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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A kick in the pants to the Oregon Republican Party, which tried to pull a fast one at last week's state convention.

The group of 10 prospective delegates — including House District 58 representative Greg Barreto — called themselves a “unity” slate, but they certainly didn't unify the party by trying to change convention rules to get each of them elected while elbowing out all others.

Our Capital Bureau reporter Paris Achen told the story earlier this week and the complex rules fight is well-described in her work.

To summarize, convention rules said that the 10 candidates who got the most votes would win seats. Pretty simple right? Yet the ballot noted, and party chairman Bill Currier instructed, that party members should vote separately for delegates and at-large delegates. That would have made it easier for a slate to sweep and fill out the entire delegation.

It may seem like a silly fight over nothing, but it helped drive a wedge through a state party that needs to be united if it is going to pull off the statewide wins it hasn't been able to do in recent years.

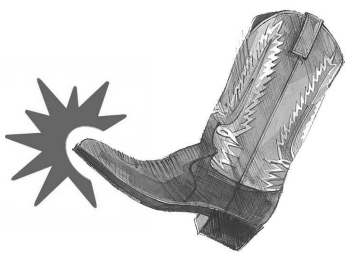
A kick in the pants to the city of Pendleton for closing and removing playground equipment without properly notifying and engaging the public.

After a recent court decision, the city's insurance policy required changes be made to equipment in three parks where equipment was below current safety standards. The city's parks and rec department cordoned them off and planned to remove them without explanation nor discussion with the community as a whole. It has upset park users and residents citywide.

Certainly, dollars are hard to come by in Pendleton. And the debate about whether to risk them with uninsured equipment, or spend them on new equipment, could be cut and dry. But it's still a discussion worth having — or at the very least, an explanation of why decades-old playgrounds were suddenly gone.

Thinking back to how the community banded together to rebuild Pioneer Park after a tragic arson destroyed the playground, it's obvious this community can come together to rebuild and improve things it cares about.

Instead of being the enemy in this situation, the city could have been a partner. Consider it another missed opportunity.



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

Advice to the class of 2016

St. Cloud (Minn.) Times

Congratulations to all the high school graduates in the Class of 2016.

As you move into the next stage of your lives — be it college, a job, the military or a “gap year” — let us offer you some advice.

We are in a unique position to give that advice. We aren't your parents or peers, but we also genuinely care about you because you are our future.

— Find your inner happiness. Ask: What really makes you happy? What do you look forward to doing? What brings you the most satisfaction? When you have answered those questions, go for it.

— Set lofty goals. But don't measure your self-worth on whether you reach those big goals. Success comes in the lessons you learn along the way. But without a road map to reaching those goals you will wander. As you follow that map, remember it takes small steps to reach for big goals.

— Think of ways you can give back to your community. You may move to a new place. Learn about your new home. Find ways you can contribute to the community. It may be a college community or a workplace community.

You will learn much from giving back. Your community or workplace will benefit from your talent.

— Step outside your comfort zone. It is easy to settle into a routine in your new stage of life. Avoid falling into a rut. Challenge yourself to experience new people, places and things. Experience the diversity in cultures, ages, religions and races. Perhaps it will be as simple as dining at a true ethnic restaurant or listening to a different style of music.

— Find a mentor. Find a person who will invest time in you and guide you. They will let you make mistakes. But they will encourage and challenge you. Most important, they will be there for you.

— Step back to step ahead. Speaking of taking a year off before starting post-secondary education, the military or a career, we offer this advice: Don't waste this “gap year.” Going to the beach to learn to surf for a year or backpacking around Europe to find yourself may sound good, but think again. Even Steve Jobs took college classes after he dropped out of school. Later in his career, Jobs talked about how those drop-in classes helped him in developing the unique Apple products that have changed much of our world.

OTHER VIEWS



Dump the GOP for a Grand New Party

If a party could declare moral bankruptcy, today's Republican Party would be in Chapter 11. This party needs to just shut itself down and start over — now. Seriously, someone please start a New Republican Party!

America needs a healthy two-party system. America needs a healthy center-right party to ensure that the Democrats remain a healthy center-left party. America needs a center-right party ready to offer market-based solutions to issues like climate change. America needs a center-right party that will support common-sense gun laws. America needs a center-right party that will support common-sense fiscal policy. America needs a center-right party to support both free trade and aid to workers impacted by it. America needs a center-right party that appreciates how much more complicated foreign policy is today, when you have to manage weak and collapsing nations, not just muscle strong ones.

But this Republican Party is none of those things. Today's Republican Party is to governing what Trump University is to education — an ethically challenged enterprise that enriches and perpetuates itself by shedding all pretense of support for real principles, or a truly relevant value proposition, and instead plays on the ignorance and fears of the public.

It is just an empty shell, selling pieces of itself to the highest bidders — policy by policy — a little to the Tea Party over here, a little to Big Oil over there, a little to the gun lobby, to anti-tax zealots, to climate-change deniers. And before you know it, the party stands for an incoherent mess of ideas unrelated to any theory of where the world is going or how America actually becomes great again in the 21st century.

It becomes instead a coalition of men and women who sell pieces of their brand to whoever can most energize their base in order for them to get re-elected in order for them to sell more of their brand to get re-elected.

And we know just how little they are attached to any principles, because today's Republican Party's elders have told us so by (with a few notable exceptions) being so willing to throw their support behind a presidential candidate whom they know is utterly ignorant of policy, has done no homework, has engaged in racist attacks on a sitting judge, has mocked a disabled reporter, has impugned an entire religious community, and has tossed off ignorant proposals for walls, for letting allies go it alone and go nuclear and for overturning trade treaties, rules of war and nuclear agreements in ways that would be wildly destabilizing if he took office.

Despite that, all top Republican leaders say they will still support Donald Trump — even if he's dabbled in a “textbook definition” of racism, as House Speaker Paul Ryan described it — because he will sign off on their agenda

and can do only limited damage given our checks and balances.

Really? Mr. Speaker, your agenda is a mess, Trump will pay even less attention to you if he is president and, as Sen. Lindsey Graham rightly put it, there has to be a time “when the love of country will trump hatred of Hillary.”

Will it ever be that time with this version of the GOP?

Et tu, John McCain? You didn't break under torture from the North Vietnamese, but your hunger for re-election is so great that you don't dare raise your voice against Trump? I hope you lose. You deserve to. Marco Rubio? You called Trump “a con man,” he insults your very being and you still endorse him? Good riddance.

Chris Christie, have you not an ounce of self-respect? You're serving as the valet to a man who claimed, falsely, that on 9/11, in Jersey City, home to many Arab-Americans, “thousands and thousands of people were cheering as that building was coming down.” Christie is backing a man who made up a baldfaced lie about residents of his own state so that maybe he can be his vice president. Contemptible.

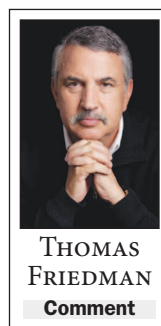
This is exactly why so many Republican voters opted for Trump in the first place. They intuited that the only thing these Republican politicians were interested in was holding onto their seats in office — and they were right. It made voters so utterly cynical that many figured, Why not inflict Trump on them? It's all just a con game anyway. And at least Trump sticks it to all of those politically correct liberals. And anyway, governing doesn't matter — only attitude.

And who taught them that? But it does matter. I know so many thoughtful conservatives who know it matters. One of them has got to start the NRP — New Republican Party — a center-right party liberated from all the Trump birthers, the Sarah Palins, the Grover Norquists, the Sean Hannitys, the Rush Limbaughs, the gun lobby, the oil lobby and every other narrow-interest group, a party that redefines a principled conservatism. Raise your money for it on the internet. If Bernie Sanders can, you can.

This is such a pivotal moment; the world we shaped after World War II is going wobbly. This is a time for America to be at its best, defending its best values, which are now under assault in so many places — pluralism, immigration, democracy, trade, the rule of law and the virtue of open societies. Trump will never be a credible messenger, or a messenger at all, for those values. A New Republican Party can be.

If you build it, they will come.

Thomas L. Friedman won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for commentary, his third Pulitzer for *The New York Times*.



THOMAS FRIEDMAN
Comment

The GOP is just an empty shell, selling pieces to itself to the highest bidders.

YOUR VIEWS

Vulnerable train towns must consider oil train dangers

My father was the manger of the old Hinkle depot so, like many others, I've benefited from family members being employed by the Union Pacific Railroad.

Because of my upbringing, I respect the UPRR and have no quarrel with the many people employed by the UP.

But I do wonder what my dad would say about the UPRR's decision to run oil trains consisting of 96 tanker cars through Hinkle. Would he breath a sigh of relief when a oil train pulled out of the Hinkle yard?

Last Friday the residents of Mosier's luck ran out. It could have happened at Pendleton, Stanfield, Echo, Boardman or Hinkle. Now if the reader chooses to think I'm a alarmist, let's look at this another way.

Every oil train that leaves the Hinkle

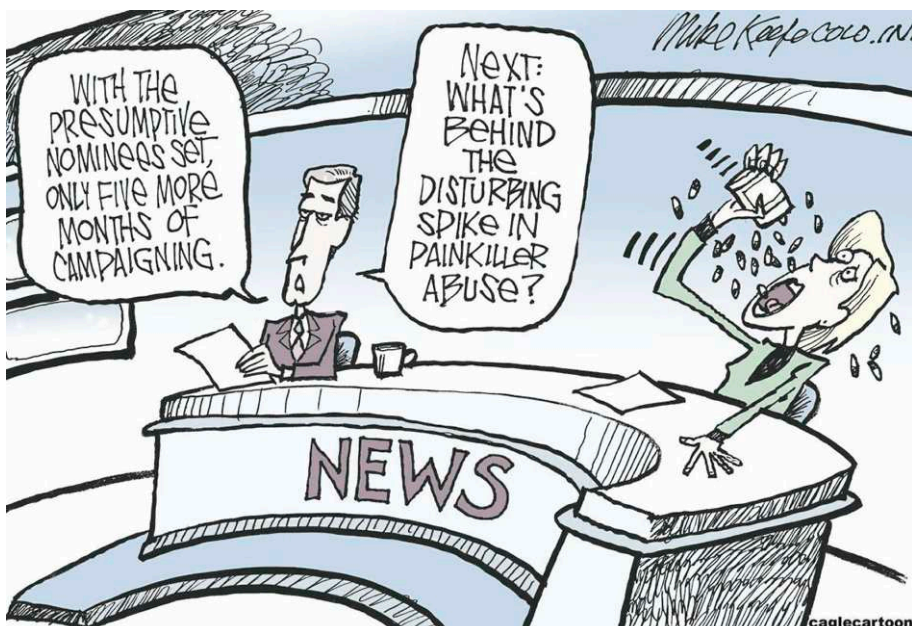
yard has to pass through many towns before it reaches it destination. The derailment at Mosier is an example of how vulnerable communities along the mainline are.

We don't often think of ourselves as part of the global community, but it's a fact that what happens here affects others elsewhere. Just because an oil train has left our region doesn't mean we should have an “out of sight, out of mind” attitude.

This isn't about the many freight trains that safely pass through Hinkle every day. I'm simply asking the residents of Umatilla and Morrow counties to think about our role in this.

Is it right for us to condone the UPRR's decision to continue running oil trains through other communities located on the mainline?

Eileen Laramore, executive director
Tour of Knowledge
Hermiston



LETTERS POLICY

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