

**EAST OREGONIAN**  
Founded October 16, 1875

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**OUR VIEW**

**Why we endorse**

It's strange in this day and age, when everyone has an opinion and everyone else is going to hear about it, that newspapers are rethinking the endorsement.

Editorial opinion was the primary driver of many of the first newspapers, when people of means sought to sway the public toward their own interests through the power of the press. That became big business in the U.S. as citizens became more literate.

Then the humanitarian journalist was born, and they sought to look out for the common man and the taxpayer instead of corporate interests. And they had the perfect platform — the only means of daily news consumption and an industry in full bloom.

But as the news options have become more varied, the newspaper business has withered. And in an attempt to appeal to a wider range of readers, many newspapers have toned down or eliminated the editorial page, and specifically their endorsements of candidates and measures come election season.

Those endorsements can be contentious. Almost every election season we hear from someone who so heartily disagrees with our recommendation that they cancel their subscription.

And they can be especially fraught in local elections, when we're not arguing about dense economic policy or tax brackets. We're talking about local people

who we see on a regular basis in our jobs and on our sidewalks.

Yet we feel that we can offer some helpful information to voters. We have the opportunity to discuss political issues with all of the candidates running in local elections.

This year is the first time we have included audio recording of those interviews, which will be published at eastoregonian.com/podcasts and on iTunes by searching East Oregonian. Some are published already.

We also speak to people on both sides of local bond and levy proposals, from school projects in Milton-Freewater, Athena-Weston and Echo, to fire district proposals in Hermiston and Stanfield.

Federal and state representatives, county commissioners and the sheriff receive a healthy salary from taxpayers, so we hold them to higher standards. City councilors and mayors receive a pittance in return for the thankless tasks they take on.

Yet we know those jobs are important too. And those running for them require a critical eye to their qualifications and their policies.

Our endorsements will run over the next two weeks on this page and will be peppered with discussions about candidates in the May elections, a primary election for some partisan races, a binding general election for others.

Your vote is powerful in local elections. We're not trying influence it as much as we're trying to empower it.

**Your vote is powerful in local elections. Our attempt is not to influence it as much as we're trying to empower it.**

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**

**Wilderness areas should remain free of bicycles**

In reply to the *Bend Bulletin's* "Other Views" editorial entitled "End the ban on bikes in wilderness areas," I would like to point out that The Wilderness Act specifically states under the prohibition of certain uses section "there shall be no other form of mechanical transportation."

Mountain bikers are already allowed on other federal, state and private lands; they should not be allowed in wilderness areas. The idea of mountain bikes has already been considered and debated.

In 1964, after eight years of discussions and compromises, the United States House of Representatives and Senate unanimously passed The Wilderness Act that offers outstanding outdoor recreation, watershed protection, fish and wildlife habitat, educational, scientific and historic value in a sanctuary of quiet, far from mechanical contrivances such as mountain bikes.

The long history of this vital legislation must not be violated.

**Marilyn Cripe  
Pilot Rock**

**Primmer has experience, dedication for council seat**

I am excited to see a great guy like Dale Primmer running for city council. I first met Primmer on a family camping trip about eight years ago.

I didn't know him then, but my first impression was that he was a bright, informed guy with a good sense of humor. I assumed he was successful at whatever it was he did and as I got to know him and his family better, I learned my assumptions were correct.

Primmer brings an energetic combination of heart and mind that would make him an exceptional city council member.

He has many things that make him

a great choice, including financial job experience, proven dedication to this community, and a knowledge of the challenges and opportunities facing Pendleton.

Please join me and my family in supporting Dale in his run for city council Ward 3.

**Genna Banica  
Pendleton**

**What does Pendleton council have to hide?**

I just finished reading an article in the *East Oregonian* about a communication person for Pendleton, and that the city manager thinks that the city council should not be able to respond to any criticisms.

I would deduce that someone is afraid of truth. If the city has money for that they have money to fix streets.

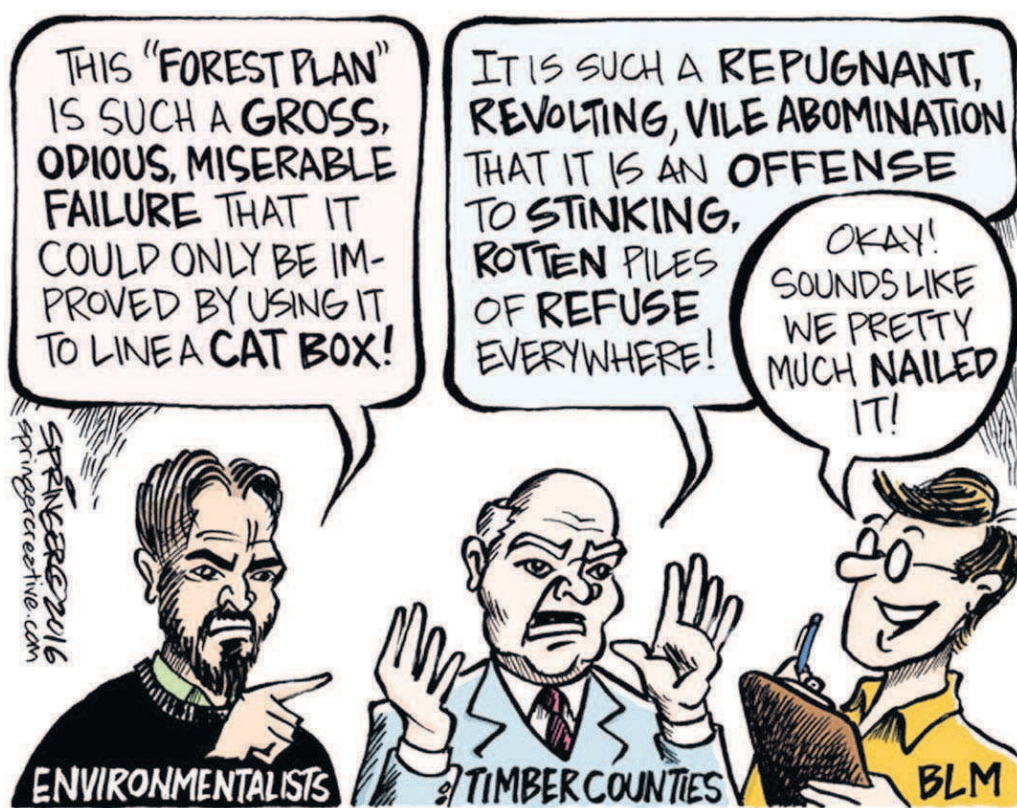
Al Plute has every right to voice his opinion. I may not agree with him, however, if he wants to defend a position and have his voice heard in the newspaper he certainly has that right. More and more government people believe they are above the people, that they know better how we should live and breathe, but they do not have to follow the rules that they made for us.

If I want to make a fool of myself I have that right. If government wants to make a jester of themselves they can and then pay the consequences.

I wonder, what is our city afraid of? What the heck is all government afraid of? Could it be the people? I suppose so — they might lose the power. They're not there for power, they are there for you. Remember it's your money not theirs, and your vote.

They are constitutionally bound to represent the majority, not their own special interests or other special interest.

**Roesch Kishpaugh  
Pendleton**



**OTHER VIEWS**

**What is inspiration?**

For decades, Anders Ericsson has reminded us of the value of hard work. The Florida State psychologist did the research that led to the so-called 10,000-hour rule. In his informative new book, "Peak," he and co-author Robert Pool downplay the importance of native-born genius (even in people like Mozart) and emphasize the importance of deliberate practice — painstaking exercises to perfect some skill.

Anybody who has observed excellence knows that Ericsson is basically right. Dogged work is the prerequisite of success. Yet there are some moments — after much steady work and after the technical skills have been mastered — when the mind and spirit take flight. We call these moments of inspiration. They kind of steal upon you, longed for and unexpected.

Inspiration is a much-used, domesticated, amorphous and secular word for what is actually a revolutionary, countercultural and spiritual phenomenon. But what exactly is inspiration? What are we talking about when we use that term?

Well, moments of inspiration don't quite make sense by normal logic. They feel transcendent, uncontrollable and irresistible. When one is inspired, time disappears or alters its pace. The senses are amplified. There may be goose bumps or shivers down the spine, or a sense of being overawed by some beauty.

Inspiration is always more active than mere appreciation. There's a thrilling feeling of elevation, a burst of energy, an awareness of enlarged possibilities. The person in the grip of inspiration has received, as if by magic, some new perception, some holistic understanding, along with the feeling that she is capable of more than she thought.

Vladimir Nabokov believed that inspiration comes in phases. First, he wrote, there's the "prefatory glow," the feeling of "ticky well-being" that banishes all awareness of physical discomfort. The feeling does not yield its secret just yet, but a window has been opened and some wind has blown in.

Then, a few days later, Nabokov continued, the writer "forefeels what he is going to tell." There's an instant vision, the lightning bolt of inspiration, that turns into rapid speech, and a "tumble of merging words" that form the nucleus of a work that will grow from it over the ensuing months or years.

Inspired work stands apart from normal life. In the first place it's not about self-interest as normally understood. It's not driven by a desire for money or grades or status. The inspired person is driven intrinsically by the work itself. The work takes hold of a person.



**DAVID BROOKS**  
Comment

Inspiration is not earned. Your investment of time and effort prepares you for inspiration, but inspiration is a gift that goes beyond anything you could have deserved.

Inspiration is not something you can control. People who are inspired have lost some agency. They often feel that something is working through them, some power greater than themselves. The Greeks said it was the Muses. Believers might say it is God or the Holy Spirit. Others might say it is something mysterious bursting forth deep in the unconscious, a new way of seeing.

Inspiration does not happen to autonomous individuals. It's a beautiful contagion that passes through individuals.

The word itself comes from the Latin *inspirare*, meaning "to breathe into." One inspiring achievement — say, the space program — has a tendency to raise the sense of possibility in others — say, a little boy who dreams of being an astronomer.

Then the one who is inspired performs his own feats and inspires others, and so on down the line.

Inspiration is not permanent and solid. It's powerful but ephemeral, which is why so many people compare it to a gust of wind. And when it is gone people long for its return.

The poet Christian Wiman wrote that inspiration is "intrusive, transcendent, transformative, but also evanescent and, all too often, anomalous. A poem can leave its maker at once more deeply seized by existence and, in a profound way, alienated from it, for as the act of making ends, as the world that seemed to overbrim its boundaries becomes, once more, merely the world, it can be very difficult to retain any faith at all in that original moment of inspiration. That memory of that momentary blaze, in fact, and the art that issued from it, can become a kind of reproach to the fireless life in which you find yourself most of the time."

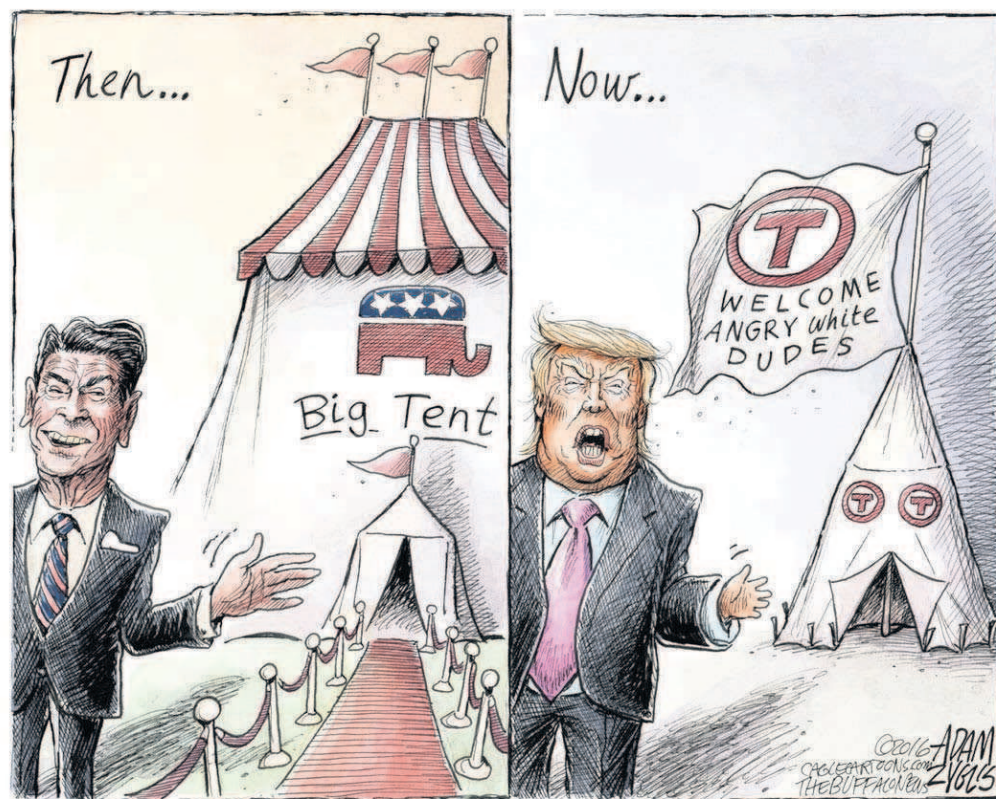
Most important, inspiration demands a certain posture, the sort of posture people feel when they are overawed by something large and mysterious.

They are both humbled and self-confident, surrendering and also powerful. When people are inspired they are willing to take a daring lark toward something truly great. They're brave enough to embrace the craggy fierceness of the truth and to try to express it in some new way.

Yes, hard work is really important for achievement. But life is more mysterious than just that.

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

**Inspiration is powerful but ephemeral.**



**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.

**Be heard! Submit your own letter to the editor**