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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to Happy Canyon, which nabbed the Oregon Heritage Tourism Award at the state's tourism conference earlier this week at Wildhorse.

The award is gifted to an organization that represents authentic Oregon. The search for authentic experiences is why travelers get on buses, planes and trains that are pointed toward Oregon. Happy Canyon puts some butts in those seats and they deserve being honored alongside such esteemed Oregon destinations as Crater Lake National Park and Mount Hood River Territory.

This September, Happy Canyon will celebrate its centennial — and you can bet more kudos will be headed their direction.



A tip of the hat to the anonymous donor who dropped off two bags of children's clothes, blankets and toys at the Pendleton *East Oregonian* office for the displaced in last week's fire at Marina Apartments in Umatilla last weekend.

The flames and smoke from the slow-moving but hard-to-fight fire destroyed the home and belongings of 9 adults and 15 children.

People have been helping since news of the fire spread, but more donations are welcome. The families are also in need of dog and cat food, and volunteers have set up GoFundMe.com accounts. Physical donations can be dropped off at Marina Apartments in the office or apartment 1500A. Or you can send them directly to the Red Cross, which has helped the families find temporary housing.



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

Federal decriminalization would solve lots of pot problems

The (Salem) Statesman-Journal

The Eugene Home Science Club, which is more than 100 years old, has about two dozen members these days.

All the women are age 60 or older. And for a recent meeting, their guest speaker was a state specialist in marijuana.

As *The Register-Guard* reported, "With the advent first of medical marijuana, and last year of legal recreational marijuana, residents of all ages are curious about the intoxicating buds that rapidly are becoming big business."

Only the federal government seems to be clueless about the big business of marijuana in Oregon and elsewhere. The feds still classify marijuana not only as an illegal drug but as one of the most dangerous.

The federal government's reluctance to give up its "Reefer Madness" mentality creates financial obstacles. Legal — at least under state law — marijuana retailers in Oregon often lack access to traditional banking systems and thus conduct most transactions in cash. That includes paying their taxes to the Oregon Department of Revenue.

That cash economy also creates security issues for the legal pot retailers and, potentially, for the state tax agency. Through March, the Revenue Department had processed \$6.84 million in marijuana tax payments this year. Fifty-seven percent of those payments had been made in person, presumably in cash. "Forcing businessmen and

businesswomen who are operating legally under Oregon state law to shuttle around gym bags full of cash is an invitation to crime and malfeasance," Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley said last year. He and Sen. Ron Wyden are among the sponsors of bipartisan legislation to remove federal barriers to marijuana banking.

People can argue the wisdom of legalizing marijuana. The same has long been true of alcohol. But alcohol legally is sold in most of the nation, and the state-legalized sale of marijuana gradually is expanding as well.

The feds' backward approach serves no useful purpose. Many federally chartered banks still refuse to do business with marijuana retailers. So do most credit card companies.

Consequently, many Oregon pot retailers cannot accept payments via credit or debit cards. Neither can those retailers pay their taxes or other bills electronically.

That is changing, slowly. Washington state has progressed to the point that the majority of pot businesses submit their state taxes electronically. But Oregon will only accept tax payments by cash, check or money order.

Oregon has a hefty 25 percent state tax on recreational marijuana sales, and a number of local governments want to add their own taxes.

A cash economy for marijuana defies logic. It's past time for the federal government to recognize reality, and for the financial industry and tax collectors to follow suit.

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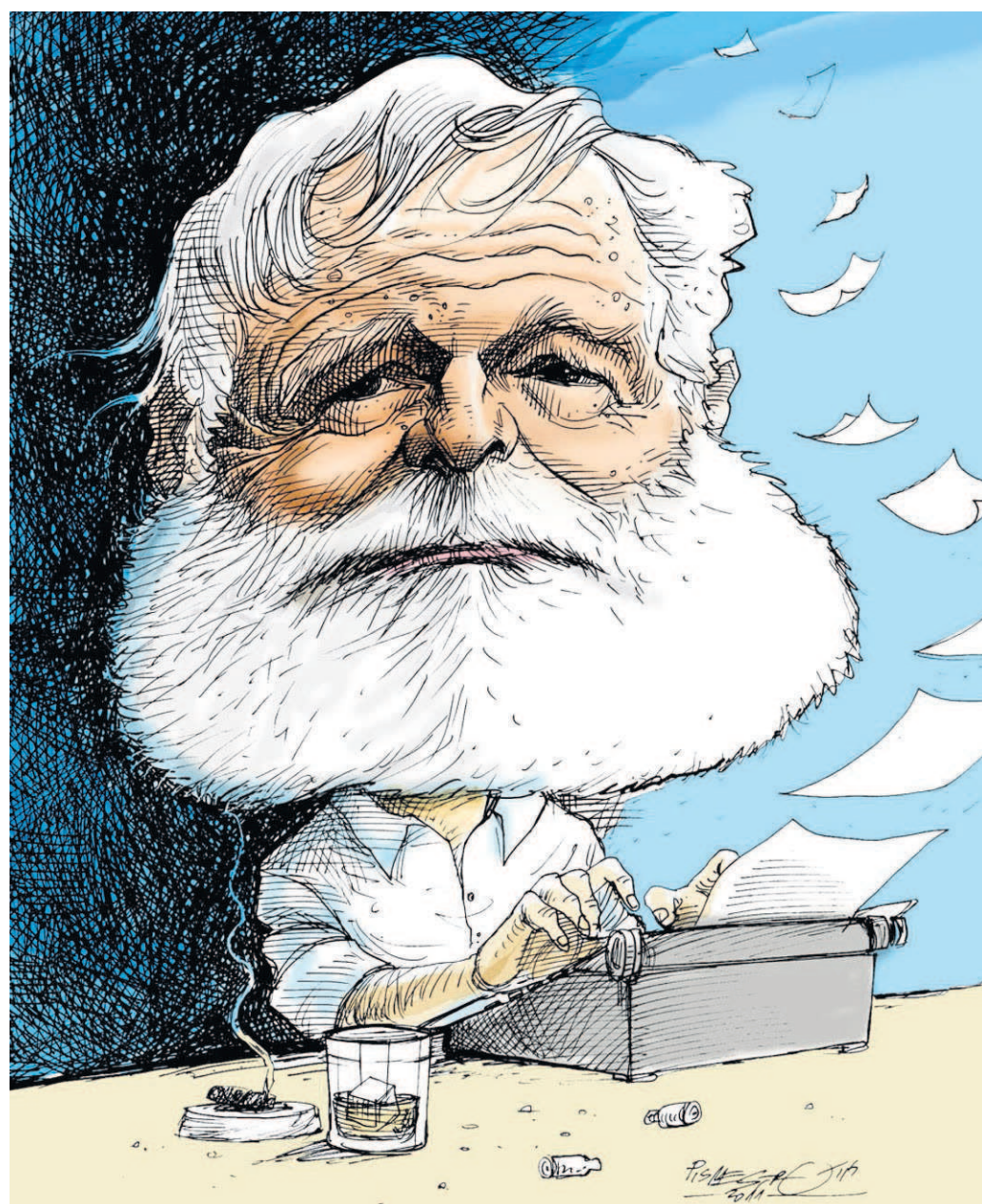
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LETTERS POLICY

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.

OTHER VIEWS



Getting to zero

HAVANA — Ernest Hemingway's house in Cuba seems like such a healthy place. It is light, welcoming and beautifully situated. There are hundreds of his books lining the shelves, testimony to all the reading he did there. There's a baseball diamond nearby where he used to pitch to local boys.

Yet Hemingway was not a healthy man during the latter phases in his life. He was drunk much of the time; he often began drinking at breakfast and his brother counted 17 Scotch-and-sodas in a day. His wives complained that he was sporadic about bathing. He was obsessed with his weight and recorded it on the wall of his house.

He could be lively and funny, the organizer of exciting adventures. But he could also be depressed, combative and demoralized. His ego overflowed. F. Scott Fitzgerald, who endured a psychological crisis at about the same time, observed that Hemingway "is quite as nervously broken down as I am, but it manifests itself in different ways. His inclination is toward megalomania and mine toward melancholy."

Even as a young man Hemingway exaggerated his (already prodigious) exploits in order to establish his manliness. When he was older his prima donna proclivities could make him, as one visiting photographer put it, "crazy," "drunk" and "berserk."

He was a prisoner of his own celebrity. He'd become famous at 25 and by middle age he was often just playing at being Ernest Hemingway. The poet David Whyte has written that work "is a place you can lose yourself more easily perhaps than finding yourself ... losing all sense of our own voice, our own contribution and conversation." Hemingway seems to have lost track of his own authentic voice in the midst of the public persona he'd created.

His misogyny was also like a cancer that ate out his insides. He was an extremely sensitive man, who suffered much from the merest slights, but was also an extremely dominating, cruel and self-indulgent one, who judged his wives harshly, slapped them when angry and forced them to bear all the known forms of disloyalty.

By this time, much of his writing rang false. Reviewer after reviewer said he had destroyed his own talent. His former mentor Gertrude Stein said he was a coward.

Yet there were moments, even amid the wreckage, when he could rediscover something authentic. Even at these late phases, he could write books like "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and "The Old Man and the Sea" and passages

like some in "To Have and Have Not" and "Islands in the Stream" that remain loved and celebrated today.

This is a process that we might call "getting to zero," when an artist — or anyone, really — digs through all the sap that gets encrusted around a career or relationship and retouches the intrinsic impulse that got him or her into it in the first place. Hemingway's career got overlaid by money, persona and fame, but sometimes even at this late stage he was able to reconnect with the young man's directness that produced his early best work.

When you see how he did it, three things leap out. The first is the most mundane — the daily disciplines of the job. In the house, there is a small bed where he laid out his notes and a narrow shelf where he stood, stared at a blank wall and chummed out his daily word count. Sometimes it seems to have been the structure of concrete behavior — the professional routines — that served as a lifeline when all else was crumbling.

Second, there seem to have been moments of self-forgetting. Dorothy Sayers has an essay in which she notes it's fashionable to say you do your work to serve the community. But if you do any line of work for the community, she argues, you'll end up falsifying your work, because you'll be angling it for applause. You'll feel people owe you something for your work. But if you just try to serve the work — focusing on each concrete task and doing it the way it's supposed to be done — then you'll end up, obliquely, serving the community more. Sometimes the only way to be good at a job is to lose the self-consciousness embedded in the question, "How'm I doing?"

Finally, there was the act of cutting out. When Hemingway was successful, he cut out his mannerisms and self-pity. Then in middle age, out of softness, laziness and self-approval, he indulged himself. But even then, even amid all the corruption, he had flashes when he could distinguish his own bluster from the good, true notes.

There is something heroic that happened in this house. Hemingway was a man who embraced every self-indulgence that can afflict a successful person. But at moments he shed all that he had earned and received, and rediscovered the hardworking, clear-seeing and unadorned man he used to be.

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



DAVID BROOKS
Comment

YOUR VIEWS

Compromise needed to decide fate of forest roads

National Forest access — something we are hearing a lot about lately. The topic brings out many passions from many different perspectives. While I applaud the interest and passion in public lands that many have who desire unrestricted motorized access, the issues are far more complex than bumper stickers would indicate.

A well-managed road and trail system is an asset to the public and to land managers. The devil is in the detail, however, as to what that means. To many, it is unrestricted motorized access to most roads, trails, and cross-country use. To others, there is value in hiking or hunting on old closed roads where walking is easy, disturbance is minimized and the opportunity to see wildlife is high.

Some roads built in earlier times were built in the wrong places, now bleeding sediment into fish-bearing streams. Private landowners often experience damage to fences and forage from big game coming onto their land seeking refuge from disturbances on adjacent public lands. There are critical habitats or species needing

security and protection to sustain them. As land managers create healthier forests by thinning and opening more overstocked forest stands, sometimes roads need to be closed to provide more big game security. Many roads have deteriorated to the point of being unsafe to drive. Managing this infrastructure for diverse needs is not an easy task.

There are good reasons to leave most forest roads open, and good reasons to close some of them. Managers of the national forests of the Blue Mountains are charged with balancing these needs and many others. There are currently over 15,000 miles of roads on the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests. The public should be involved and be part of access discussions and decisions, but those who speak the loudest should not overrule the diversity of interests. As our population continues to increase and demands on public lands continue to expand, I am reminded of the old Rolling Stones song, "You Can't Always Get What You Want."

Compromise — not confrontation — is what we need to address these complex and important issues.

Jeff Blackwood
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