

# EAST OREGONIAN

Founded October 16, 1875

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## OUR VIEW

# Read columnists with experience and expertise

For some, the editorial page is the first stop after reading the 1A headlines when picking up the newspaper. The candor of the letters to the editor, the biting satire of the political cartoons and, of course, the deep wisdom in the local editorial.

Those readers look forward to the new thoughts and ideas expressed by their favorite columnists, and enjoy both the enrichment of finding their views articulated and the challenge of having their ideas tested.

We hope to provide both experiences as often as we can, and in an effort to do so pick from a stable of columnists that range the ideological spectrum to analyze and opine on the world. We run their photo with each piece, but not much more about who these men and women are.

What follows is a brief primer, written from each columnist's biography, to show the wealth of experience and thought that is represented each day:

• **David Brooks** became a columnist for *The New York Times* in September 2003, teaches at Yale University and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is a conservative voice on the *Times*' editorial page and a commentator on "PBS NewsHour," NPR's "All Things Considered" and NBC's "Meet the Press."

• **Charles M. Blow** joined *The New York Times* in 1994 as a graphics editor and has been a *New York Times* columnist since 2008. He left the paper in 2006 to become the art director of National Geographic magazine. He lives in Brooklyn, often writes about social justice and is the only black columnist to appear regularly in the paper.

• **Gail Collins** joined *The New York Times* in 1995 as a member of the editorial board and columnist and in 2001 she was appointed editorial page editor — the first woman to hold that post. She uses lighthearted humor in her columns, often writing in the form of pop quizzes.

• **Ross Douthat**, previously a senior editor at The Atlantic, joined *The New York Times* as a columnist in 2009. He is the author of "Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics," and a co-author, with Reihan Salam, of "Grand New Party: How Republicans Can Win the Working Class and Save the American Dream" (2008). He is the film critic for National Review and lives with his wife and daughters in Washington.

• **Maureen Dowd**, winner of the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for distinguished commentary and author of two *New York Times* best sellers, became a columnist in 1995. She began her journalism career in 1974 and has covered seven presidential campaigns. She turns her weekly editorial space over to her more

conservative brother each year.

• **Timothy Egan** worked for 18 years as a writer for *The New York Times*, first as the Pacific Northwest correspondent, then as a national enterprise reporter. He won the National Book Award for his history of people who lived through the Dust Bowl, "The Worst Hard Time," and in 2001 he won the Pulitzer Prize as part of a team of reporters who wrote the series "How Race Is Lived in America." He has done special projects on the West and the decline of rural America.

• **Thomas Friedman** became the *New York Times*' foreign affairs columnist in 1995. He joined the paper in 1981, after which he served as the Beirut bureau chief in 1982, Jerusalem bureau chief in 1984, and then in Washington as the diplomatic correspondent in 1989, and later the White House correspondent and economic correspondent. He was awarded two Pulitzer Prizes for international reporting in Beirut and Israel and one for commentary.

• **Nicholas Kristof** has been a columnist for *The New York Times* since 2001. He grew up on a farm in Yamhill, graduated from Harvard, studied law at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, and then studied Arabic in Cairo. He was a longtime foreign correspondent for *The New York Times* and speaks many languages, including Chinese and Japanese.

Mr. Kristof has won two Pulitzer Prizes for his coverage of Tiananmen Square and the genocide in Darfur, along with humanitarian awards such as the Anne Frank Award and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize.

• **Paul Krugman** joined *The New York Times* in 1999 as a columnist and continues as professor of Economics and International Affairs at Princeton University. He received his B.A. from Yale in 1974 and his Ph.D. from MIT in 1977. He has taught at Yale, MIT and Stanford.

• **David Leonhardt** is the managing editor at The New York Times Company and served as its Washington bureau chief since 2011. He writes a weekly economics column for *The Times*'s business section and in 2011 was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary.

• **Byron York** is a syndicated columnist and the chief political correspondent for *The Washington Examiner*. He has written for conservative publications including National Review, The Hill, The Atlantic, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Weekly Standard*, and *New York Post*. He is a frequent guest on conservative television and radio, appearing on such programs as "Meet the Press," "PBS NewsHour," "The O'Reilly Factor," "Special Report," "The Laura Ingraham Show," and "Hardball" with Chris Matthews.

## Culture Corner: Family-friendly fun at "Studio C"

If you like your comedy free of profanity and politics, Studio C is like a breath of fresh air. This sketch comedy series from BYUtv is family friendly, always goofy and often hilarious. Kids of any age can watch, but they'll really start to get it around age 9.

Studio C's YouTube channel — with more than 650 short videos dating back to 2012 and a new video posted every few days — can be addictive. You can also watch episodes on the BYUtv cable television channel.

A few of our family's favorite episodes are The Restaurant of Life,

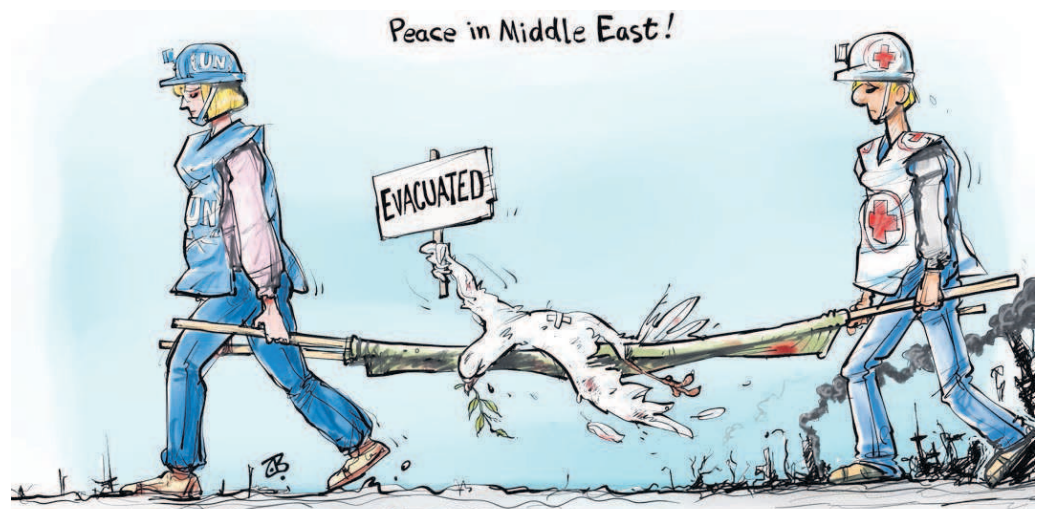
The Walking Dead Survival Guide, Elf on the Shelf Gone Wrong, Kid's School Photo Banned and Channel Surfing. The grammarist in me enjoys Captain Literally and Captain Irony.

Most sketches are just a couple of minutes long, perfect for binge watching whether you have five minutes or five hours. There are also some compilations, such as The Top Music Videos of Studio C, that run 45 minutes.

If your New Year's resolution is to laugh more, or if you just need a break from the news of the day, check out Studio C.

— Kathryn B. Brown, publisher

**STUDIO C**



## OTHER VIEWS

### Red state hope for Democratic blues

For the longest nights of the year, there is no better place to be than on snow-custed ground, staring up at Montana's big empty sky. Democrats across rural America must know the feeling, this Christmas week, of looking into a black void and feeling so very alone.

There is a chance for the pulse to quicken — a flash of the northern lights, perhaps, the distant howl of a wolf — in that utter darkness. And there is hope for a party spurned in the wide-open spaces of the country, as well. Meet Steve Bullock, the newly re-elected Democratic governor of Montana.

Donald Trump took Montana by 20 percentage points — a rare win for celebrity-infatuated megalomaniacs in a state whose voters can usually smell the type from a hundred miles out. But once again, Democrats won the governor's office and did it with votes to spare. Bullock's Mountain State secret sauce is something national party leaders should sample during their solstice.

A week after the election, Bullock went deer-hunting with his 10-year-old son. This doesn't mean Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey should start shooting Bambi near the Meadowlands. But the cultural thing is a wash for Bullock. As a Montana native and a graduate of Columbia Law School, he has a foot in both coastal elitism and prairie pragmatism.

"Every morning my wife and I drop our kids off at the same public schools that we went to," he said.

Public, that's key. As in public land — the great shared turf of the American West. Public health, which the governor expanded in this poor state. Simple stuff, grounded in the nontoxic populism of the past.

So when the Trump administration starts taking away people's health care, trashing public schools with a church-lady billionaire as education secretary or colluding with a Congress that wants to offload public land, Montana can offer a resistance playbook.

I asked the governor to give some specific advice to fellow Democrats.

"Show up," he said, noting that Barack Obama was at the Fourth of July parade in the hardscrabble Montana mining town of Butte in 2008.

That year, the black community organizer from Chicago came within 2 percentage points of winning a state with one of the smallest black populations in the nation. To Hillary Clinton, on the way to fundraisers with tech millionaires, Montana was flyover country.

Had she gone to Great Falls or Glendive, she would have seen that struggling white people desire the same things that struggling people in diverse urban areas want. Bullock brought Obamacare's Medicaid expansion



TIMOTHY EGAN  
Comment

to his state — a literal lifesaver to thousands, forcing Republicans to defend the indefensible. He attacked Republican calls for tax cuts as budget busters and community-killers. And in a state where hate groups still pop up like poisonous mushrooms, he was a champion of Native American sovereignty and gay and lesbian rights. "It's not about identity politics," he said. "It's about trying to bring everybody up."

That's the theme. Everybody. Not just the "emerging demographics," charted on many a Democratic PowerPoint. Vice President Joe Biden, that son of Scranton, Pennsylvania, sounded much like Bullock, but his fellow Dems didn't listen. Perhaps they're listening now.

"I mean these are good people, man!" Biden said on CNN this month. "These aren't racists. These aren't sexists."

A former Iowa governor, Tom Vilsack, tried to remind Democrats that rural America is about 15 percent of the population — larger than the Hispanic vote.

Democrats shouldn't need a translator to learn how to speak to these lost constituents. Franklin Roosevelt, a bit of a dandy from Hudson Valley wealth, knew the language. It's about lifting up those left behind. And taking it directly to those who obstruct progress.

Bullock didn't abandon people whose paycheck is dependent on coal. Nor did he make false promises about coal roaring back. Even coal plant owners acknowledge that their days are numbered as the free market turns to cheap natural gas to generate power, and as the world turns away from it for self-preservation.

With the Trump presidency, truth will be a commodity more precious than the gold lining his throne in Manhattan. He no sooner won the Electoral College than he started the Trump era with a big lie, saying he'd achieved "a historic electoral landslide." For the record: His victory ranked near the bottom, 46th out of 58 presidential elections.

But it was historic — no president has ever lost the popular vote by a larger number, almost 3 million votes. And yet half of Republicans believe that he won the popular tally.

As we say goodbye to a dreadful year, one that should be bound up in chains and dropped into the Missouri River, Democrats should not forget that they have the majority on their side on almost every major issue. It's time they got reacquainted with the millions of other people who make up that majority.

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## YOUR VIEWS

### Show appreciation for those who keep us safe

Umatilla County residents: I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to all the men and women in Umatilla County who have had a part in ensuring the safety of individuals and families in our communities and along our highways and roadways the last few weeks, and who will likely be doing so through the remainder of the winter months.

Often times, it is easy to forget that there are folks providing these vital services within our neighborhoods. These individuals include all our law enforcement officials, fire and emergency services personnel, 911 communications center staff, road department crews, search and rescue teams, warming

station and shelter volunteers, tow truck drivers, air ambulance flight crews, utility company workers and many others who work long hours, often in cold and miserable conditions, to ensure our safety and comfort when the ice and snow makes an appearance. The people who dedicate themselves and sacrifice their time and comfort to assist the rest of us deserve our thanks.

I encourage everyone to please take a moment if you see one of these individuals around your neighborhood to offer them your gratitude. They have mine, and will continue to have for a long time to come.

Happy Holidays Umatilla County!

Thomas Roberts, Umatilla County emergency manager  
Pendleton

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