

Quick takes

Occupiers try to avoid possible liberal Portland jury

They are correct. They won't be able to get a decent trial with a Portland jury.

— Melissa Lea

Make the venue where it happened. Let a jury of their peers call it since y'all are so against everything. Let the locals decide their fate.

— Tory Covlin

Too bad. You do the crime, you pay your time.

— Jeff Blanchard

I believe these terrorists will get a fair trial anywhere in Oregon. They sure were seeking press the entire time! Make sure those in jail now stay in jail through all legal proceedings.

— Jim Stengle

Outdoor school season

Some of my best memories are from outdoor ed in fifth grade.

— Jodi Henline

My son had so much fun at outdoor school. I still have all the pictures.

— Kristina Ream

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.

Schools should be palaces, education should be free

By MICHAEL SHAFER

I write to you today to show my support for the upcoming bond for the Athena-Weston School District. My father, John Shafer, recently wrote a letter of support for the bond, which your paper published. Within that letter my father mentioned the fact that he had two children currently attending the high school and so he had a vested interest in seeing the much-needed repairs made. I decided that I would share my perspective on the school bond.

I hold the point of view that schools should be palaces, teachers should make six-figure salaries, and education should be incredibly expensive for the government and free of charge for its citizens.

Unfortunately, I haven't figured out how to do that yet. I have, however, made a difference. My school's budget was not large enough for it to purchase the kind of technology that it needed to give the students the education they deserve. For that reason I went out and secured two grants my freshman year to provide 100 iPads and charging carts for my peers and me to use. I take my education and the education of my peers seriously.

Currently one in five American children live in poverty. One in five children live in the most gut-wrenching, abject, soul-tearing

poverty that you can imagine. Education is the silver bullet that can break a vicious and violent cycle of poverty. I mentioned before that schools should be palaces, but if they can't be a palace they should at least be a sound and safe place where children can grow and the next generation of American leaders can be formed.

One can simply walk among the three schools in our district and clearly see the problems that our buildings face. Ceilings that are sagging from water damage, buildings that do not come close to meeting ADA standards and securities issues that would make any parent turn pale from fear. If the bond were to pass, these are the issues that would be fixed.

The bond is only asking for an additional 44 cents per assessed \$1,000 on your home. This slight raise would give the district a \$4 million matching grant from the state of Oregon. This would give our district \$8 million to make much needed repairs.

This is really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that we have been handed. The school district has identified \$11 million worth of repairs that need to be made. This means that even if we get the bond there are still \$3 million worth of things that need to be fixed. It is clear that our district desperately needs these funds.

My biggest concern as a student is not education, it is safety. Not too long ago we had an incident at the high school and

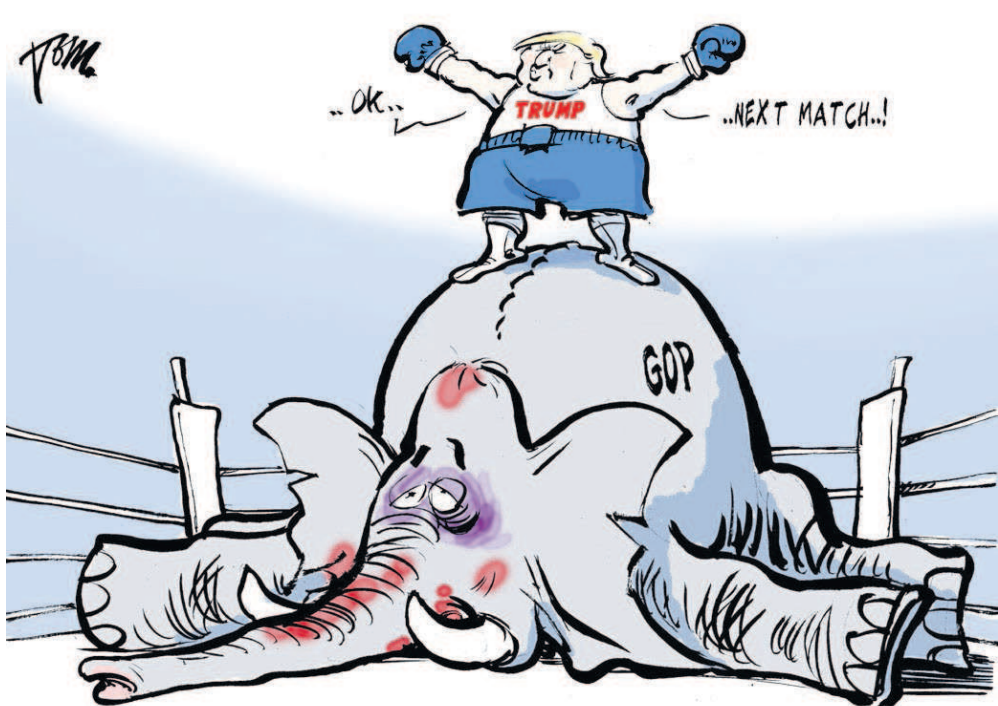
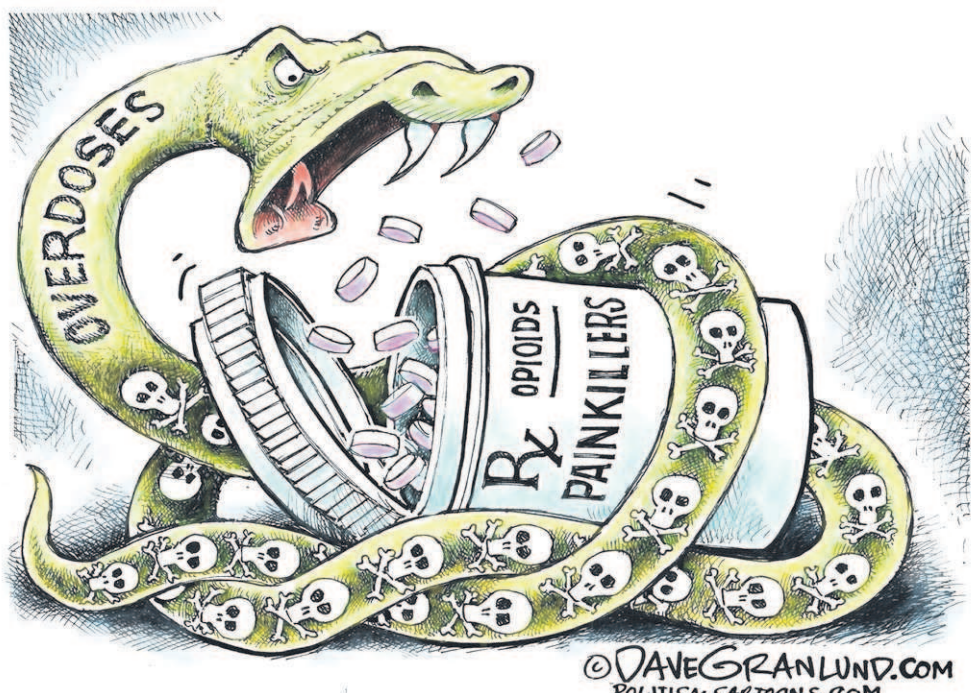
middle school that reminded us all of how vulnerable we are. Every week we see news stories that shake us to our core. Children are being killed in their own school. There has been school shooting after school shooting. The question I, and many others, are asking is when will it happen here? Students cannot learn if they are not safe. If the bond passes the school district will be able to provide security upgrades to all three of our buildings and provide for the students a safer learning environment.

There are some people in the district who are hesitant to give more of their tax money to the school district. They say that they are already taxed too much. However, I believe that this is too important an issue for a no vote to be given. The safety of the students in the Athena-Weston School District hinges on the passage of this bond. A no vote is a vote against student safety. A no vote on this bond opens up our school district to the terrible possibility of a horrific attack. To vote yes is to take a stand against the waves of violence that have been crashing into one American school after another.

The passage of the bond for the Athena-Weston School District will dramatically improve all three of our schools. We can fix dilapidated buildings, improve school security, and become compliant with ADA regulations. The passage of this bond will improve the quality of education that I and my classmates are receiving. Please, for my sake and for the sake of future generations, vote yes on the upcoming bond for the Athena-Weston School District.

Michael Shafer is a 17-year-old junior at Weston-McEwen High School.

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An Indian perspective of the Ancient One

By LONA POND

We can't look forward until we look into the past. The Ancient One has been suspended in time for nearly 20 years. A death in Indian culture is a very important rite of passage. There were so many of our relatives who went to Congress on behalf of the Ancestors, with regards to repatriation of Indian

Their religious beliefs have not been washed away.

remains. This occurred during the 1960s until the end of the last century prior to the Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

When the Ancient One was found, the Columbia River Indian tribes claimed the skeleton and refused to allow the bones to be studied. The role of the Corps of Engineers was in favor of the tribes when they learned of the radio carbon dating that revealed how old the remains were. In 2002, scientists won a case to study the remains. In August 2015, DNA confirmed that the Ancient One was in fact a relative to all Native Americans. The other factors that helped confirm were diet, genetic data and skull shapes of Natives that changed over millennia.

Recently, Patty Murray introduced a bill in the name of the Ancient One — a magnificent stride for Columbia River Indian tribes and the Corps of Engineers. Elizabeth Wocatsie Jones made two testimonials on behalf of the Ancient One. The first was a Q&A interview and the second was Elizabeth speaking in her native tongue for nearly 45 minutes. I asked her what she said. She said that she shared the creation story of our peoples and she had just one wa'shat song. Their tracks may be washed away, but not their religious beliefs and certainly not their spirit in the fight for repatriation. At'twai, means a great love who has passed away.

The President had a role in directing federal agencies to make the appropriate changes to preserve and protect Indian religious practices. It took two years for 70 Indian tribes to embrace the act. Also, the act provided Indians with an important voice in the decision-making over federal and sacred land, paving the way for protection of American Indian cultural resources. In 1990, there were only four states that implemented repatriation. During these precarious times, a few senators began to clarify provisions for a new act — the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. In short, it

Lona Pond, of Pendleton, studied repatriation at Washington State University.

Support Athena-Weston schools bond

We support the passage of the Athena-Weston School District bond measure. Because the bond money will qualify for a funding match with state grant money, it makes good sense to us. The need is there, and we have an opportunity to leverage millions of dollars for our schools.

We also appreciate the hard working group of volunteers who have worked for the passage of this issue. You have done a great job.

Bill and Margaret Hansell
Athena

On Election Day May 17, the Athena-Weston School District will find out whether or not the taxpayers are going to take advantage of the Oregon school capital improvement matching program under Senate Bill 447, which was designed to encourage communities to pass local school district general obligation bonds to address the deferred maintenance problems present in Oregon's schools.

On January 27 the Athena-Weston School District was chosen by the Oregon Department of Education to receive a matching grant of \$4 million. If voters in Athena and Weston pass the school bond on May 17 for \$4 million, the state of Oregon will give the district an additional \$4 million, for a total of \$8 million to be used for its schools. However, if the bond does not pass, the \$4 million from the matching grant will be awarded to another school district.

Because Athena and Weston are small rural towns, schools are more than buildings. They are important centers of each community. From athletic events and awards assemblies to student fundraisers and community functions, our schools are constantly utilized by multiple generations, bringing people together. The \$4 million generated by the bond measure and \$4 million matching grant will enable the school district to make the necessary capital improvements to improve school security and to protect the investment in our schools and respected communities.

Jim Reger,
Interim superintendent, Athena-Weston

Vote Fairley for Pendleton city council

For the 13 years I was regional advisor to the Oregon Department of Housing & Community Services, Scott Fairley and I covered the same 10 eastern counties and I had the

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distinct pleasure of working with him often.

In my experience, Scott Fairley is bright, articulate, reasonable, levelheaded and well versed in the issues facing Eastern Oregon and Pendleton. Fairley knows economic development, infrastructure and housing and is exceptionally well connected throughout the state of Oregon, which will be fruitful for the city of Pendleton.

While I no longer live in Pendleton, if I did I would cast my vote for Fairley. I would ask my Pendleton friends to do so as well.

Bruce Buchanan
Walla Walla

Join us in voting for Scott Fairley for Pendleton City Council Ward 2. Scott brings unique experience as both a civic and community volunteer and his professional work/training is in economic and community development.

Scott is gifted with patience and he actually listens to people. His mission is collaborative problem solving — not having his own way. These attributes uniquely prepare him to be a positive and highly skilled member of Pendleton's city council.

Karen and Fritz Hill
Pendleton

Donald Trump a deserving winner

It's time to vote. The information has flowed freely. You may not like the current candidates but they got the vote. We have the opportunity to vote for the presidential candidate in Oregon's primary. While I am a supporter of Sen. Cruz, Donald Trump has the most delegates. In fact Sen. Cruz and Gov. Kasich have withdrawn and, barring some major unforeseen event, Donald Trump has won as the Republican candidate for president.

Is Mr. Trump a conservative? There are many people who say they will never vote for Mr. Trump because he is not a conservative. Gov. Romney lost the election twice as a Republican candidate and he was considered a conservative. Mr. Trump has been gathering many voters for his ticket

and I think he can be elected.

Many of the issues he supports, I support, which means I will vote for Mr. Trump, and I encourage you to vote for him also.

Donald Peterson
Pendleton

EOCI inmates should not work outside prison

I have lived in Pendleton since 1966 and have seen many changes to the city, both good and bad.

I was not in favor of a prison being in Pendleton, but after it was established, we were assured that the prisoners would not ever be let out in the community. In 1987 the state of Oregon and the city of Pendleton entered into a written agreement that the inmates at the prison would be prohibited from working outside the prison.

Several years after the agreement was entered into, a proposal was presented to recommend the prisoners be released to work in the public. The community protested vigorously, reminded the council of previous assurances and promises, and the proposal was not approved.

Now, again, the council has decided that the agreement with the state means nothing to the people of Pendleton. The council is trying to pass a resolution that work crews made up of prisoners from EOCI will be allowed to work in our city.

I am firmly opposed to this proposal and do not want any prisoners released to work in Pendleton. I have recently been told by several residents and business people around town that the majority of the council members are in favor of the resolution and that it is a "done deal."

I certainly hope that this is not true and I urge everyone who is opposed to having prisoners working in our town to please let the council members know immediately. The resolution is supposed to be addressed and possibly approved on May 17 at the next council meeting.

Frances King
Pendleton

LETTERS POLICY

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