. Now, they have professed their mutual affection for each other. The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, invades countries, stifles dissidents and has been accused of killing those who oppose him. For that, Donald Trump says he is worthy of admiration. Trump sneers at women, the disabled, blacks, Mexicans, Muslims, veterans and anyone who is unattractive. "He is a really brilliant and talented person," said Putin. The vulgarian and the war criminal, together at last.

- The American people: Had my doubts. Still do. I mean, climate change a hoax? Obama a Muslim? Rooting for the New England Patriots? But a Quinnipiac poll this week found that 50 percent of the nation's voters would be "embarrassed" to have Trump as their president. In this age of the rude and crude, a glimmer of decency. Good night to all. Sweet winter dreams. See you next year.

Timothy Egan worked for 18 years as a writer for The New York Times, first as the Pacific Northwest correspondent, then as a national enterprise reporter.

## YOUR VIEWS

### Timber for road closures

A new process is working its way throughout Eastern Oregon that pits locals against each other. It is the concept of "forest health vs. motorized access."

The model has been seen in the West before. Idahoans and Montanans have seen forests built to unsafe fuel loads with eager "conservationists" willing to plan projects that will relieve the burden of the excessive fuels, if only we are willing to destroy roads after the projects are completed. The work is done through service contracts that equate to lawn care services on our public lands. Companies bid on these contracts to implement prescriptions for treatment that are written by the Forest Service, along with road destruction.

Two examples playing out in Eastern Oregon that show this process are the Grant County Stewardship Contract: a massive, multi-million dollar, single-source contract to Iron Triangle that will treat vegetation, and restricts motorized access to thousands of acres of land; and the East Face Project between La Grande and Baker, which is planning 38 miles of road closures.

Both equate to nothing more than lawn care service contracts, except in this case, once mowing the lawn and weeding the flower garden are complete, they tear out your driveway so you cannot access them anymore.

Timber sales do not have to equate to road closures, and jobs for our families do not

have to mean loss of motorized access. Roads were built to harvest these lands, for them to stay the productive resources we were promised they would be when set aside in the early 1900s — not the multi-billion dollar drains they have become over the last 30-plus years under the failed leadership of the Forest Service, who no longer serve the people, but serve their own personal agendas.

I support vegetative treatments, I support logging/mill jobs and all the services that come with them, but I do not believe you have to destroy motorized access to have jobs or a healthy forest. I ask that if you don't support these restrictions, you become active in these projects to speak out against them.

John D. George  
Bates, Ore.

## 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.