

EAST OREGONIAN
Founded October 16, 1875

KATHRYN B. BROWN
Publisher
JENNINE PERKINSON
Advertising Director

DANIEL WATTENBURGER
Managing Editor
TIM TRAINOR
Opinion Page Editor

OUR VIEW

Who wants to be a billionaire?

Chances are good that you bought a ticket for tonight's Powerball. Chances are much better than you're going to lose.

But that's beside the point for now, right? You'd be crazy not to take the chance to become an overnight billionaire. Spending two bucks for a ticket is worth it, if only for the pleasing brain exercise of deciding what to do with all that money.

With the winnings you could buy the Playboy Mansion, on the market right now for a cool \$200 million. You could make Paul Allen a godfather offer for the Trail Blazers. You could buy Umatilla County — all the land and everything built on top of it. You could purchase your own Caribbean island, a yacht roughly the same size, and enough margaritas to sink the whole ship.

Or, you could do some actual good with it: Blow minds at your favorite charity. Pay off all your friends' mortgages. Pay the tuition for generations and generations of your family. You could even stock up on a lifetime supply of monocles — got to look the part when you become a billionaire.

But it's important to remember that you're not going to win the Powerball. You best not plan to win, nor risk any dollars you can't afford to lose.

The chances of winning the jackpot are roughly one in 292 million. And while that may look like playing the lottery this week is a decent gamble — the possible earnings outweigh the odds of winning them — it really isn't the case.

The \$1.5 billion is cut roughly in half if you take a lump sum payment. Oregon would take their taxes, the feds would take theirs. In the Beaver State, if you took

the lump sum payment, you'd probably come away with close to \$400 million. A life-changing haul, no doubt, but a mere slice of the \$1.5 billion advertised. In addition, according to the Associated Press, more than 75 percent of all number combinations will be purchased for Wednesday's drawing. And though the number combinations are not evenly split (lower numbers are covered with greater regularity, because people like to pick their birthdays, anniversaries, kids' birthdays, etc.), that means the chances are high that the pot will be split before taxes. If the jackpot is

divided even once, it would put the final payout below \$292 million.

But none of us play the lottery as a sound investment. It's mostly a chance to dream of a life of leisure and luxury, and we wouldn't dare dash that dream.

Yet tonight, right before the winning numbers are revealed, take a moment to remember about the lottery you have already won: You've been born! On top of that, you've been born in the richest country in human history. You've been born in a time of unfathomable wealth, entertainment opportunities and absence from unnecessary pain and suffering. You've been born in a world that includes sports, yachts, Playboy Magazine and microwaveable popcorn. You will live longer and healthier, on average, than almost all prior human beings. And best of all: You're alive right here, right now. You have the ability to do millions of different things today, and do them differently tomorrow.

The chances of being that lucky are much higher than 1 in 292 million. You've already hit the jackpot, and the winning ticket is right there in your hand. Celebrate!

The chances of winning the Powerball jackpot are 1 in 292 million. The payout could even be less than that.

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

Good news should have headlined 2016 paper

I am 85 years old and this is my first letter to a newspaper. Why do we have to start the New Year with the headlines of DULLS in 2015, when there was a story like the Hermiston High School band and all the awards that they won in San Diego that was on page three? Your choice of a headline made a statement to me of what was important in your eyes. That statement was that the noting of DUI stats was more important than the accomplishment of our youth.

Please think about giving the deserved credit and space to the band, the school, the teachers and the parents to encourage other to do well in their school activities. The choice of headlines that were used, especially on the first day of a new year, should have been a more positive and celebrated choice.

Mildred Baker
Boardman

issue within the communities of Pendleton, Mission and the surrounding area. Despite adequate funding to more than pay for the current batch of new statues, the Arts Commission has decided to fund only half the cost, and let the mayor continue to beg for additional grants. It kind of reminds you of those panhandlers that are actually pulling down \$50,000 a year and pleading poverty. Now that's a very effective fundraising technique. Evidently one unnamed foundation has fallen for the ploy with a pledge of \$10,000.

EOTEC: With its decision to partner up with city of Hermiston in this business venture, the county commissioners are now looking for a loophole in the state law to put the rest of the county on the hook for a loan to fully finance the project, as the amount poured into it so far by county taxpayers is not sufficient to fund it. Loopholes? Must be some political term.

Rick Rohde
Pendleton

Lack of returned ballots show lack of statue interest

Local newsworthy news: The CTUIR continues to lead the way in energy development. The Tribes' wind power effort is being followed up with a new solar energy project partially funded by the Blue Sky contributions of the city of Pendleton.

Meanwhile our expert planner, Evan MacKenzie, is suggesting a reduction in our use of clean burning natural gas as a way of reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. As a result, no natural gas will be made available to the new Sargent City housing development near Olney. An alternative source of electrical power, a bicycle-powered generator in every back yard, is a possible solution.

Statue update: The selection of the new statues and their location have been determined with the massive turnout at the ballot box. Approximately 250 ballots were counted, which confirms the intense interest placed on this important

EOTEC has gone ahead, left fair and rodeo behind

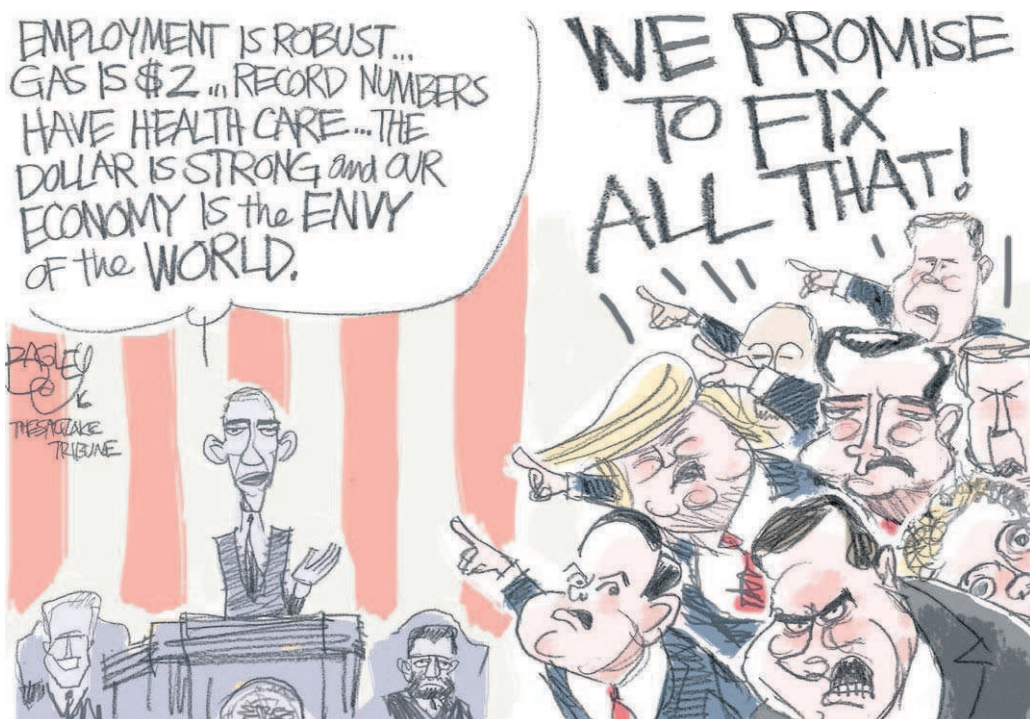
Initially, the Umatilla County Fair/rodeo grounds were job number one for relocation and I understand the reasons.

Then, the "grand scheme" became EOTEC. Now the millions of dollars are gone and the fair/rodeo facilities are with "tin cup" in hand wanting to build the required structures for fair/rodeo.

One example stands out. Vice chairman Dan Dorran stated Oct. 26, 2015, he "thought the barns were just that, barns." Well, once codes and requirements were figured in the \$14 square foot construction cost became \$24 a square foot. And that's just the roof, no walls.

However, the "trade center" is close to completion. I could expound from here, but just ponder the competency of our local leadership.

Rod Triplett
Hermiston



OTHER VIEWS

The brutalism of Ted Cruz

In 1997, Michael Wayne Haley was arrested after stealing a calculator from Wal-Mart. This was a crime that merited a maximum two-year prison term. But prosecutors incorrectly applied a habitual offender law. Neither the judge nor the defense lawyer caught the error and Haley was sentenced to 16 years.

Eventually, the mistake came to light and Haley tried to fix it. Ted Cruz was solicitor general of Texas at the time. Instead of just letting Haley go for time served, Cruz took the case to the Supreme Court to keep Haley in prison for the full 16 years.

Some justices were skeptical. "Is there some rule that you can't confess error in your state?" Justice Anthony Kennedy asked. The court system did finally let Haley out of prison, after six years.

The case reveals something interesting about Cruz's character. He is now running strongly among evangelical voters, especially in Iowa. But in his career and public presentation Cruz is a stranger to most of what would generally be considered the Christian virtues: humility, mercy, compassion and grace. Cruz's behavior in the Haley case is almost the dictionary definition of pharisaism: an overzealous application of the letter of the law in a way that violates the spirit of the law, as well as fairness and mercy.

Traditionally, candidates who have attracted strong evangelical support have in part emphasized the need to lend a helping hand to the economically stressed and the least fortunate among us. Such candidates include George W. Bush, Mike Huckabee and Rick Santorum.

But Cruz's speeches are marked by what you might call pagan brutalism. There is not a hint of compassion, gentleness and mercy. Instead, his speeches are marked by a long list of enemies, and vows to crush, shred, destroy, bomb them. When he is speaking in a church the contrast between the setting and the emotional tone he sets is jarring.

Cruz lays down an atmosphere of apocalyptic fear. America is heading off "the cliff to oblivion." After one Democratic debate he said, "We're seeing our freedoms taken away every day, and last night was an audition for who would wear the jackboot most vigorously."

As Republican strategist Curt Anderson observed in Politico, there's no variation in Cruz's rhetorical tone. As is the wont of inauthentic speakers, everything is described as a maximum existential threat.

The fact is this apocalyptic diagnosis is ridiculous. The Obama administration has done things people like me strongly disagree with. But America is in better economic shape than any other major nation on earth. Crime is down. Abortion rates are down. Fourteen



DAVID BROOKS
Comment

million new jobs have been created in five years.

President Barack Obama has championed a liberal agenda, but he hasn't made the country unrecognizable. In 2008, federal spending accounted for about 20.3 percent of gross domestic product. In 2015, it accounted for about 20.9 percent.

But Cruz manufactures an atmosphere of menace in which there is no room for compassion, for

moderation, for anything but dismantling and counterattack. And that is what he offers. Cruz's programmatic agenda, to the extent that it exists in his speeches, is to destroy things: destroy the IRS, crush the "jackals" of the EPA, end funding for Planned Parenthood, reverse Obama's executive orders, make the desert glow in Syria, destroy the Iran nuclear accord.

Some of these positions I agree with, but the lack of any positive emphasis, any hint of reform conservatism, any aid for the working class, or even any humane gesture toward cooperation is striking.

Cruz sows bitterness, influences his followers to lose all sense of proportion, and teaches them to answer hate with hate.

Cruz didn't come up with this hard, combative and gladiatorial campaign approach in isolation. He's always demonstrated a tendency to bend his position — whether immigration or trade — to what suits him politically. This approach works because in the wake of the Obergefell v. Hodges court decision on same-sex marriage, many

evangelicals feel they are being turned into pariahs in their own nation.

Cruz exploits and exaggerates that fear. But he reacts to Obergefell in exactly the alienating and combative manner that is destined to further marginalize evangelicals, that is guaranteed to bring out fear-driven reactions and not the movement's highest ideals.

The best conservatism balances support for free markets with a Judeo-Christian spirit of charity, compassion and solidarity. Cruz replaces this spirit with spartan belligerence. He sows bitterness, influences his followers to lose all sense of proportion and teaches them to answer hate with hate. This Trump-Cruz conservatism looks more like tribal, blood and soil European conservatism than the pluralistic American kind.

Evangelicals and other conservatives have had their best influence on American politics when they have proceeded in a spirit of personalism — when they have answered hostility with service and emphasized the infinite dignity of each person. They have won elections as happy and hopeful warriors. Cruz's brutal, fear-driven, apocalypse-based approach is the antithesis of that.

David Brooks became a New York Times Op-Ed columnist in 2003.



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.