

EAST OREGONIAN

Founded October 16, 1875

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OUR VIEW

Marijuana deserves chance to succeed in Pendleton

You may have missed it. Lost amid electing a new president of the free world and deciding the fate of the most important fiscal measure in Oregon history, marijuana businesses became legal in Pendleton. Heck, it has been more than a week since the election and we're finally getting around to writing about it in this space.

Pendleton voters easily passed the measure, with 55 percent in support of allowing recreational marijuana businesses and 44 percent opposed. That's almost a flip from the results of Measure 91, which legalized recreational marijuana statewide just two years ago. Medical marijuana passed in Pendleton by an even wider margin, with 60 percent of voters in favor of overturning the ban. And just about everybody was in favor of adding an extra 3 percent tax to it — 83 percent.

The city may do better because the other two nearby municipalities with pot on the ballot did not overturn their bans. Bans in Milton-Freewater held by the slimmest of margins (51 percent to 48 percent) while in Hermiston it was wider (54 percent to 45 percent).

Those results benefit Pendleton. It will soon be the only place in Umatilla County — and the only place in Oregon for hundreds of miles — where both recreational and medical users can shop for, sell and commercially grow marijuana. And slices of the statewide pie increase for participating municipalities every time someone opts out.

Yet success is not assured. Pendleton City Council — a body that has been openly and aggressively opposed to implementation, and only narrowly agreed to let voters have a say in the matter — still has plenty of control over its future in the city. So, too, does the planning department and the mayor.

We believe each should respect the will of the voters and do its best

to help marijuana businesses succeed in and benefit Pendleton. That begins with enacting a marijuana-specific business license, creating straightforward and stringent (but not onerous) requirements, and allowing marijuana retail businesses safe and affordable places to operate. And this should be done in the next few meetings, so businesses can

know what to expect and begin moving forward come the first of the year.

The current rules and zoning requirements in Pendleton are not ideal, but they offer a place to start. No marijuana business can open in the downtown

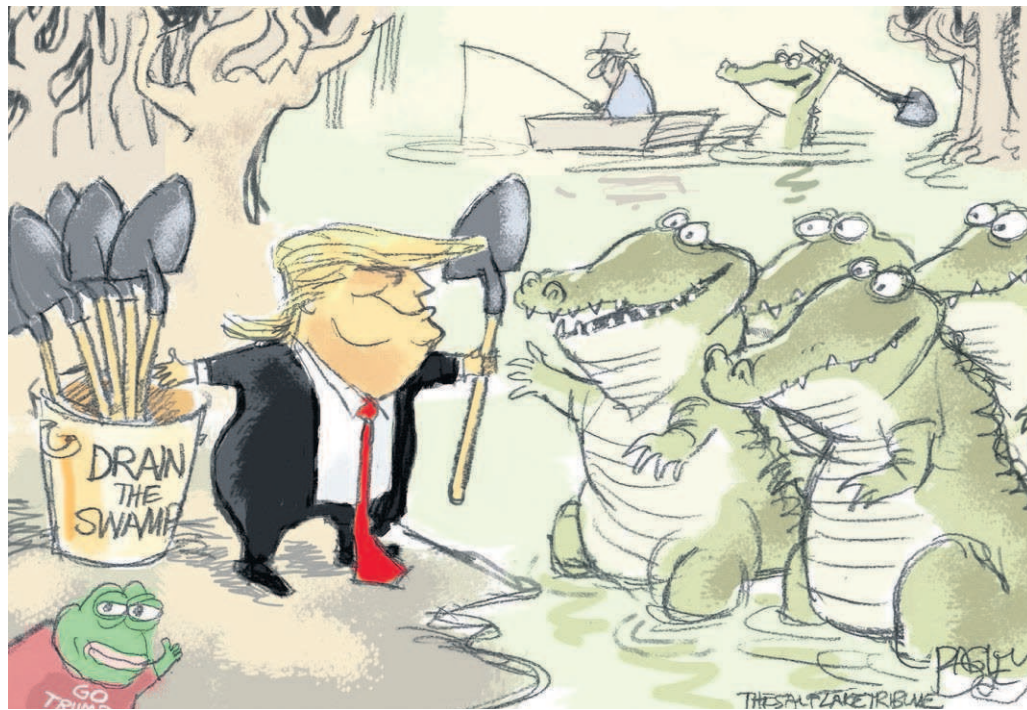
core, where it would make the most sense, but can in the out-of-the-way parts of the city. That includes off Interstate 84 near the Red Lion, the southernmost edge of Southgate, and parts of Riverside where commercial buildings are lacking. But the most likely place — where professional space is available and traffic is considerable — is near the intersection of 20th Street and Court Avenue, near Wal-Mart and Walgreens. That would be a useful place to site Pendleton's first dispensary, should landlords be willing to collect rent from a new type of business.

There are still plenty of questions to be answered. Are there entrepreneurs willing to make a go of it here? Will such businesses thrive? Will they play by the rules and become good neighbors and Chamber of Commerce members? Will they require more public safety presence and strain local law enforcement agencies?

It is not yet known. What is known is that Pendleton voters have tasked the city with finding answers to those questions and putting forth a good faith effort to make a go of it.

The marijuana experiment — which has been an unmitigated success in Colorado, Washington and much of Oregon — now arrives in Pendleton. We wish it luck and the support of the city.

OTHER VIEWS



Obama in Trumpland

If Election Day seemed to be a dream (or, rather, nightmare) devoid of logic, the week since has done little to render the world more coherent.

Let's review:

Donald Trump, exulting in his big win, addressed the question of The Wall. You know, the central pledge of his candidacy, reiterated at every rally. A mighty barrier between the U.S. and Mexico that only he was potent enough to erect.

And what did he have to say?

That it might be a mere fence in spots.

A fence! Just three days after his victory,

he was downscaling, backtracking. At this rate, he'll be talking at his inauguration about a glorious hedge along the border. By April it'll be flowering shrubs, with blossoms that spell out "Welcome to America." And by June? Some sort of new Christo installation, maybe the world's largest-ever topiary display.

As for Obamacare, it's apparently not so awful after all. Trump said he liked the part that lets kids stay on their parents' insurance plans, which is, if you think about it, sort of what Donald Jr., Ivanka and Eric have been doing all along. He also liked the part that prevents insurers from disqualifying people for pre-existing conditions.

My hunch? If some crafty Democrat drafts legislation to keep the Affordable Care Act as is but rechristen it Trumpcare, he'll sign the bill in a nanosecond. He's a man in thrall to ego, not policy.

President Barack Obama is betting on that. He's suddenly professing faith in Trump — or, rather, playing a fascinating mind game in which he endeavors to save his legacy by complimenting Trump into compliance.

That was some through-the-looking-glass news conference Monday, when Obama, who had previously warned that Trump was all four horsemen of the apocalypse rolled into one shocking jockey, spoke of Trump's "gifts" and how "gregarious" he could be.

"I don't think he is ideological," Obama said. "Ultimately, he is pragmatic." From your lips, Mr. President, to God's ear.

He said that their initial meeting had gone so well that he could, on this last foreign trip of his presidency, allay our allies' anxieties.

Never mind that Trump and Vladimir Putin were already whispering sweet nothings to each other over the phone. ("You're the man." "No, you're the man.") Or that Steve Bannon was en route to the West Wing.

Perhaps the Bannon appointment didn't sink in fully until Tuesday, when Obama, in Greece, had chillier words of warning

about the direction in which a Trump administration might — but mustn't — turn.

"We are going to have to guard against a rise in a crude sort of nationalism," he said. That's hardly the extent of the vigil. Trump is reportedly seeking security clearances for his children, who will be running his business, and a former State Department official watching an increasingly messy transition process took to Twitter to warn other Republicans to "stay away" from Trump's "angry, arrogant" team.

Obama is partly trying to save face

after Hillary Clinton's devastating loss. In the weeks before the election, he implored Americans: Honor me by choosing her. Not enough of them did, and at Monday's news conference, he seemed to steal a page from Trump's playbook and take issue with her stamina.

He never said her name but noted, pointedly, how he had trudged through "every small town and fair and fish fry" in Iowa, a state that he won in 2008 and 2012 and that she, with less trudging, lost.

He also repeatedly recited a litany of yardsticks by which he was leaving the country in fantastic fettle. Was he reassuring us — or himself?

From his electrifying address at the 2004 Democratic convention through his stirring 2008 presidential campaign, he spoke of transcending blue and red, uniting black and white, healing.

And here we are. It has to gall him. It definitely gives him incentive to use whatever psychological jujitsu necessary to nudge and manipulate Trump. He doesn't want historians to write that he opened the door to a monster. So he's pressing for a sunnier tale: the monster defanged, the nation safe and sound.

And he's a patriot, always has been, which is what's so rich here. Trump bangs on about putting America first, when he really puts himself before all else. That shriveled, unhinged hood ornament of his, Rudy Giuliani, is on the record questioning Obama's love for America.

But Obama loves this country enough to summon the same grace for his successor that other presidents did for theirs, although his is a nasty, juvenile breed apart.

And he loves this country enough to try to calm it when it most needs calming, even if that means a willed optimism about Trump that's oh so difficult to share.

Frank Bruni, an Op-Ed columnist for The New York Times since 2011. He has been chief restaurant critic and Rome bureau chief.



FRANK BRUNI
Comment

If some crafty Democrat drafts legislation to keep the Affordable Care Act but rechristen it Trumpcare, he'll sign the bill in a nanosecond.

OTHER VIEWS

Unmasking the faceless thugs who exploit public protests

The Oregonian

Portland's descent into civil disorder occurred sometime after 8 p.m. last week as otherwise peaceful, if roadway-blocking, protesters snaked their way through town. Things got ugly in Northeast Portland, where 19 new cars at a Toyota dealership were trashed by brick-throwers, and then worse when thousands of folks walked across the Broadway Bridge and into the Pearl District.

There, the vandalism metastasized. It became athletic, wantonly opportunistic and expansive. Power sources mounted to structures were battered, sparks flying. Large plate glass windows were shattered, shards of glass raining down. Walls and store entrances were sprayed with graffiti, leaving strange signatures and symbols.

Frightened onlookers asked: Where are the police? By Friday, police estimated total damages at more than \$1 million.

The rampage was conducted, protesters and police said, by a comparatively small number of infiltrating anarchists. It seemed plausible, given that KGW-TV's

courageous live footage of the spectacle showed young men, mostly, with bandanas or other forms of face coverings, and wearing knit hats — the better to go unrecognized. Overheard were cries from marchers to stop the violence.

But one man, if unrecognizable, was the poster boy of the night. Tall and lean, he repeatedly left-footed a large plate glass window, caving it in to applause from his cohorts before bouncing back on his feet and clapping his hands twice — as if he'd finally found his rhythm and sunk a rimless basket from an invisible 3-point line.

Except this was no game. This was real life, real property, real violence against unseen others. And it was a proud city's tattered spirit circling the drain.

Portland should have no room for hooligans, thugs and those who soothe the efforts of others. The young man bent on violence, along with his expletive-shouting comrades, had no apparent connection to any of the myriad causes that brought LGBT, ethnic, global warming and other groups beneath a unifying anti-Trump banner. He was, and is, a common

criminal. And he was likely getting away with his marauding deeds while becoming a star among comrades.

A police spokesman explained to a reporter that entering a crowd of thousands to conduct criminal enforcement against a few could backfire, creating a massive eruption fueled by fear, confusion and anger. No doubt. So events had to reach a certain threshold before police in riot gear showed up, after 9 p.m., to establish a commanding line, sending marchers on their way and ultimately arresting 26. Many of their mugshots appeared at OregonLive.com Friday, and it will be some time before charges, if any, can be attached to them.

But protesters already angering folks for thwarting movement about the city must take a hard and new lesson from last week's carnage: The rules just changed.

Protesters, when assembled in the hundreds and thousands, must now accept full responsibility for hosting anarchists who find cover within their ranks and wreak havoc. That means stopping the event cold and retreating the minute violence erupts. That means defanging the parasites



and possibly exposing them. That means clearly establishing the terms of demonstration to include the willingness to quickly disband if violence erupts.

It was heartening to learn that protest sponsors had created a fund to pay for repair work in the Pearl. But cleanup that covers for the criminals enables and encourages. What's to stop the next batch of fools from delivering to Portland harrowing moments of civil disorder when there's no real price to pay?

LETTERS POLICY

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies. 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 phone number. Send letters to 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.

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