

**EAST OREGONIAN**  
Founded October 16, 1875

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**OUR VIEW**

# Tip of the hat, kick in the pants

A tip of the hat the EOTEC authority board for turning over the reins to Frew Development for the final sprint to the project's finish line.

After years of plotting, planning and revising, the board was confronted by John Frew, the head of the development company, and warned that the fairgrounds and rodeo arena were in danger of missing their August 2017 completion deadline if the board continues to insist on micromanaging each detail along the way.



It has led to delays in getting the different parts of the project out to bid, and the grand opening date is already pushed up against next year's county fair. It's a deadline that cannot and should not be missed.

The board, made up of representatives for the city of Hermiston and Umatilla County, agreed that perfection can't stand in the way

of practicality. They have worked to give the fair and rodeo a heavy hand in the planning process up to now — a worthy goal — but the drawing board phase is long past. It's time to bring this baby home.

Now Frew will take over the building, and the EOTEC board can turn its attention to making it run once it's open.

**A tip of the hat to the weekend.**

We get 52 every year, but some are just a little more fun than others, and this one coming up is going to be a doozy.

For those with an adventurous spirit, here's a challenge:

Start the day in downtown Hermiston for the Funfest breakfast and visit the classic car show in McKenzie Park, K9 Kings Flying Dog Show by the library and lawn mower drag racing down Main Street.



Make the drive to Athena for lunch and the Caledonian Games, where you can catch competitions in Scottish athletic and piping in the early afternoon.

Then follow Highway 11 to Milton-Freewater for the Brews by the Blues Festival, the second annual beer event featuring some of the region's best brews. Just

make sure you've invited a designated driver along for the ride.

Wrap up the day back in Hermiston to run off those calories at the Neon Nights 5K on the Oxbow Trail, with proceeds helping to pay for medical expenses of Patricia Bentz, who is fighting a rare cancer.

There are, of course, other options throughout the weekend. Check out the Coming Events list on Page 5A of today's paper for some of the other happenings.

And those potential rain clouds in the forecast? They'd better believe a kick in the pants is coming if they ruin the day.

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**

## Obama's final fight

You introduce yourself to voters as a son of Kansas and Kenya, an emblem of this country's openness to outsiders and its embrace of difference. Your election and re-election affirm the distance that the United States has traveled, or so you believe. So you hope.

Then you look up toward the end of your second term to behold a Republican presidential nominee who is cynically exploiting racism and xenophobia to put the White House within his own reach. He's not merely your adversary; he's your antithesis. And his victory would do more than endanger your policies. It would question the very moral of your journey, the very bend of the arc you frequently invoke.

That's what Barack Obama confronts right now, and that's why he hit the campaign trail Tuesday, appearing onstage with Hillary Clinton in North Carolina and proclaiming without reservation that "there has never been any man or woman more qualified for this office" than she. That's why he'll say words like those again and again, with the same fire, in the months ahead.

For the nation's first black president, Clinton isn't just the better candidate. She's the better America. She wins and he holds on to his rosier convictions about what he and his presidency symbolize. Donald Trump wins and that's a tricky thing to do.

Trump forged his bond with bigots by essentially calling Obama an impostor and demanding to see his birth certificate. But that particular stunt weighs less on Obama than Trump's sustained behavior during the 2016 presidential race does, according to people close to the president.

"The thing that I'm sure aggravates him — enrages him — is the invocation of race and ethnicity in our politics," David Axelrod, a former White House aide, told me. "Obama's message is about the emerging America and the strength of our diversity. He represents it. And when Trump says 'Make America great again,' there's an element of turning the clock back to the days when minorities were at the back of the bus."

"That goes to the character of our country," Axelrod added. "The president is someone who would be uniquely sensitive to that."

Uniquely sensitive and utterly impassioned. In North Carolina he didn't so much urge voters as command them, with a testimonial about Clinton that was gushing and epic. I swear I saw her blush.

Was Trump on Obama's mind? I suspect. "Everybody can tweet," he said, adding that it's no preparation or qualification for the presidency. He brought up his younger daughter. "Sasha tweets, but she doesn't



**FRANK BRUNI**  
Comment

think that she thereby should be sitting behind the desk."

Was Trump on Clinton's mind? Clearly. She complimented Obama as "someone who has never forgotten where he came from — and Donald, if you're out there tweeting, it's Hawaii."

The 2016 campaign keeps showing us things that we're not accustomed to, and a second-term president campaigning with unfettered vigor for his desired successor is another of

those. George W. Bush didn't do it: He was so toxic at this point in his administration that John McCain's most fervent wish was to tuck him into a broom closet.

Bill Clinton didn't do it, because Al Gore was intent on coming across as his own, less priapic man. Neither did Ronald Reagan, because Bush's father similarly felt the need to flex his own muscle, outside of anyone's shadow, and Reagan's energy was flagging anyway.

Dwight Eisenhower? When asked what Richard Nixon had accomplished as his vice president, he said that he needed a week to think about it.

Obama and Hillary Clinton have arrived at a place of obvious respect for each other, and of palpable fondness. His high approval ratings put him in a position to help. Her stature puts her in a position not to be eclipsed by his presence or belittled by that assistance.

Campaigning together is an imperfect arrangement, inasmuch as she may seem to be arguing for the status quo instead of a better tomorrow. But Americans hold Obama in significantly higher esteem than they do her or Trump. There are far riskier things than letting the president carry the ball.

And he's a player in this regardless, given the larger context, which was clear when Clinton asked the North Carolina audience to think of "the early patriots who met in Philadelphia" in 1776.

"Nobody who looked like Barack Obama or me would have been included back then," she said. "But we're here today because the story of America is the story of hard-fought, hard-won progress."

That's the tale that Obama has always told. It's the narrative that so many of us cling to. Where does Trump fit into it, and does it survive him? Instead of just wondering and worrying, the departing president has joined the fight.

Frank Bruni, an Op-Ed columnist for The New York Times since June 2011, joined the newspaper in 1995 and has ranged broadly across its pages. He has been both a White House correspondent and the chief restaurant critic.

**YOUR VIEWS**

### Pendleton housing focus should be downtown

I am concerned we are not taking a long-term view about low-income housing units in Pendleton. Building five 20-unit apartment blocks at the end of the present duplexes will devalue both this property and the surrounding area. Concentrated poverty leads to a host of urban ills, and these units will rapidly slide into all the typical problems that entails. Traffic also will be concentrated in one of the busiest areas of the city, exit 209 and Highway 395. Looking at other large complexes in the city, one sees the future of this way of development quite easily.

Although more expensive initially, upgrading second story and higher levels on existing buildings downtown would provide a mix of retail, entertainment, food, and other anchors for a vibrant residential community contributing to a lasting betterment for the residents of the units and the city as a whole. This is the future development that would supercharge downtown and give a much-needed boost to the whole city, instead of warehousing people in another dreary box with no draw except as a place to live,

no true creation of community. It might take five years longer to realize this, but anyone who has studied urban planning knows the value of mixed use, high density development for the central core of the city.

Let's really give this a thought: I know there always are naysayers out there, but the logic is staring us in the face. Look at Walla Walla's downtown as an example. I would like to see a new dynamism downtown and housing would be a great addition. Rents will surely be higher, also providing more money and a higher income tenant who will spend more and attract a more upscale clientele to the existing businesses. A virtuous circle will begin to form and more business will locate here, rents will rise, taxes will follow, and the city can replenish its coffers and gentrify its downtown. The more wealth spent here, the more services the city can offer. We can also start going after streets and sidewalks at a faster pace as the city's financials improve.

Let's think outside the box, make Pendleton a better place and offer more housing, at all income levels. The future belongs to forward-looking policies and cities residents want to live in and be proud of. Revitalization starts at the core downtown, spreads

out and envelops the entire city. Attracting more business is also the right thing to do, nightlife and fun in a vibrant urban core.

Scott Newell  
Pendleton

### Global left attacking American values

The socialist/global left and the East Oregonian are promoting an agenda to undermine our godly Christian heritage claiming America "was born on the back of genocide against native populations and slavery against those deemed sub-human." The truth is our nation was born on the backs of courageous patriotic men and women that put their lives, their posterity, their fortunes and their heritage on the line to give America an "in God we trust" moral compass of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence. Certainly the American government failed at times to honor that moral compass, but why blame the founding fathers? Our government has initiated genocide against native populations and America citizens (Waco, Ruby Ridge). That is why the Second Amendment was written: to protect American citizens against a government that would turn on

its citizens. Every nation has a history of slavery; only one has shed the lives of 600,000 of its best to end slavery.

Instead of attacking our founding fathers the EO should be exposing the global agenda of Islamic jihad that is "born on the back of genocide against native populations and slavery against those deemed sub human." The socialist/global Obama administration does not and will not protect American citizens against Islamic jihad and the mainstream media will not tell the American people that truth. American citizens are not safe and our sovereignty has no advocate in our current government or mainstream press.

The EO would seduce us to believe that in the last 50 years civilization has reduced warfare and made "momentous gains in quality of life." Really? Here is the truth: The socialist/global left destroyed our moral

foundation when they removed God, prayer and the Bible as our public standard and America is now infested with class warfare, violence, crime and corruption. American government has started a bunch of wars in the last 50 years and won none.

The socialist/global left will provide cover and protect the Clintons, and skewer Trump when he exposes their global slavery agenda. They will blame the "bigot" Trump for the violence they will initiate at the Republican convention, promoting their agenda to end our sovereignty. They will thwart efforts to maintain surveillance on Muslims with terrorist ties, endangering all Americans. Only Christians/patriots that oppose the globalist agenda will be considered terrorists in their society for our future.

Stuart Dick  
Irrigon

**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.