

**EAST OREGONIAN**  
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**OUR VIEW**

# Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to the Pendleton and Heppner chambers of commerce for hosting candidate forums this week.

In Pendleton it's an unwieldy field, with more contenders for the five open seats than we've seen in a long while. Eleven of the 14 people listed on the ballot spent the lunch hour briefly running through their thoughts on the city, its government and its future.



Although the format didn't allow for much more than broad strokes, it put the candidates at one table and gave a crowd of business and community leaders the chance to hear their pitch directly.

Because Pendleton is divided into three wards, most ballots sent out will only have a voice in three of the races — mayor, at-large

councilor and whichever ward they live in. But knowing a little bit about all of the candidates is a good first step into understanding what's in store in the next four years.

In Morrow County, with a less crowded field, the candidates had a little more time to speak their minds. You can look for a story on that forum in Saturday's paper.



Photo illustration courtesy of Women on 20s

**Harriet Tubman will replace Andrew Jackson on the front of the \$20 bill.**

A tip of the hat to the U.S. Treasury Department for finally and rightfully planning to update the \$20 bill with a praise-worthy figure from U.S. history — Harriet Tubman — to replace a president who has had more than enough time in our monetary limelight — Andrew Jackson.



Tubman was an abolitionist who helped rescue slaves through the Underground Railroad, and later worked as a Union spy during the Civil War.

Jackson was the seventh president of the United States and the founder of the Democratic Party. He was a wealthy slave owner who made a name for himself during his military career for success against the British, Spanish and Creek. As president

he signed the Indian Removal Act that led to the forced removal of the Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Seminole and Cherokee Nations tribes from their home in the southeast to reservations west of the Mississippi River.

He was a man of his time, celebrated for expanding control of rich, white men into new corners of this country. But it is now time we expand our celebration past that demographic.

Along with changing the face on the front, the new bills to be rolled out in the next four years will be harder to counterfeit and include tactile features that can be more easily identified by blind people.

Our only disappointment with the change is that Jackson won't be retired entirely, but instead will be moved to the back of the bill.

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.

**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 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

**Two yes votes needed to create new district**

Just a reminder to everyone that will be voting for the formation of the Umatilla Fire District #1: You will need to vote yes for the dissolution of the old districts and yes for the formation of the new in order for it to pass.

If you are still undecided, check www.hermistonfire.com for more information. Or you can call Chief Scott Stanton or visit with him. He has been having coffee hour at different locations around town. You can also check gohermiston.com to find out where he will be next.

**Bruce Naugher**  
Stanfield Fire Department  
board member

**Fairley a professional and a proven leader**

This letter is in reference to the Ward 2 race for Pendleton City Council and my support of Scott Fairley.

I have had the opportunity to know Scott since he was very young. His professional

background and community involvement provides him with the skills and experience to advance the interest of Pendleton in a very positive way.

Scott has been working at a regional level in the area of economic development for nine years, providing excellent leadership for the communities of Eastern Oregon. He is the chair of the Pendleton Planning Commission and member of the Airport Commission. Scott is also a past president of the Farmers Market. His communication skills and connections at the local, state and federal level will be very helpful to the Pendleton community.

Please support Scott Fairley for Ward 2.

**Phillip W. Houk, mayor**  
Pendleton

**Voters should support golden schools bond**

We urge all of our Milton-Freewater community members to vote yes for the upcoming school bond. As has been stated in many previous letters, this truly is a

"once in a lifetime" opportunity to support our school system, our community and all of the residents within the school district.

I grew up in this community and graduated from Mac-Hi in 1962, the year Milton-Freewater was named an "All American Community." We were all very proud of our community and all that had been achieved. We must recapture that pride in our community and this is the golden opportunity to do so.

A strong school system is the core of a vibrant community. If we don't make this move for a new school, and the upgrading needed for those that are structurally acceptable, we will be required to make these changes in the not-too-distant future. And the cost will never go down; as the old Fram Filter advertisement used to say: "You can pay me now, or pay me more later."

If we do not pass this bond, we will have to pay the full \$31.5 million, or in that proximity, before too many years pass. If that happens, then we will all be extremely unhappy with the taxes we will have to pay to upgrade

our schools. We can avoid that unpleasant experience by voting yes now.

I was a partner at Key Technology when we decided to move our operations to Walla Walla in the mid-1980s. It was not an easy decision for us; many factors were involved.

However, one of the continual challenges we faced was recruiting top technical and management talent to Key. We had numerous strong candidates apply, but many turned us down because they did not think that Milton-Freewater was a healthy community and our schools were sub-par. Nearly all of those who did join Key lived in Walla Walla. That's history, but the core issue is much the same as it was 30 years ago.

No, none of us want to pay more taxes, but this opportunity will be one of the wisest investments we will ever be able to make. This bond will actually replace the current bond that was approved three years ago. It will provide the impetus for our community to become relevant again, and will increase the value of our community by substantial

amounts.

There is a great deal of truth in the statement: If you aren't progressing and moving forward as a community, then your community is dying.

**Jim and Barbara Stanton**  
Milton-Freewater

**Fairley a good addition to Pendleton council**

We have known Scott Fairley for nearly 40 years and have watched him grow up to become an involved and productive member of his community, region and state. He has acquired vast experience in community and economic development while working with local and state leaders.

He is forward thinking and believes in transparency, mutual respect and trust in local government and community relations. He is positive about our city's future and is willing to contribute in a proactive way.

We encourage Ward 2 voters to elect Scott Fairley to our city council.

**Jake and Cathy Cambier**  
Pendleton



**OTHER VIEWS**

# Obama in Saudi Arabia, exporter of oil and bigotry

A college senior boarded a flight and excitedly called his family to recount a U.N. event he had attended, but, unfortunately, he was speaking Arabic. Southwest Airlines kicked him off the plane, in the sixth case reported in the United States this year in which a Muslim was ejected from a flight.

Such Islamophobia also finds expression in the political system, with Donald Trump calling for a temporary ban on Muslims entering the country ("Welcome to the USA! Now, what's your religion?") and Ted Cruz suggesting special patrols of Muslim neighborhoods (in New York City, by the nearly 1,000 police officers who are Muslim?). Some 50 percent of Americans support a ban and special patrols.

Such attitudes contradict our values and make us look like a bastion of intolerance. But for those of us who denounce these prejudices, it's also important to acknowledge that there truly are dangerous strains of intolerance and extremism within the Islamic world — and for many of these, Saudi Arabia is the source.

I'm glad that President Barack Obama is visiting Saudi Arabia, for engagement usually works better than isolation. But let's not let diplomatic niceties keep us from pointing to the insidious role that Saudi Arabia plays in sowing instability and, for that matter, in tarnishing the image of Islam worldwide. The truth is that Saudi leaders do far more to damage Islam than Trump or Cruz can do, and we should be as ready to denounce their bigotry as Trump's.

Americans are abuzz about the "missing 28 pages" — unsupported leads suggesting that Saudi officials might have had a hand in the 9/11 attacks. But as far as I can tell, these tips, addressed in a still-secret section of a congressional report, were investigated and discredited; Philip Zelikow of the 9/11 Commission tells me the 28 pages are "misleading"; the commission found there was "no evidence" of the Saudi government or senior officials financing the plot.

The much better reason to be concerned with Saudi Arabia is that it has promoted extremism, hatred, misogyny and the Sunni/Shiite divide that is now playing out in a Middle East civil war. Saudi Arabia should be renamed the Kingdom of Backwardness.

It's not just that Saudi women are barred from driving, or that when in cars they are discouraged from wearing seat belts for fear of showing their contours, or that a 19-year-old woman who was gang-raped was sentenced to 200 lashes (after protests, the king pardoned her). It's not just that public churches are banned, or that there is brutal repression of the Shiite minority.

As the land where Islam began, Saudi Arabia has enormous influence among



**NICHOLAS KRISTOF**  
Comment

Muslims worldwide. Its approach to Islam has special legitimacy, its clerics have great reach, its media spread its views worldwide, and it finances madrassas in poor countries to sow hatred.

From Pakistan to Mali, these Saudi-financed madrassas have popped up and cultivate religious extremism — and, sometimes, terrorists. A State Department cable released through WikiLeaks reported that in Pakistan these extremist madrassas offered impoverished families a \$6,500 bounty for turning over a son to be indoctrinated.

To be blunt, Saudi Arabia legitimizes Islamic extremism and intolerance around the world. If you want to stop bombings in Brussels or San Bernardino, then turn off the spigots of incitement from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries.

**Saudi Arabia legitimizes Islamic extremism and intolerance around the world.**

"Saudi Arabia is not an enemy of the U.S., but it is an enemy of itself," a Kuwaiti once told me.

A new survey finds that young Arabs in the Middle East and North Africa want to modernize, with 52

percent saying that religion plays too big a role in the Middle East. That's true of many, many Saudis as well, and some have tried to start a desperately needed conversation about tolerance. One of them, Raif Badawi, a blogger, was arrested and sentenced to 1,000 lashes.

In the past I sometimes defended Saudi Arabia on the basis that it was at least moving in the right direction.

But in the past few years it has been backtracking while also starting a brutal war in Yemen. Obama's biggest mistake with Saudi Arabia was providing arms for that war, implicating America in what Human Rights Watch says may be war crimes.

In short, as a Saudi father named Mohammed al-Nimr says, "Saudi Arabia is now going in the wrong direction." He should know: His brother, a prominent Shiite religious figure, was executed in January, and his son, Ali al-Nimr, has been sentenced to death for participating in protests when he was a minor.

"Americans should care, because what happens here can affect the world," the father told me, and he cautioned that Saudi repression destabilizes the entire Middle East. He's right.

Bill O'Reilly has denounced me as a "chief apologist" for Islam, and I'll continue to decry what I see as Islamophobia in the West. But at the same time, let's acknowledge that Saudi Arabia is more than our gas station; it is also a wellspring of poison in the Islamic world, and its bigotry fuels our bigotry.

*Nicholas Kristof grew up on a sheep and cherry farm in Yamhill.*

**YOUR VIEWS**