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OUR VIEW

Let's get ready to Round-Up

It's here — time for another go-round at the Pendleton Round-Up.

For Umatilla County's biggest week, the streets are already filling up, parking spaces are harder to come by, and the checkout line at Safeway is getting longer every hour.

But the rodeo is getting closer, too. And the Pendleton pride, hospitality, Western culture and hollering good times are on fine display already. The Indian Village has begun rising into the cool September sky. And slack got underway Monday, the beginning of the long slog required to qualify for the main events on Saturday.

There is a lot to see this year, for visitors and locals alike. And for an event that is 106 years old, there are quite a few new narratives this time around.

The big news is that back-to-back-to-back title winner Trevor Brazile will be a no-show this year, after starting his own cowboy circuit competing with the PRCA. That means this year's Round-Up is a wide open affair, and a new champion will surely be crowned. It's sad to miss one of the all-time great cowboys, but

Brazile's absence means this year the East Oregonian trophy — given to the best all-around cowboy — could be claimed by anybody. That will bring an excitement to Saturday's finals that hasn't been there the last few years, as Brazile's domination went unchallenged.

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But in addition to events on the grass, this is also the year to visit (or more likely, revisit) Happy Canyon. The venerable night show celebrates its centennial this year, with a renewed focus on its long legacy.

It's hard to believe the event has lasted for 100 years, through the era of silent films, color films, 3D films and IMAX films. It requires a massive amount of volunteer time and labor, and it has been able to keep both volunteers and audiences engaged for generations, even as tastes and politics changed.

Surviving is remarkable enough, but as it inches over in the triple digits, Happy Canyon is thriving. Like the Round-Up went all out for their centennial, Happy Canyon is doing the same. Be sure to join the party and watch the show sometime during Pendleton's busiest week.

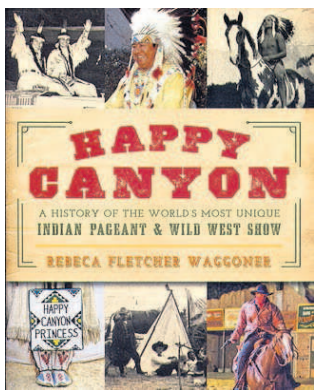
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Culture Corner

For the past 100 years, Happy Canyon has been telling the history of Umatilla County in a very non-textbook sort of way.

Through song and dance, narration and mime, pyrotechnics and pratfalls, the Indian pageant and wild west show entertains the audience in town for the Round-Up. You could even argue that some come for the night show and then stick around for the rodeo.

Rebecca Fletcher Waggoner, a fourth-generation participant in the show, celebrates the history with her first book, "Happy Canyon: A History of the World's Most Unique Indian Pageant & Wild West Show."



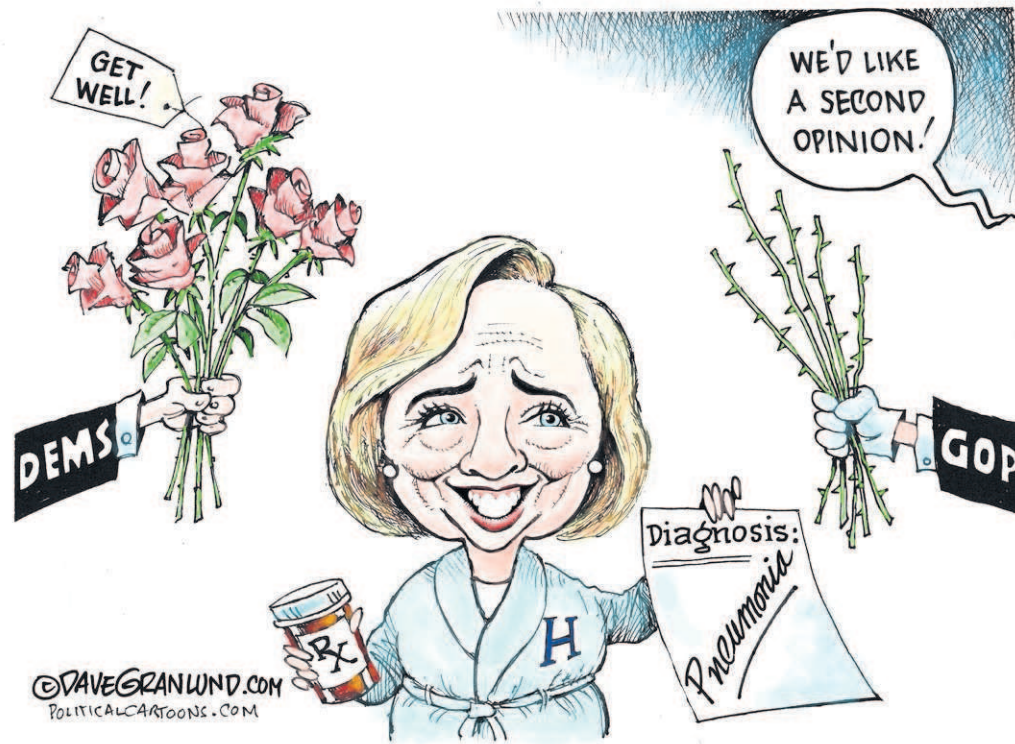
The pages are full of inside stories and rare photographs of the pageant through the years, creating a well-organized archive of all the people and moments that define Happy Canyon.

The show is a throwback to be sure, and if someone set out to write and stage it today it would look far different. Understanding the show's creators and innovators will give the performance some valuable perspective. As

Doug Corey, a former Happy Canyon director, says in the book, "The show depicts history. It has nothing to do with the present day and age."

Be heard!

Comment online at eastoregonian.com



OTHER VIEWS

Our Russia problem

Russia's place in American politics used to be (relatively) simple. The further right you stood, the more you feared Ivan and his Slavic wiles. The further left, the more you likely thought the Red Menace was mostly just a scare story.

Now things are more complicated. In just 15 years, the Republican Party has had a president who famously claimed a soul-to-soul relationship with Vladimir Putin ... followed by two consecutive nominees who took a starkly hawkish stance on Russia ... and now a presidential candidate in Donald Trump who has a palpable man-crush on Putin and promises closer ties with his regime.

Over the same period, Democrats have gone from mocking George W. Bush's naiveté about Putin ... to mocking Mitt Romney for describing Russia as America's main geopolitical foe ... to spinning theories about Trump being an agent of Russian influence that seem ripped from a right-wing periodical circa 1955.

The ideologues, too, have lost the plot. Sean Hannity is hosting the Russian cat's-paw Julian Assange because he might have dirt on Hillary. The Nation is defending Donald Trump against what it calls the "neo-McCarthyism" of mainstream liberalism. Team-player conservatives are tying themselves in knots explaining or defending Trump's Putin crush; liberal pundits are trying to memory-hole everything they wrote about Romney and Russia in 2012.

This confusion reflects various partisan derangements, plus the destabilizing influence of Trump's strongman shtick. But to some extent confusion is entirely justified. We should be uncertain about how to think about our relationship with Russia, and our parties should be trying on different perspectives, because it isn't clear at all where our national interest vis-à-vis the Russians really lies.

At the root of this uncertainty is the fact that neither the United States nor Russia seems certain exactly what kind of power it intends to be. During the Cold War, we were (mostly) a status quo power — practicing containment, building intricate alliance networks, propping up bad actors for fear of something worse — and the Russians were the revisionists, promoting socialist revolution from Havana to Hanoi. Then in the early 2000s we seemed to have changed places: Under George W. Bush, America was a revolutionary power, preaching the messianic faith of liberalism and democracy, while Moscow was a friend of strongmen, stability and the Saddam-era status quo.

But now it's a muddle. In the Middle East, throughout the Arab Spring and its aftermath, Washington has remained revisionist while Moscow has labored at realpolitik, seeking



ROSS DOUTHAT
Comment

to protect the devils that it knows. But at the same time Putin has become opportunistically revisionist in his own right, sensing American weakness and looking for ways to destabilize the Western order — including through tacit support for Donald Trump.

Unless you're Trump himself, Putin's destabilizing moves — the Crimean Anschluss, the Ukraine invasion, the shadow war against his neighbors and Western governments writ large — have made it much harder to imagine Moscow as anything but an adversary to be checked, contained, opposed.

But the trajectory of events in the Middle East, where American grand strategy has

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mostly come to grief and we face a shifting array of foes and rivals, suggests the limits of a "new Cold War" lens. Our primary interest in Syria and elsewhere is not, as it was decades ago, containing Russian expansion. It's containing jihadi terrorism, ending the refugee crisis, restoring some kind of basic order — and in all these tasks we need a way to work with Moscow if we hope to see them through to any kind of finish.

Which gets at the underlying question here, one that both parties ought to be debating: Just how

right was Romney? Russia certainly looks more like a more dangerous geopolitical rival today than it did four years ago. But is Putin's regime and its revanchist ambitions the biggest potential danger that we face? Bigger than al-Qaida and ISIS and their epigones? Bigger than the far-richer, far-stronger, and equally authoritarian People's Republic of China?

It is not enough to say that all of them are dangers; statesmen must prioritize, and our priorities are dangerously open-ended and undefined.

If the last four years really are a Cold War 2.0 overture, then our approach to the Middle East and Asia needs to be refashioned with an eye toward winning a new twilight war with Moscow.

But if Beijing is, in the long run, a more important rival than Moscow — if China's capacities and ambitions are more dangerous than Putin's bold play of a weak hand — then we may need a path to de-escalation and wary cooperation with the Russian regime.

Donald Trump, with his grotesque embrace of Putin's thuggishness, is not the man for that task or any other. But as has often been true in this election, in the midst of his folly you can see the questions that the next generation of leaders needs to ask.

Ross Douthat joined *The New York Times* as an Op-Ed columnist in April 2009. Previously, he was a senior editor at *The Atlantic*.

YOUR VIEWS

Time to harvest puncture vine

Go forth now and start harvesting, prior to a visitor picking up the seeds. Do be careful, though, as the main or big seed will split into five when touched. Puncture vine is a very tricky plant.

Already all those visitors, in the past, have packed off enough seed across the West. Besides, we could lose next year's first place winner at the county fair!

Joe LaVerdure
Pendleton

Wolf explains calf misunderstanding

The pack and I certainly agree about poor communication from Fish and Game people. They never tell us anything. We howl to anyone who will listen. It would be nice to know if the latest plan is lethal or non-lethal. That makes a big difference in where we

hunt and what we eat.

There was an incident recently where we were unjustly blamed for killing a calf in the Blue Mountains. The calf was swimming in a dugout and started to drown. Several of our pack swam out to rescue him, but were unsuccessful and somehow we were blamed for his death.

A. Wolf, proud father of several new litters (as told to Mike Mehren, the wolf listener, Hermiston)

This is not your father's Republican Party candidate!

The candidate running for the highest office in our land just last week at the National Forum on National Security said that Vladimir Putin is a great leader and that our President Barack Obama was weak, but not presenting any evidence to back up this claim. This is the same person that asked the Russians, in a rally, to find/hack

Hillary Clinton's emails. There has been some assertions that they did just that and hacked the Democratic party email as well. The closeness of this candidate to Russian political figures through his aides and business dealings is quite troubling and then to disparage our sitting president is hateful/irresponsible and beyond the pale!

I have listened to the rhetoric on both sides of the aisle concerning this presidential campaign and concluded that Hillary Clinton is the best person for this high office because she has the knowledge of world affairs throughout her life as first lady of Arkansas, First Lady of the United States and U. S. senator from New York. Then she had the great honor to be selected for Secretary of State for President Obama's cabinet. This position is one of the most demanding jobs in the cabinet; she worked with world leaders in Europe and China as well as the Middle East — our allies and our adversaries. Numerous times she settled differences

and explained situations to straighten out problems in her work as Secretary of State. She is a calm, serious, steadfast person that gets the job done and does it well. Her moral compass points straight and true!

Hillary Clinton For President — We Are Stronger Together

Jan Beitel
Umatilla

Restrooms needed for long Dress-Up Parade

We had a great time at the Dress-Up Parade in Pendleton on Saturday. The only thing I was surprised about was the lack of any port-a-potties this year. Thank goodness Up With Donuts didn't hassle us for using their restroom. They offered great service and even better donuts. Can't wait for the Westward Ho! Parade coming up on Friday. Let 'er buck!

Dan Trimble
Weston

LETTERS POLICY

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