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OUR VIEW

BMCC baseball looks for rally

If you threaten to demolish it, they will come.

Supporters of Blue Mountain Community College baseball will dig in at the Pendleton City Council chambers Tuesday to defend the field that has been the team's home for the past three decades.

To be fair, the council hasn't exactly said it intends to demolish the field it was recently gifted when land near the prison was transferred to the city from the state. But members of the council did discuss adding a 180-day eviction notice to the lease between Pendleton and the college in case a developer wants to build in the industrial zone and needs a bigger footprint.

If the city does decide to change the terms of the lease, an interested buyer could show up and effectively throw BMCC out of the game.

That's worth kicking some dirt over.

The relationship between Pendleton and BMCC should supersede the relationship between Pendleton and a business to be named later. The idea of a big-league

company wanting to move into the attractive Westgate spot is appealing, but at this point it's just a dream.

The college, on the other hand, has a long-time vested interest in seeing Pendleton grow, and the city should have the same view of the college.

Without certainty that a field will be available to the college for a period of at least two years, the program won't be able to recruit or schedule — putting it at a severe disadvantage in the Northwest Athletic Conference. It's at real risk of losing the roster of 40 athletes who are also full-time students at the school.

Our hope is that the council takes the college's concerns seriously, rallies up some teamwork and puts the partnership first.

Maybe BMCC baseball isn't meant to be played at the prison field forever. But rather than being forced to scramble to find a new home — or held in limbo for an unknown amount of time — the city should be wary of hurting the relationship in order to benefit what at this point is only imaginary.

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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.

Culture corner

A long-awaited sequel to a beloved literary classic hit the shelves today.

And unlike last year's much-hyped sequel to "To Kill a Mockingbird" that arrived via dubious channels, this one you'll feel good about reading.

Pulitzer prize-winning author Richard Russo's 1993 novel "Nobody's Fool" introduced us to the masterfully crafted character most of us were able to recognize in our own lives: aging, down-on-his-luck, troublemaking and kindhearted Donald "Sully" Sullivan. In 1994, Paul Newman would inhabit the character in his last film role in an excellent and underrated film based on the novel.

Now, 15 years after the book was

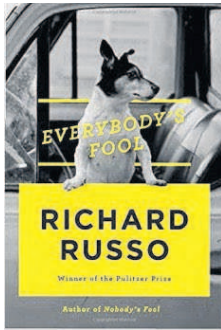
published, Russo takes readers back to the small town of North Bath and the cast of characters who reside there.

The new book is titled "Everybody's Fool."

No more than a bit part in the first book, Sully's occasional nemesis Officer Raymer is the lead in the sequel — which means this work carries a bittersweet air, too. Philip Seymour Hoffman, who played Raymer in the film, died of a drug overdose in 2014.

The two deaths show that no story is totally free from loss. Readers will find some of that in "Everybody's Fool" — but tempered by the sweetness and comedy that is always present in Russo's writing.

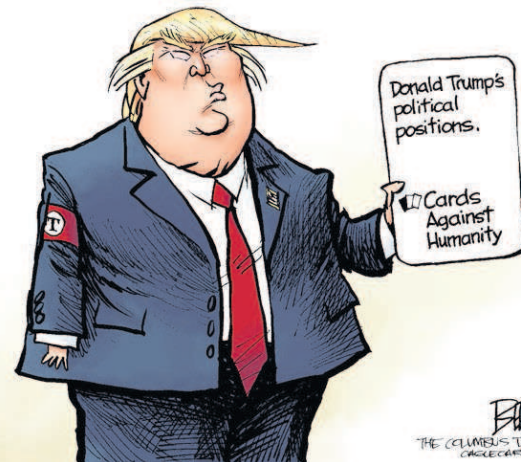
— Tim Trainor is the opinion page editor of the East Oregonian.



The WOMAN CARD



The TRUMP CARD



OTHER VIEWS

The choice explosion

A few years ago, social psychologist Sheena Iyengar asked 100 American and Japanese college students to take a piece of paper. On one side, she had them write down the decisions in life they would like to make for themselves. On the other, they wrote the decisions they would like to pass on to others.

The Americans filled up the side for decisions they want to decide for themselves. Where to live. What job to take. The other side was almost blank. The only "decision" they commonly wanted to hand off to others was, "When I die."

The Japanese filled up the back side of the sheet with things they wanted others to decide: what they wore; what time they woke up; what they did at their job. The Americans desired choice in four times more domains than the Japanese.

Americans have always put great emphasis on individual choice. But even by our own standards we've had a choice explosion over the past 30 years. Americans now have more choices over more things than any other culture in human history. We can choose between a broader array of foods, media sources, lifestyles and identities. We have more freedom to live out our own sexual identities and more religious and nonreligious options to express our spiritual natures.

This opening has produced much that is wonderful. But making decisions well is incredibly difficult, even for highly educated professional decision-makers. As Chip Heath and Dan Heath point out in their book "Decisive," 83 percent of corporate mergers and acquisitions do not increase shareholder value, 40 percent of senior hires do not last 18 months in their new position, and 44 percent of lawyers would recommend that a young person not follow them into the law.

It's becoming incredibly important to learn to decide well, to develop the techniques of self-distancing to counteract the flaws in our own mental machinery. The Heath book is a very good compilation of those techniques.

For example, they mention the maxim, assume positive intent. When in the midst of some conflict, start with the belief that others are well intentioned. It makes it easier to absorb information from people you'd rather not listen to.

They highlight Suzy Welch's 10-10-10 rule. When you're about to make a decision, ask yourself how you will feel about it 10 minutes from now, 10 months from now and 10 years from now. People are overly biased by the immediate pain of some choice, but they can put the short-term pain in long-term



DAVID BROOKS
Comment

perspective by asking these questions.

The Heaths recommend making deliberate mistakes. A survey of new brides found that 20 percent were not initially attracted to the man they ended up marrying. Sometimes it's useful to make a deliberate "mistake" — agreeing to dinner with a guy who is not your normal type. Sometimes you don't really know what you want and the filters you apply are hurting you.

They mention our tendency to narrow-frame, to see every decision

as a binary "whether or not" alternative. Whenever you find yourself asking "whether or not," it's best to step back and ask, "How can I widen my options?" In other words, before you ask, "Should I fire this person?" Ask, "Is there any way I can shift this employee's role to take advantage of his strengths and avoid his weaknesses?"

The explosion of choice means we all need more help understanding the anatomy of decision-making. It makes you think that we should have explicit decision-making curricula in all schools. Maybe there should be a common course publicizing the work of Daniel Kahneman, Cass Sunstein, Dan Ariely and others who study the way we mess up and the techniques we can adopt to prevent error.

This is probably especially important for schools that serve the less fortunate. The explosion of choice places extra burdens on the individual. Poorer Americans have fewer resources to master decision-making techniques, less social support to guide their decision-making and less of a safety net to catch them when they err.

As researchers Sendhil Mullainathan and Eldar Shafir have shown, the stress of scarcity itself can distort decision-making. Those who experienced stress as children often perceive threat more acutely and live more defensively. A school principal I met in Pittsburgh observed that living in an area of concentrated poverty can close down your perceived options, and comfortably "relieve you of the burden of choosing life." It's hard to maintain a feeling of agency when you see no chance of opportunity.

In this way the choice explosion has contributed to widening inequality.

It's important to offer opportunity and incentives. But we also need lessons in self-awareness — on exactly how our decision-making tool is fundamentally flawed, and on mental frameworks we can adopt to avoid messing up even more than we do.

David Brooks's column on the Op-Ed page of The New York Times started in September 2003.

YOUR VIEWS

Support Athena-Weston schools

To the community members of Athena and Weston:

I am writing to urge your support of the Athena-Weston School District's Bond, Measure 30-113. Our communities have the rare opportunity to receive an unprecedented \$4 million matching grant from the state of Oregon, which, when coupled to the proposed \$4 million bond, will allow the district to address a wealth of safety and security improvements, energy efficiency projects, and upgrades and renovations at all three schools — all directly benefiting kids in our communities.

We all know the wonderful work that our district's staff perform daily at our schools, and passage of this bond will not only address much needed safety improvements, but also allow the district to put more money back into the general fund budget through reduced operating costs — a direct result of the proposed energy efficiency projects and addressing the "death

by a thousand cuts" maintenance expenses the district incurs now.

This will have a direct benefit to the classroom, and, more importantly, to our students.

The grant from the state is a rare opportunity and, when matched with the district's \$4 million bond, will allow us to benefit from \$8 million work of improvements and upgrades while still retaining one of the lowest tax rates in the region.

As the proud parent of two children in the district, and a proud resident of our respective communities, I urge your support for Ballot Measure 30-113.

Scott Rogers
Athena

A vote for Trump is a vote for Hillary

After what seems a never-ending election cycle, it is now Oregon's turn to vote. For the last several elections it has been said that "this is the most important election our lifetime" and this year, it's more true than ever.

At the beginning the primary season, the Republicans provided

a candidate field of great depth, albeit much too large. We've watched one after another suspend campaigns, leaving two major contenders, along with debris from the ugliness of this year's process. Zealots in each campaign are still energized but the mean seventh grade mentality has left way too many disgusted. While it was hoped to hear policy and principle discussions, we have witnessed bullying, personal attacks and bait and switch deceptions.

With all the raucousness of the internet wars, and the bias of a media valuing profit over fact, the truth is that the consequences of this vote are so important that the America I have grown up knowing hangs in the balance.

Anger and frustration, it is said, fuel Trump's candidacy. I'm angry and quite frustrated with what has happened over the last eight years.

Trump, everyone agrees, has tapped into that anger and has great campaign slogans. Being an effective president requires more than arousing large crowds. (I still see Obama standing in

front of Greek columns.) To be a president who navigates America out of these turbulent times requires many skills and character traits such as trust, honesty and faithfulness; Trump has a recorded history of lacking these. Also lacking is any history of conservative convictions.

Like most conservatives in the last two election cycles, I held my nose voting for McCain and Romney. Please consider very carefully when voting; a Trump nomination ensures a Hillary presidency, for, like thousands of rock-solid conservatives across the country, I will NOT vote Trump in November.

Annette Lathrop
Joseph

Dale Primmer checks all the boxes

Dale Primmer is the best choice for Pendleton City Council Ward 3. Having been raised in Umatilla County, Dale has been able to see the evolution of Pendleton's economics. Being a father, Dale is interested in the quality of life here and the

opportunities for his children. Being a department head for Community Justice at Umatilla County, Dale has the professional experience that is needed on the Pendleton City Council.

Dale has experience with managing community programs during times of declining funds. Dale has experience making difficult decisions that are unpopular. Dale has experience with developing collaborative partnerships that make public dollars go farther. Dale is motivated to serve on city council because he wants to add value and make a difference.

I have had the pleasure to work with Dale for two years and have seen him in action consistently taking a goal-oriented, solutions-based approach. Dale is about doing something, not just talking about it. Dale is a courageous and convicted leader who I would be proud to have represent Pendleton. Join me in voting for Dale Primmer and then support him once he takes his seat.

Susan Bower
Pendleton

Be heard!

Comment online at eastoregonian.com

LETTERS POLICY

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