

# EAST OREGONIAN

Founded October 16, 1875

**KATHRYN B. BROWN**  
Publisher

**DANIEL WATTENBURGER**  
Managing Editor

**TIM TRAINOR**  
Opinion Page Editor

**MARISSA WILLIAMS**  
Regional Advertising Director

**MARCY ROSENBERG**  
Circulation Manager

**JANNA HEIMGARTNER**  
Business Office Manager

**MIKE JENSEN**  
Production Manager

## OUR VIEW

# Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to our letter writers, who have overwhelmed the editor with their thoughts in the last few weeks before November elections.



From presidential politics to local levies, seceding from the union to building a wall around the current one, we've had people submit thoughts on all of it.

We're pleased to see that level of engagement, and that writers realize the power of a letter to the editor in an age when you can plaster your thoughts on Facebook immediately. A newspaper arrives on thousands of doorsteps each morning — and many of those people aren't on your Facebook friend list and they might even be inclined to disagree

with you. Reaching them is the important part.

If you want your letter to run before Election Day, please submit them by Oct. 27. We hope to empty our election letter hopper on Oct. 29 and give everyone a few days to breathe before filling out their ballot.

We're cutting our tips and kicks short this week, so we can fit in more of those letters.

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

### Umatilla school bond will not increase tax rate

I am writing in support of the Umatilla School District bond measure on the November ballot. This bond will allow the district to make needed improvements at all three schools in Umatilla — McNary Elementary, Clara Brownell Middle School and Umatilla High School. Our district staff have done a wonderful job of maintaining our buildings, but there comes a time when funds are needed for capital improvements.

There are two really great things about this bond. One is that it will NOT increase taxes for Umatilla citizens; the new bonds are estimated to continue the same tax rate of the current bonds, just longer. The second great thing is if voters approve the bond, the Umatilla School District will receive an additional \$4 million from the state of Oregon for district projects. This opportunity will not come again from the state for a long time, if ever, and is a great benefit to the district — essentially receiving a free \$4 million.

I encourage the Umatilla community to vote YES on this school bond — to protect our students, to protect our educational investments and send a clear message that the Umatilla community is dedicated to quality education.

Travis Eynon, chair  
Umatilla School Board

### Support Irrigon Fire District bond measure

The Irrigon Rural Fire Protection District is submitting Bond Levy 25-76 to the voters of the district to construct a much-needed new building to meet the growing demand for services, and to support the necessary training needs of the emergency response personnel. Our volunteers serve both the city of Irrigon and the rural fire area.

The boundaries are Umatilla/Morrow County line on the east to Paterson Ferry Road on the west and the Columbia River on the north to Depot Lane on the south. The fire district is independent of the city of Irrigon.

The new facility will be referred to as the Irrigon Safety Center and it will not only house the fire services but in addition will serve the ambulance and law enforcement. The repayment of the bond levy is approximately \$97.27 per year for a home with an assessed value of \$100,000.

The existing station was built in the 1940s and is lacking many of the safety requirements currently required. We encourage the community to come and tour our current station and speak with chief Larry Burns or any member of the board elected to govern the district. Feel free to call 541-922-3133 to visit or have any questions you may have answered.

Please vote yes on bond measure 25-76.

Larry Burns, fire chief  
Irrigon Rural Fire Protection District

## YOUR VIEWS

### Rowan hasn't made Umatilla County safer

Sheriff Rowan states on his website: "It's not in me to take a back seat; I have a desire to serve and make the community safer." However, if you look at Umatilla County, it is not safer. Especially it is not safer for children.

Since 2006, our county has had a very visible meth and opioid issue. We have policies and agencies that must be transparent and up-to-date. We deserve someone who has the collective support of police agencies, not just board memberships. We deserve someone who will question mis-spending.

Please support Ryan Lehnert for Umatilla County Sheriff. Back seat or front seat, it doesn't matter if the vehicle is headed off a cliff. Not only does Umatilla County need a new driver, it needs Ryan Lehnert to stand up, not sit down, as the new sheriff.

Carol McMillan  
Hermiston

### Republican platform puts public lands at risk

As a long time Oregonian who enjoys our great public lands, I am deeply disturbed by sections of the Republican Platform that resulted from the 2016 convention in Cleveland last summer. Under the section titled "America's Natural Resources," the platform outlines the party's position on federal lands, the Endangered Species Act, and climate change.

The platform states: "Congress shall immediately pass universal legislation providing for a timely and orderly mechanism requiring the federal government to convey certain federally controlled public lands to states." Recent discussions indicated this could mean up to 2 million acres per state as a start. States have very talented and skilled resource managers — that is not the question. Each state has differing capabilities for managing public lands, however, as well as motivations. Differing approaches can slant priorities for multiple-use and access that we have enjoyed for over 100 years. What would change? Would these lands be sold off to help balance budgets or when they become uneconomic to manage? The big question in divesting federal public lands is, who would be the big winners over time? President Teddy Roosevelt and others established these lands for the American public for conservation purposes with an eye towards future generations, not to be parceled out for economic or political gains.

If Congress were truly interested in improving management of public lands, they could start with two basic actions. First, they could pass legislation that would end "fire borrowing" where funds intended for multiple use management are routinely used to fight ever increasingly expensive wildfires. These events, when exceeding regular fire budgets, should be treated like other natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods. Second, Congress should provide some protection from litigation when restoration projects are developed as a result of diverse public collaborative efforts.

These public lands belong to all of us — not just those who would gain an economic or political edge. For over 100 years, we Americans have enjoyed the economic, cultural and spiritual benefits of lands owned by and accessible to all. As we look to the future, they will only become more valuable, especially in providing clean water, clean air, and carbon storage, helping reduce the impacts of climate change. To divest of these national treasures for economic gain, to irresponsibly throw away protections, and to deny the changes in climate we are all experiencing seems short sighted, leaving future generations with fewer options and choices.

Jeff Blackwood  
Pendleton

### Measure 97 will damage Oregon businesses

Measure 97 is bad for the average Oregonian. Measure 97 is a value-added progressive tax similar to what is used in Canada and Europe. It taxes most all goods and services at each level. While 2.5 percent being paid by an out-of-state corporation sounds good, that is not what really occurs.

Since most companies have some form of debt and are responsible to owners or shareholders, in order to cover a 2.5 percent tax they have to gross it up to meet loan conveyances and margin requirements. The result is an average 3.2 percent increase at each level. Since the product is touched multiple times before it is actually purchased by the end consumer, the average consumer will experience an estimated 8 percent inflation on all primary goods, which include food, healthcare, fuel, living quarters, utilities and even cell phones.

For example: Boise Cascade buys fuel from Chevron, fertilizer and seed from Monsanto, utility services from Cascade, Bonneville, Century Link, etc. At the first and second levels, basic wood product wholesale prices go up 1.6 percent for cost increases, plus 3.2 percent for Boise's revenue tax. Home Depot then realizes a 4.8 percent increase and has to add 3.2 percent to cover its new tax; the consumer then sees an 8 percent increase at the cash register.

While the tax is not applied to non-"C" corporations it does negatively impact all businesses and consumers with higher costs.

Measure 97 is poorly defined — the money can go anywhere in the state budget. It is not legally obligated to support healthcare, education or safety programs. With a billion dollar PERS problem looming in the next few years, this is a stopgap measure for the state employee retirement program, which is why M97 was brought forward and supported by their union.

If tax money is needed to support healthcare, education, and emergency services then a better solution for the average citizen would be a 4 percent sales tax on consumer goods.

That way utilities, healthcare and living quarters expense could be excluded. The consumer would also have an opportunity to be selective in what they purchase. Out-of-state visitors and businesses would support the system as they purchase Oregon goods and services, with no one experiencing an across-the-board inflationary tax.

Let's not hurt the poor, our young workers, or the economy.

Barry Featherstone  
Pendleton

### Had enough of the way things are? Vote Republican

Are you tired of: Our society imploding from a lack of character and honor; a school system that refuses to teach the Ten Commandments, allow prayer, or say the pledge of allegiance; a court system that incarcerates four to five times more of its citizens than any other country on the planet; a court system that allows attorneys to lie in their courtrooms.

They even reward it: A public retirement system that indentures its citizens to pay government employees 2-3 times more retirements than the private sector, 15 to 20 years earlier; a national debt approaching \$20 trillion; a society that feels that they are entitled; a legal system that allows judges to not rule in front of the public that elects them, then rule on their own retirement system; a health care system that is 2-4 times higher than any other industrialized nations?

If you have had enough you need to vote Republican.

Kalvin B. Garton  
Pendleton

## OTHER VIEWS

# The debate boiled down to its scariest answer

OK, Donald Trump won't promise to accept the results of the election. That's truly ... good grief.

"I will tell you at the time. ... I'll keep you in suspense," he told Wednesday's debate moderator, Chris Wallace. The word "rigged" came up. Yow.

Hillary Clinton noted that Trump tends to presume that whenever he loses anything, the system was rigged: "There was even a time when he didn't get an Emmy for his TV program three years in a row and he started tweeting that the Emmys were rigged."

"I should have gotten it," Trump retorted.

This is obviously what we should have known was coming when the host of "The Celebrity Apprentice" wound up as a presidential nominee. But jeepers, people, this is serious. Trump was refusing to acknowledge it was even possible for him to lose a fair fight. At one point, he announced the election was rigged because Hillary Clinton was in it. ("She should never have been allowed to run for the presidency based on what she did with emails.")

The rigged-election moment overshadowed everything else in the debate, during which Trump made very strange faces while Clinton was talking, but did



GAIL COLLINS  
Comment

manage to avoid going completely off the rails. Does that make him a success? We are once again faced with the problem of the very, very low bar. Still, no.

He did manage, particularly in the early part of the debate, to ignore Clinton's effort to get his goat. When she claimed he "choked" at his meeting with the president of Mexico, he kept pretty calm. Although Trump did observe, weirdly, that when it came to immigration, under President Barack Obama "millions of people have been moved out of this country. ... She doesn't want to say that, but that's what's happened ... big league." Is moving people out not the whole Trump plan?

They also had a whopping argument about — guess who? Vladimir Putin! "Putin from everything I see has no respect for this person," Trump said, referring to Clinton. The fight went on for a while, until she cannily managed to divert the discussion to the possibility of placing Trump's "finger on the nuclear button."

OK, two critical takeaways. Trump won't promise to concede if he loses, and if he wins, he gets control of the nukes. These are the only things you need to think about for the next 2 1/2 weeks.

We have been down this debate road before, and we knew before the evening started that when

Trump was asked about groping women, he'd deny everything, blame it on Hillary Clinton and then bring up the emails. And that when the emails came up, Clinton would mention the way Trump insulted John McCain's war record, the Mexican-American judge and the parents of the dead war hero.

"Such a nasty woman," Trump said at one point. As the debate went on, he got more sullen, his expressions stranger. One of the things we have now learned for sure, three debates running, is that he has a serious stamina problem.

Hillary Clinton has many faults. She tends to give long, rather boring answers. She has never learned how to deal with the email question. But the woman is an absolute rock in these long-running, high-stress critical encounters.

Also, she made it very clear that she would accept the results of the election, even if she lost. God help us all.

Clinton was not particularly good in defending the Clinton Foundation. However, it did seem fair for her to point out that Trump used some of his own foundation's money to purchase a 6-foot portrait of himself. ("Who does that?")

But what difference did it all make? The man wouldn't promise to concede if he loses. Later on CNN, his campaign manager said Trump would indeed accept the results "because he's going to win the election." This was not



"IT'S SAFE TO COME OUT NOW! NO MORE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES THIS YEAR."

particularly reassuring.

If you were totally ignoring the entire event, you might want to know that nobody shook hands, that it took Clinton an hour to mention that Trump had never released his tax returns, and that whenever she pointed out that he had purchased the very same Chinese steel and aluminum he complained was ruining the economy, he said that it was her fault for not changing the laws.

She did bring up the Miss-Universe-is-fat moment, and Trump said "give me a break."

He promised to run the country "the way I run my company," and a great part of the listening public contemplated the fact that this is a guy who's declared bankruptcy six times. But we've already forgotten

all about it.

Only one thing matters. The man says he won't promise to accept the results of the election. All those establishment Republicans who've been hoping to get through this ordeal by just being quiet and looking sad have got some work to do. Fast.

Gail Collins joined *The New York Times* in 1995 as a member of the editorial board. In 2001 she became the first woman ever appointed editor of the *Times's* editorial page.

## LETTERS POLICY

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters for publication. Send to 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.