

**EAST OREGONIAN**  
Founded October 16, 1875

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**OUR VIEW**

# Who will maintain the Park Service?

## Won't be Congress

Are America's national parks being loved to death? The watchdog group Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility has implicitly asked the question for years. In its current issue, the *Christian Science Monitor* raises the question explicitly.

The *CSM's* report focuses on the high visibility crown jewels of the park system — Yellowstone and Yosemite. Their visitor counts are astounding. Yellowstone received more than 4 million visitors last year. Total visitor count at all parks in the system this year will be equivalent to the U.S. population.

The *Monitor* notes that America's system of national parks is "chronically underfunded." In the most visited parks, that shows in trail systems and other facilities that are deteriorating from deferred maintenance.

In the face of inexorable growth in visitor count, the Park Service is innovating. Koenen says that Muir Woods near San Francisco has created a new advance parking reservation system to eliminate its chronic traffic congestion.

Yellowstone is working toward a similar solution.

For all of its phenomenal growth in visitor count, our system of national parks remains a haven for the nation. The Western writer Terry Tempest

Williams told the *Monitor*:

"Our national parks are breathing spaces in a country that is increasingly holding its breath." Williams just produced a report on her visit to a dozen Park Service sites — *The Hour of Land: A Personal Topography of America's National Parks*.

We cannot expect Congress to do the right thing and give the Park Service adequate funding. Thus the system will have to use ingenuity to maintain its quality.

**America's system of national parks is chronically underfunded.**

# We must do more to help foster kids

Oregon's foster care system for children in the midst of family crises is in serious trouble. Oregon Public Broadcasting has been shining a bright list at problems with foster care and finding situations that demand redress.

This is no new thing. OPB reported "cracks in foster care" five years ago. But by almost any reckoning, things have gotten worse.

There are hundreds fewer foster care beds in Oregon this year compared to last. Children sometimes have to spend nights in state offices and motel rooms, with a couple of state workers detailed to watch them.

How did we get to this point? First, there was an understandable nationwide switch away from state-run institutions for neglected, endangered and abandoned children, toward what was viewed as a more benign system of housing children in family homes where foster parents received state compensation in return for providing a semblance of home life.

Oregon foster parents receive a base rate of \$575 to \$741 a month per child, depending on the child's age. There is significant additional compensation to help deal with

special needs and circumstances. All in all, payments are not transparently unfair.

Some, and perhaps even most, foster parents aren't in it for the money but welcome the chance to be a savior to kids in need. So why do fewer and fewer participate? In part, our culture has changed.

**Oregon foster parents receive a base rate of \$575 to \$741 a month per child, depending on the child's age.**

Most modern families have only one or two children. In such small settings, foster children can necessitate major changes in "household chemistry." This means most contemporary families won't even contemplate joining the foster care program.

Those who do may find themselves weighed down by bureaucracy that is viewed as essential in today's abuse-conscious and litigious society.

It's becoming clear in Oregon and throughout the U.S. that we must develop and fund alternatives to traditional foster care. The Oregon Department of Human Services and the Legislature must confront this issue head on. We must do a better job of caring for children who are having the worst time in their lives.

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.

**YOUR VIEWS**

## BMCC pool needs time, money to be saved

Finding a way to keep the Blue Mountain Community College pool open would do many things.

First, it would keep both Pendleton and Hermiston High School swim teams alive. Second, it would allow BMCC to offer water-based classes to its students (scuba prep, swimming, and even aqua jogging classes for the elderly) Third, the Pendleton Swim Association does wonders for the children and families that take part in club lessons and activities.

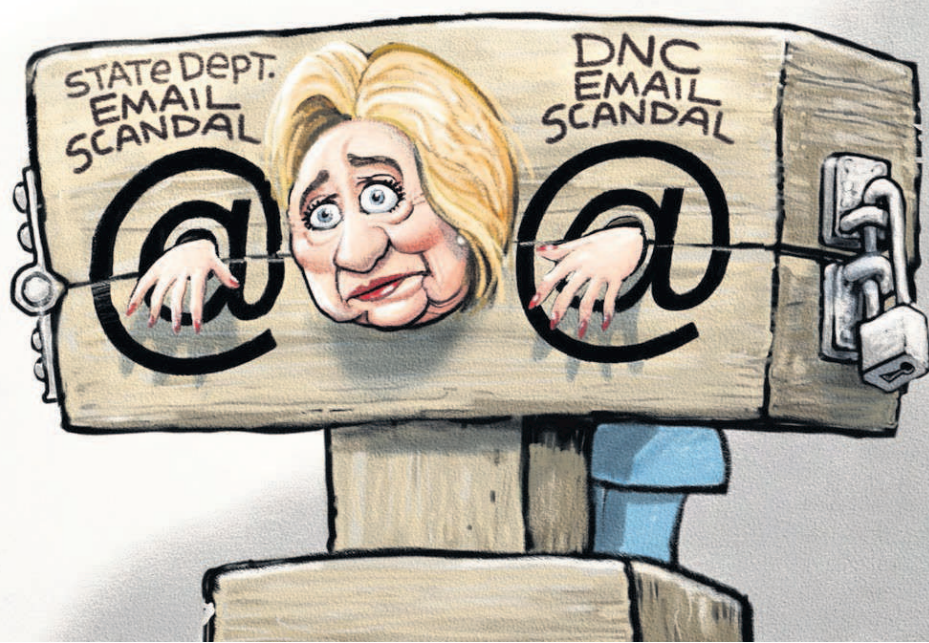
PSA instructors teach children the basics of water survival and individual strokes — freestyle, butterfly, breaststroke and backstroke.

Not only does PSA instruct kids about how to swim, but we teach them how to be independent and work within a team. Saving this pool — or even possibly building a new one — would mean a great deal to this community and some of its clubs. Please, give it thought.

Furthermore, if the college board can notify the baseball program (a program restricted to the college's baseball players) and give them close to 18 months to raise funds to keep their program intact, then giving a program that is open to the public with much more use only three months to raise close to \$2 million hardly seems fair.

**Dylan Clemons**  
Pendleton Swim Association instructor and former Pendleton High swimmer, Pendleton

**OTHER VIEWS**



# Hillary, this is why Democrats are still struggling

**P**HILADELPHIA — Dear Hillary, Donald Trump has presented you with an amazing opportunity to become a world historical figure! If you crush him in this election, you could create a new Democratic majority and reduce the GOP to an ever-declining rump of ethnic nationalism. On the other hand, if you fail to beat Trump, you will go down as America's most hapless political loser and be vilified forever for enabling an era of American Putinism.



**DAVID BROOKS**  
Comment

No pressure! Have fun in Philadelphia! To end up on the right side of this equation you're probably going to have to resist three natural tendencies, two of them your party's and one your own.

First, you're going to have to fight your party's materialistic mind-set.

This is 2016, not 1992. Over the past few years, economic and social anxiety has metastasized into something spiritual and existential.

Americans are no longer confident in their national project. They no longer trust their institutions or have faith in their common destiny. This is a crisis of national purpose. It's about personal identity and the basic health of communal life. Americans' anger and pessimism are more fundamental than anything that can be explained by GDP statistics.

Many Democrats have trouble thinking in these terms. When asked to explain any complex phenomenon, they instinctively reduce it to a materialist cause. If there's terrorism there must be lack of economic opportunity. If marriage is declining it must be because of joblessness.

This materialistic mind-set means that many Democrats are perpetually surprised by events that involve cultural threats and national identity. Why don't working-class Kansans vote for us? We offer them more programs. Why did the Brits leave the EU? It's against their economic interest.

The mind-set is also reductionist. There's a tendency to break national problems into small, interest-group-size chunks and then deliver pandering policy promises.

Look at your website. As Oren Cass points out in *The City Journal*, every demographic or interest group gets its own pander. If you're a horse lover, the Clinton campaign vows to crack down on "horse soring, in which chemicals or other inhumane methods are applied to horses' limbs to exaggerate their gait."

If Democrats wage that kind of niche-targeted campaign this year they will lose. Voters are worried that the whole society is falling apart. If Democrats think a crisis of national identity can be addressed with targeted tax credits they are living in a different century.

To stand a chance, Secretary Clinton, you're

probably going to have to talk as adeptly about threats to personal dignity as you do about day care. You're probably going to have to talk bluntly about the American civic religion. You're going to have to show you understand the way members of your class have slighted people who are less educated and less cosmopolitan.

Second, you're going to have to fight the Sanders tide, which on Day 1 of this convention was astoundingly strong. Many Democrats have grown hostile to capitalism. Sixty percent of Democrats are friendly to socialism, according to a poll by OnMessage Inc. and the American Action Network.

Of course, this is general election suicide. If you want a perfect way to turn off suburban service economy office park workers who will decide this election, then the Bernie Sanders route is it! The economic nostalgia of the left is as futile as the demographic nostalgia of the right.

Somehow you're going to have to come up with an updated muscular Clintonism. For 30 years

your name has stood for a Democratic governing style that is internationalist in foreign affairs, socially moderate and pro-global integration (while softening its edges). That open, optimistic approach has to be combined with a more aggressive and radical effort to help people compete in the new economy.

Third, you're going to have to answer hatred with love. Your tendency so far in your career has been to answer hostility with distrust, and secretiveness.

You've ended up projecting coldness but also weakness and hurt. People who build emotional walls amid conflict do so out of fear, not strength.

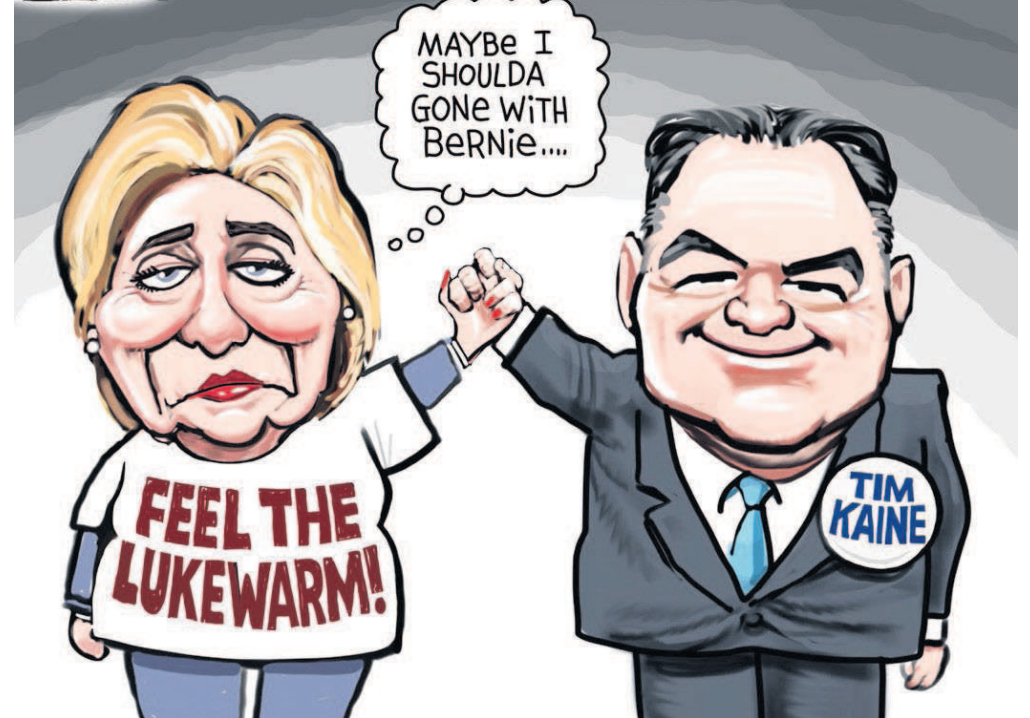
Along the way you've made yourself phenomenally unpopular. The polls show that you are now just as distrusted by the American people as Donald Trump is.

The confident move is to break out of the emotional bunker with vulnerability. The sign of strength is to answer the "Lock Her Up" enmity with a confident honest account of what it feels like to be you — embroiled in the political combat, encased in this global celebrity role, but maintaining authenticity in a world that conspires against it.

Imagine if you displayed honest self-appraisal and even moments of remorse. You'd have the world rooting for you, not against you.

This convention is about resetting relationships: establishing trust between you and voters, restoring optimism that we can thrive in the modern economy, redefining a soul satisfying faith in the American project.

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



**LETTERS POLICY**

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