

## Quick takes

### Solar power subsidy

Hey Salem, in the winter we only get 9 hours of sunlight, at a poor angle for solar production, and we have no way to store the energy produced. Also we have several hydroelectric dams that are capable of providing all of our energy needs. Stop wasting our tax money!

— Logan Wood

We need a mix of sources for stability... And to encourage SMALL development and not just high impact development. Also improves stability.

— Jill Johnson

But, but, but what about my windmills?

— Chris DeFries

### What's that smell?

We live in eastern Oregon, come on people buck up. That's what happens when air stagnants.

— Alice Taylor

This smells like a job for Peter Walters

— David Liberty

*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.*

## YOUR VIEWS

### In support of John Turner

This letter is in reference to John Turner, who has filed for mayor in the city of Pendleton. I want to express my full support of Mr. Turner for this position.

Many have asked me to be sure that we find the right candidate to replace me as my term expires at the end of 2016. John is the right person at the right time. The transition can be seamless and positive for our community. John's leadership abilities are endless and now that he is retired, he can really provide the time and energy to move Pendleton forward.

Pendleton has much going on right now, and John is already involved in much of it. His experience as president of [Blue Mountain Community College] fits in well. He did a great job up there and will do the same for the city. I was on the Board of Education for the college when we hired John and know him very well. It was clearly a great decision.

As a community, please let us all support John to serve in this very important role.

**Phillip W. Houk, mayor  
City of Pendleton**

As a long-time observer of Pendleton city government, it's refreshing when a candidate comes along who is extremely qualified to run for office.

John Turner knows the city, how it works, and has many strategic ideas about how it can be more efficient, and responsive to citizens. He has administrative and policy development experience and knows how to communicate a message.

Mr. Turner can step into the job without any on the job training and begin to rebuild trust and confidence among our citizens for city actions.

Let's continue the leadership of mayors Houk, Ramig and McLaughlin with the election of John Turner.

**John Brenne  
Pendleton**

Having known John Turner for 12 years, we have come to appreciate his people skills and leadership abilities. These were honed after serving his country and community for a combined 38 years as a Marine officer and BMCC president as well as serving on many local and regional boards. He is a problem solver by caring about people, being a good listener, analyst, and consensus builder.

We both feel John would work well with our city council, city staff, community and business leaders as mayor to guide Pendleton going forward.

**Dr. Jake and Cathy Cambier  
Pendleton**

He turned BMCC around. He can do it for the city of Pendleton. Thanks, John!

**Bob and MaryAlice Ridgway  
Pendleton**

We support John Turner on his decision to run for the mayor of Pendleton. John recently retired as the president of BMCC. He has remained active in the community serving on the Rotary board and the Port of Umatilla Commission. John has great organizational and leadership skills with the ability to develop consensus among diverse groups of people. These are qualities we need in our next mayor.

We have known John and his wife, Gail, for over 10 years, and we appreciate John's willingness to further serve our community as mayor.

**Robert and Carol Blanc  
Pendleton**

John Turner will make a great mayor. John has shown over the years that he is a born leader. I have known John as BMCC's president, fellow Rotary member and past president and numerous board positions. John has always been a forward thinker and a promoter of Pendleton. It will be a privilege working with him as mayor when he is elected.

**Neil Brown, city council president  
Pendleton**

# A new, more dangerous Sagebrush Rebellion

By JONATHAN THOMPSON  
Writers on the Range

At first, as the armed occupation in Oregon's High Desert unfolded in January, it looked like a widescreen version of the flare-ups we've seen in the West ever since the Sagebrush Rebellion erupted in the 1970s. Recall the so-called "oppressed ranchers," their anti-federal rhetoric and the sight of cowboy-hatted heroes riding to their rescue.

But a closer look, and the episode's violent culmination, reveal a bigger and more sinister problem than your run-of-the-mill local-control scuffle.

For starters, precious few locals or even ranchers were among the couple of dozen occupiers of Oregon's Malheur Wildlife Refuge. The lead occupier, Ammon Bundy, may look the part, but he actually owns a truck-fleet maintenance business in Phoenix.

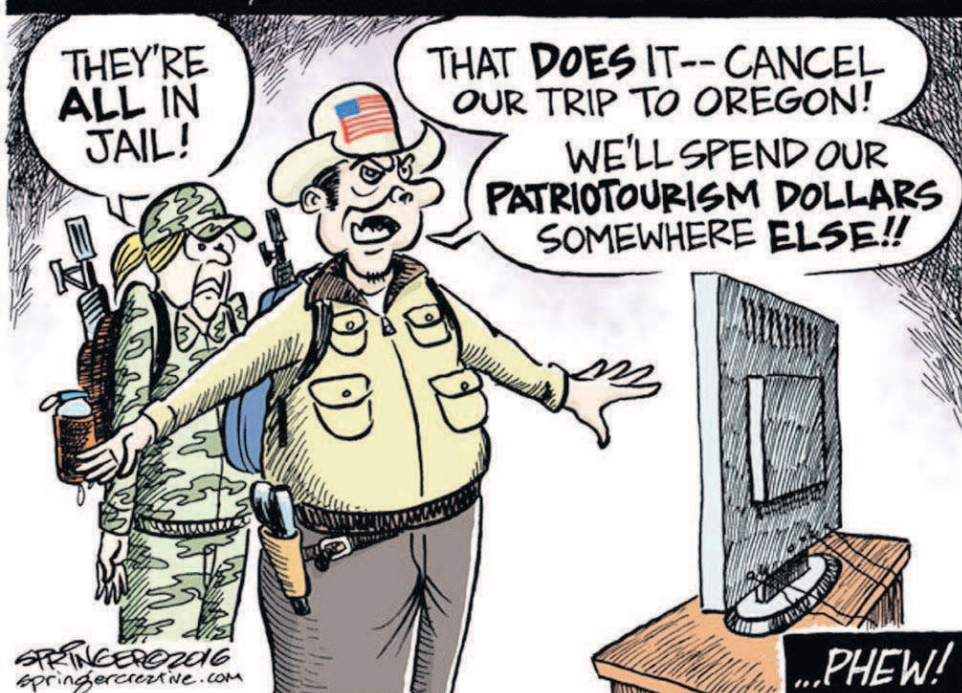
At one of his press conferences, Bundy said that he wasn't just sticking up for "the ranchers, the loggers and the farmers," but also for the "auto industry, the health-care industry and financial advisors." That remark, which ignored the federal largesse those industries receive, revealed the crusade's true scope.

Whereas the Sagebrush Rebellion of old was driven largely by pragmatic, grassroots concerns, today's version is purely ideological — a nationwide confluence of right-wing and libertarian extremists. Many of them have little interest in grazing allotments, mining laws or the Wilderness Act. It's what these things symbolize that matters: A tyrannical federal government that activists can denounce, defy and perhaps even engage in battle. This movement, which has grown increasingly virulent since President Barack Obama's election, has created a stew of ideologically similar groups, ready to coalesce around each other when necessary.

The groups are bound together by libertarian-tinged ideology, disdain if not hatred for Obama, and by fear that the government will take away their guns, their liberty, their money, their land, their Confederate flags, and, yes, Christmas.

"What we're seeing in the West is a number of extremist streams coming together to form a backdrop that is complicated and frankly confusing," says Ryan Lenz of the Southern Poverty Law Center. The confluence occurred at incidents like the Bundy Ranch standoff in Nevada, where members from all of these different movements — elected officials included — stood shoulder to shoulder to defend the "rights" of what they portrayed as a persecuted rancher.

## MEANWHILE, ELSEWHERE ACROSS THE COUNTRY...



It happened again at Malheur, though less harmoniously. While some politicians questioned the methods used by the occupiers, the more hardcore ones, such as Nevada Assemblywoman Michele Fiore, continued to stand by the Bundys and further inflame the situation with incendiary rhetoric aimed at the federal land-management agencies. So-called think tanks like the American Lands Council, which advocates local control of publicly owned land, simultaneously tried to distance itself from the occupiers and use their actions to further its own agenda.

Meanwhile, presidential candidate Ted Cruz and libertarian Rand Paul have embraced the American Lands Council's and the occupiers' shared ideology. The earlier Sagebrush Rebellion of the likes of uranium miner Cal Black, or Nevada rancher Wayne Hage, has been co-opted by a far larger right-wing movement.

It's not entirely clear why all of these folks, many of them urban, have taken up a rural Western cause. It might be because they actually have some legitimate gripes regarding land-use regulations, or more likely, ranchers and loggers better fit the populist image they're trying to project. It's not so easy to fight against gun control when the laws are laxer than ever, or revolt against the taxman when taxes on the rich are far lower than they were in the 1950s.

Perhaps it's partly a matter of expedience: The dire economic straits in

which many rural, extractive industry-reliant counties have found themselves can make them ripe for insurgencies of the Bundy sort. Then there are the cowboy hats, which give a noble look to even those fighting for the causes of capitalist billionaires.

Past rebellions weren't entirely nonviolent. Land was bulldozed, federal officials were threatened and Forest Service facilities bombed. Now, however, these new rebels have the power of so-called militiamen and their arsenals behind them. In extreme cases, the local "constitutional sheriff" has even joined with those who defy federal laws and regulations. It's all combined to create a potentially dangerous situation.

Last fall I talked to Sean Thomas, a Forest Service law enforcement officer stationed in southern Oregon, and the vice president of the National Federation of Federal Employees Local 5300. Thomas, who has faced the belligerence of a "constitutional" sheriff before, believes we stand at a pivotal moment.

"The feeling we all have out here in the West," he told me, months before the explosive events at Malheur, "is that this is a pressure cooker, and something's about to blow."

Jonathan Thompson is a contributor to *Writers on the Range*, an opinion service of *High Country News*. He is a senior editor of the magazine based in Durango, Colorado.

# Rules on the Hebert homestead

In the 1940s, Vashon Island, lying between Seattle and Tacoma, was a slow 30-minute crossing from Fauntleroy dock in West Seattle on the old 1927 ferry boat, MV Chetzemoka.

And during the years 1944 to 1957 anyone driving home from Boeing's toward Vashon town passed a large, singular sign out by the highway. The sign simply read "HEBERT." Odd, really. The big mailbox in fading paint read "Goodwill Farm," but the sign glowing in your headlights was our family's name. Because to the citizens of Vashon Island that sign guaranteed that my parents stood behind the important community work that went on there.

Starting from an early 20th century manor with racing stables, the Goodwill Farm had been established in the late 1920s as a home for unemployed men, often from Seattle's skid road, who operated it as a small, utopian, self-reliant colony through the Depression. My parents maintained this spirit.

These men were not winos and drunks, but working men, some beat up by the world. So I grew up with Alaska sourdoughs, Norwegian bachelor farmers, the miners, loggers, and switchmen who built western America. Many of the men were from the 1930s were still there when we bought it from the Goodwills in 1944 for \$10,000. This for a business, 30 men and 50 acres, just 30 minutes from Seattle.

Like a small village, the 25-room Big House was surrounded by the 15 out-buildings, several with rooms, and two cabins, and a large farm that was worked in large part by the men who lived there. A truly self-sufficient place with big hogs, two draft horses (the farm was horse-operated), 100 rabbits that I took care of, many fruit trees, Vashon's only public stud bull — the famous Boeing



**TOM  
HEBERT  
Comment**

Bull-milk cows grazing in the front yard, saddle horses, 500 chickens, a huge vegetable garden, and goats, goats, goats. We originally produced most of the food that was served

there until little-by-little the county and state regulations forced us to use processed food entirely except for the many dozens of half-gallon jars of fresh fruit canned each summer. The men were called to meals by a big train bell that the neighborhood set their clocks by.

They came to Hebert's after preliminary screening by King County's welfare department. The men would arrive from Seattle on the afternoon "stage" with a note from the caseworker attesting to their sobriety and good morals with their possessions in a valise or just a bundle.

Mother's given name was Elene. Her childhood nickname was Lady Nell. But hardly anyone called her Nell, it was always Mrs. Hebert. And let me emphasize that Mrs. Hebert ran the place, ran it with an American mix of Victorian uprightness and rectitude laced up tight to a late frontier sense of open house and town-building. No one took Mother lightly, but the door was always open and the light always on. She, with my father, created for Vashon an institution that, in spirit and values, remains in the publicly owned comprehensive Vashon Community Care institution that now occupies the same land.

As men grew older they moved from outside into the Big House with the other men. And by 1953 we finished the transition from boarding house to nursing home. This because my parents wouldn't abandon

these men to inferior care. Indeed, they stayed in touch with many of them even after we sold and moved.

A kind of settlement house, I thrived there from 1944 until I left to Linfield College in 1956. Fifty acres of barns, old buildings, fields and pastures, a horse named Billy, and with huge old-growth cedars in that canyon back there where I could trap a 16-18" Coho salmon with my bare hands in Shinglemill creek. And a crew of old men who watched me grow up. Some even spoke to and of me in the traditional way, as young "Master Tom."

### Mrs. Hebert's Rules:

A life-long public servant, I learned much about the practicality of rules and sometimes uncomfortable standards:

- I once asked mother the motto of "Hebert's." She replied instantly, "No colds, no sores, good food and a warm room."
- My mother said that a nursing home operator's key responsibility is "instructing nursing aids and setting a constant example."
- Mother's key to hiring her fine nurses and aids: "Do they like people?"
- At a nursing home conference, a doctor said, "Mrs. Hebert is right: A patient's feelings are reflected in their health."
- She once said that to "keep a healthy person, keep them in the stream of life. Patients need all the life they can get."
- Mother was proud that "all our men looked good when they got dressed up." She bought them clothes for that purpose.
- Mother always said that Hebert's nursing home had to truly be a home.
- In the eighth grade I was doing a paper on the "Golden Years." I had found a quote: "Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be." Mother snorted. "That's nonsense. Being old is just the same, except more so."

What people were like during their youth was easy to see. She also said that the people who did best in their old age were those who actively read.

• Mother also once said that the bachelor men were more content than the once-married. That innocent remark stuck to me like glue. I'm still a bachelor.

A special note on bedsores: Mother would always proudly say, "We've never had a bed sore or staph infection." She said that if you wanted to really know what kind of care a nursing home gave, all you had to do was "strip the bedding and roll the patient over." The key to healthy skin is, as she put it, "Rub, rub, rub."

### My father's rules:

First, "We eat what the men eat."

Second, "There will be no meanness here." And my mother would fire a staff person who showed any meanness or negligence, even once. There were no second chances. As I said, uncomfortable.

Third: If one of our residents had done but one good or interesting thing in their life, they had his attention. It's been my rule also.

And when a man died he was "buried from the house," with the funerals held in our living room. At the cemetery Lundberg, always a pallbearer, would, inevitably, forget to take his hat off and dad would loudly order, "Lundberg, take off your hat!" And I would giggle.

But mostly Hebert's was a place of great life and lots of laughter. Dozens of island women worked there as nurses, cooks, aides, and friends. They worked hard with our parents to make it the treasured place it was and remains.

Tom Hebert is a writer and public policy consultant living on the Umatilla Indian Reservation outside Pendleton, Oregon.