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OUR VIEW

Oregon must comply with ID act

The Oregon legislature is in a stare-down with the federal government, one it is likely to lose. At issue is the adoption of federal standards for driver's licenses and state-issued identification cards in Oregon that can be used at secured areas, including airports.

The law requiring it, the Real ID Act of 2005, was enacted as a result of the 9/11 attacks and the subsequent war on terrorism. It requires higher standards of proof of U.S. citizenship or proof of lawful status in the U.S. in order for state-issued IDs to be valid for federal purposes, such as at airport security points or when entering federal courthouses or other secure federal facilities.

The Transportation Security Administration, which oversees airport security, has said it intends to stop accepting noncompliant IDs on Jan. 22, 2018. States that are still noncompliant — but have been granted deadline extensions — will face a hard deadline of October 2020, when Homeland Security has said it will require all air travelers to carry a Real ID-compliant license. At that point, residents from noncompliant states will be required to present other identification which does meet Real ID requirements, like a passport, to fly domestically or to enter federal courthouses or other secure federal facility. Passports are already required for international air travel.

Across the country, 21 states currently comply, but others including Oregon have fought the law, saying it is an overreaching, unfunded federal mandate. In 2009, Oregon lawmakers prohibited the Department of Motor Vehicles from spending state funds to comply with the act. They have

argued that many of the requirements were too expensive to undertake, and they have asked for extensions each year, which have been routinely granted. Just this month, the state was granted another extension, but this time only until June 2017, essentially just enough time for the Legislature to reconsider its position. Oregon lawmakers have said they will continue to seek extensions, which if granted, would make its deadline for full compliance in 2020.

While we understand Oregon's initial reluctance to comply, it's time to start implementing the changes.

Congress enacted the law more than a decade ago and aviation safety remains a deep concern. The Real IDs will help ease some of the worries. The security measures also make the licenses and ID cards harder to replicate and they have the potential to reduce fraud and identity theft.

Additionally, technology and expense issues that existed in 2005 along with security concerns about the cards' data shouldn't be a factor today. Experts say better technology and security now exists at far less cost than it did then. And on some of the concerns, like data security, the states should already be addressing those issues regardless of the Real ID requirements.

Failure to take the needed implementation steps will eventually force all residents who want to board a plane or enter a federal courthouse to spend the time and money themselves to obtain a compliant ID when one could easily exist otherwise through state-issued driver's licenses.

Legislators shouldn't allow that to happen and should address it in their next session.

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.

Culture Corner

If you're one of the 1,200 or so people who ran through the Boardman poplar tree farm this weekend, you know races on dirt and rock trails through nature are rewarding in their own special way, even if running on a wide, flat street or sidewalk might be easier on the feet.

But there are limits. And the Barkley Marathons in rural Tennessee push those limits to the extreme.

The 2014 documentary "The Barkley Marathons: The Race That Eats Its Young" is a study in the limits of the human body and will. It's a top secret race, with only 40 slots and no publicized method for entering, that consists of five backwoods marathons that must be completed in 60 hours.

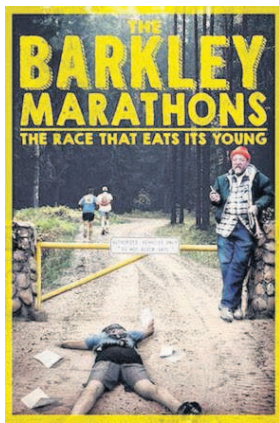
Must is a strong word. In its 31 years, only 14 people have finished the five circuits, and for the first decade of its existence, completing two loops was considered the extent of human ability.

The course traverses the steep forests of eastern Tennessee, and to complete the entire race a competitor must climb and descend an accumulated 54,200 feet, equal to summiting Mt. Everest twice.

The documentary explains the eccentricities of the race itself, its founders and those who dare take the challenge. And the challengers are the most fascinating part. As each completes a loop and takes a moment to rest, eat and receive medical help, the question of whether they will muster the courage to head out again becomes a study in self-discipline. There is no prize except the satisfaction

of completing what few people ever have or could.

Through the course of the film the viewer becomes invested in each competitor — so much so that it's hard to know whether you want them to finish the race or simply stop at camp after completing a third or fourth loop to end their misery. — *Daniel Wattenburger*



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OTHER VIEWS

Addressing mental health in rural Oregon

A recent study of mental health resources in Umatilla County, commissioned by the Pendleton Academies board of directors, revealed among its findings challenges that include a shortage of mental health professionals such as child psychiatrists. The Pendleton Academies board actively promotes improved and responsive mental health care services for children in Umatilla County.



BILL GRIGSBY
Comment

In 2015, the board approached Eastern Oregon University about collaborating on a research project to better understand the issues facing Umatilla County's mental health care system. Professor and colleague Rosemary Powers and I worked with three students on a study examining issues related to accessibility, availability and acceptability of mental health services for children. The study was carried out over the course of a year, and involved interviews with mental health professionals in different settings, surveys of teachers in the K-12 school systems, and a survey of available research on current trends and promising practices.

Study results suggested resources are scarce, but they also painted a picture of a system performing admirably well considering the shortage of mental health professionals. Specific issues identified include:

- 1) a need for more psychiatric care for those children in greatest need, provided by professionals residing in the county;
 - 2) a perception on the part of teachers that they are often on the front lines of helping to distinguish between behavioral and mental health issues in the classroom;
 - 3) a recognition that barriers of language, culture and distance must be addressed to ensure all children who need services can access them easily; and
 - 4) an understanding that children will fare better when their families' situations, economic and otherwise, are stable and secure.
- The county's mental health care system is developing in ways that help address these issues. Key players, including Intermountain ESD, Greater Oregon Behavior Health, Inc. (GOBHI), Lifeways, Umatilla County Mental Health and C.A.R.E. Coordination, the Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center, local schools and Head Start, and private mental health professionals such as Psychological Services of Pendleton and child psychiatrist Dr. David Conant-Norville — who is based in Hillsboro and travels to Pendleton one day a week to see patients — are all working toward similar goals:
- Student-based health centers in schools that include mental health counselors;

- Investment in "wraparound" care that seeks to expand services and support to the families of children facing mental health challenges;
- Development of in-school programs to address issues like suicide, bullying, and trauma-informed care and practice;
- An emphasis at the state and regional levels to use the Governor's Early Learning Initiative to integrate mental health concerns and care;
- Greater coordination among mental health and allied providers through the county's C.A.R.E. Coordination initiative.

In short, while Umatilla County suffers from the same issues that many areas of rural America face with respect to children's mental health, the system in place has recognized the importance of addressing them, improving coordination, especially with schools to make sure mental health care gives every child the chance for a quality education, and investing at the system level where it will do the most good.

For its part, Pendleton Academies' board has committed itself to improving access to child psychiatric care, and more generally to professional development for individuals committed to working as child psychologists in Umatilla County.

Lifeways is working with schools to increase access to counseling, and the county's C.A.R.E. Coordination team is setting the example for working with all partners and providing the "glue" that holds the system together by making it more "user friendly," especially to those children whose families may lack the financial means. In addition, "telepsychology" (using computer technologies to provide patient care at a distance) may be an effective means to address some of the barriers posed by distance in rural areas.

The collaboration between Pendleton Academies and Eastern Oregon University proved fruitful. The board has a better sense of where to invest its resources, EOU was able to provide unique research-based opportunities to students seeking careers in the social welfare arena, and the process provides a model for future collaboration with EOU that should serve the region well.

Pendleton Academies Executive Director Terry Edvalson has been working with EOU and regional partners for decades, and this recently completed study is just one of several he has spearheaded in recent years that should bear fruit in the future.

Bill Grigsby, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Eastern Oregon University.

YOUR VIEWS

Ryan Lehnert for sheriff

When I was sheriff of Umatilla County, Terry Rowan worked for me as a correction officer and I was pleased with his work. I'm sure there is good work in his department but the only contact I have had or heard about the department has been negative. Below are some such incidents.

The only interaction I have had with his department has left a very bad taste in my mouth. I had a loved one spending 30 days in his jail. I found it almost impossible to get in to see her. Most of the time I could not get them to answer the phone so I could make an appointment. My wife tried all day for several days, but no answer. When she tried other numbers at the sheriff's office they would not help her but would refer her to the number set up to make appointments.

I have been made aware of several incidents where there has been a lack of response by the sheriff's department. One such incident was where the kids and teachers at Pilot Rock Grade School heard what they identified as gunshots. They crawled under their desks, crying and waiting for the sheriff's department

to respond. When the sheriff didn't respond they called Ryan Lehnert, who had the day off. He arrives in a few minutes from his home in Pendleton. Sheriff Rowan responded five days later.

Another one was where a relative of mine watched thieves steal their jet ski and they called the sheriff's department during the theft. They knew who the thieves were but still could not get a response from the sheriff. She got the license number at the request of the sheriff's department but the department never did respond, even after more calls were made. They are still waiting.

Ryan has spent 20 years in the National Guard. He has been a first sergeant in both Pendleton and Hermiston National Guard. He spent a year in combat in Iraq as a sergeant in a recon scout unit. His experience in the military is vital to policing in today's world.

I have known Ryan since he was a boy, and even as a boy he had utmost character.

He is a Christian with Christian values. He treats people with respect and has a sincere interest in their problems.

Jim Carey
Pilot Rock

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.

