

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

The carrot or the stick?

It's the age old question: What is the most effective way to get someone to do something they don't seem all that interesting in doing?

Some of the world's most accomplished CEOs have debated it, as have generals and coaches, princes and kings, moms and dads. Each has their own view on whether a carrot held in front of the horse gets you to the finish line faster than a stick whipped across its behind.

Pendleton city council had its opportunity last week to choose between the two, and councilors were certainly split in their partiality.

Yet a slim majority went with the stick, and took stern action against owners of the old city hall building, in the form of daily fine of up to \$500.

Thwack indeed. But will it work?

The historic building in question was damaged in a fatal, tragic fire back in 2015. It was uninsured, which left its future in doubt. The Quezada family that owned it understandably needed time to deal with the death of a family member before addressing the future of the building.

Serious damage was done in the fire and explosion, but it has always been salvageable — but less so with each passing day. The calendar now reads 2017 and the building is going through its second winter without a roof.

The city knows the old city hall, located just a block off Main Street, is a real asset to the downtown historic core and that it should do

what it can to save it.

So it tried the carrot approach. Officials asked the Quezadas to come up a rehabilitation plan, promised to be an advocate and pointed them toward possible grant dollars that could help pay for major

renovation. When that was ignored, the city asked the Quezadas if they needed help creating the plan and offered their services. When that too went nowhere, and no action toward buttoning up the

building seemed imminent, the city started to consider the stick.

We agree with the council's decision to get serious and enforce work at the site.

If a fine is the only way to do that, then so be it. Something had to be done and the options were few. The precedent must be set.

But we hope the fines are not levied as punishment, and that they do not work against the longterm goal of getting the building back up to snuff. If the fine is so exorbitant that it inhibits work at the site, what good is that?

Old city hall is a long way from being solidly protected from the elements and no longer being a danger to downtown neighbors. Perhaps if the family really is serious and does the requisite job, their fines can be forgiven. Those dollars will be desperately needed for bringing a giant, empty, damaged building up to standard and once again making it a functioning part of downtown Pendleton.

Carrots and sticks can both be deployed to help get there.

Daily fines for the owners of the old city hall cannot inhibit work at the site.

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.

OTHER VIEWS

Improving health care outcomes in Oregon

The (Eugene) Register-Guard

Oregon got both some good news and a pat on the back when the federal government recently announced the state is one of a handful chosen for a pilot program to provide better behavioral health care in areas that are currently under-served.

The two-year Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic project is part

of a bigger effort to coordinate behavioral health care with other health care. It aims to improve access to high-quality care for people with mental health and substance abuse issues in both rural and urban areas through community clinics — and make this part of their overall health care.

Lane County is one of 14 counties in Oregon that will take part in the pilot project, with a certified clinic operated by PeaceHealth.

One of the reasons Oregon was one of only eight states chosen, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is that the state and its community clinics have done "an incredible job in paving the way for the demonstration program."

A program such as this is badly needed, not just in Oregon but across the country.

Health care professionals are well aware that physical health cannot be divorced from mental health and substance abuse issues. It's difficult, or sometimes impossible, to adequately treat physical health problems while ignoring the fact that the person also has substance abuse or mental health

problems that can affect or impair treatment of the physical ones.

The Oregon clinic will serve adults with serious mental illnesses, children with serious emotional disturbances, and those with long-term and serious substance use disorders, as well as others with mental illness and substance use disorders.

The mental health care provided by the community clinics in the pilot project will include a broad range of services, including recovery support, that should contribute to long-term solutions.

This kind of coordinated approach has long been needed, and Oregon is fortunate to be one of eight states chosen from the 24 that began the process in 2015. Of the original 24 states that started

the process, 19 submitted applications to participate in the demonstration program; eight were chosen.

These final eight will provide data to Health and Human Services, which will evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot projects in late 2017. As part of the project, Oregon's clinics will be reimbursed at a fixed daily rate for all services provided to Oregon Health Plan beneficiaries.

Health care professionals know that you need to treat the whole person and not just one symptom or ailment. But government has been slow to catch up.

This pilot program, in addition to providing an immediate benefit to Oregon in the form of improved health care, helps pave the way for improved health care nationwide. Oregon is fortunate to be among the leaders.



OTHER VIEWS

Erasing Obama

For a soon-to-be nowhere man, he's everywhere. Sensing "time's winged chariot hurrying near," as the poet had it, President Barack Obama is using every hour left in his presidency to ensure that Donald Trump will not erase it all.

It's one part vanity project. What president doesn't want to put a dent in history? One man freed 4 million slaves. Another created national parks and forests that left every American a rich inheritance of public land. A third crushed the Nazis — from a wheelchair, while dying.

And Obama? He bequeaths the incoming president "the longest economic expansion and monthly job creation in history," as my colleague Andrew Ross Sorkin noted. Trump, the pumpkin-haired rooster taking credit for the dawn, has already tried to seize a bit of that achievement as his own. Thanks, Obama. But he's also likely to screw it up, perhaps by a trade war, or a budget-busting tax cut.

Already, Trump has flirted with treason, flouted conflict-of-interest rules, bullied dissidents and blown off the advice of seasoned public servants. He has yet to hold a news conference since winning the election. And did another day just pass without a word of the promise to "reveal things that other people don't know" about Russian interference with our election? Maybe he's waiting for more whispers in his ear from the Kremlin.

In advance of his farewell address next week, the president has tried to Trump-proof a climate pact that commits the world's second-leading producer of earth-warming pollutants — the United States — to making this little orb of ours a less perilous place for Sasha's and Malia's and Ivanka's kids. Trump has promised to go rogue on the planet, as quickly as he can.

Until Day 1, Trump is just a 70-year-old man with a twitchy Twitter account. But on Jan. 20, he becomes what Grover Norquist wished for in a pliantly conservative president: "A Republican with enough working digits to handle a pen."

With that pen, the new president can take health care from 20 million Americans, free Wall Street to once again wildly speculate and smash things up for the rest of us, and require schools to let people carry guns into classrooms — all campaign promises.

Make America Sick Again is the slogan floated by Sen. Chuck Schumer, who is much better at messaging a negative than Obama ever was at messaging a positive. The people who stand to lose most are Trump supporters. The Affordable Care Act has saved countless lives in red states, and slowed medical costs. So why toss it, without a plan to replace it? To spite the guy on the way out.

The intent of Republicans, poised to push through the most far-reaching conservative

agenda in nearly a hundred years, is to act as if Obama never existed — the George Bailey of presidents. It won't take long for Bedford Falls to become Pottersville.

Trump will cut taxes on the rich, and for those born on third base, eliminate an estate tax that was one of Teddy Roosevelt's solutions to inequality. He may try to defund Planned Parenthood — for many poor women, the only chance to catch cancer early. He may deport Dreamers, more than 740,000 young people who have been allowed to obtain temporary work permits and avoid being thrown out of the country under Obama.

On his first day in office, Trump will "repeal every single Obama executive order."

Already, Trump has flirted with treason.

That's the promise of Vice President-elect Mike Pence. Obama issued just under 270 executive orders, well below the number proclaimed by Ronald Reagan, Dwight Eisenhower, Harry Truman, Franklin Roosevelt and even that conservative paragon, Silent Cal Coolidge.

A significant Obama order protected gays in the government contracting system from discrimination. Another prohibited federal employees from texting while driving. There were sanctions against criminals, mobsters and other international monsters, and upgrades in pay for federal employees who earned less than their private sector counterparts.

And get this: Repealing "every single Obama executive order" would require Trump to dump four edicts that allowed federal workers to leave early on Christmas Eve. The War on Christmas heavy breathers at Fox News, who recently declared said conflict dead and won for St. Nick's side, will surely be outraged. Not.

Obama leaves office with his highest job approval ratings in four years. Most Americans like him and his policies. Trump will enter office with the lowest transition approval ratings of any president-elect in nearly a quarter-century. About half of all Americans don't like him, and of course, he got nearly 3 million fewer votes than Hillary Clinton.

Most of the Trump agenda — building a wall, cutting taxes on the rich, ramping up oil and gas drilling at the expense of alternative fuels, taking away people's health care — is opposed by clear majorities. Trump will erase Obama's policy legacy at his peril.

What he cannot do is erase the mark of the man — a measured and rational president, a committed father and husband, who is leaving his country much better off, and the office without a trace of personal scandal.

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.

YOUR VIEWS

Do-Not-Call list fines could fill state budget shortfall

You know, if a mere private citizen ignored or directly, intentionally violated federal laws, there would be serious consequences, the kind of thing that keeps us on the straight and narrow.

However, there are two laws that are routinely violated without consequence, violated by Corporate America.

The first is the Commercial Audio Limit Mitigation act (CALM) that is supposed to require that the audio levels on commercials on television broadcasts be near the level of the programming. This went into effect two years ago and there was a short time where it held up. But that didn't last, and with an increase in the ratio of commercials to entertainment, more annoying.

The second that comes to mind is the

Do-Not-Call list. Yesterday there were 12 calls to our listed, registered land line. These are who called:

315-966-9777: called today and 11 times yesterday, Caller ID said "Out of Area"; 720-452-9940: Caller ID said "Electorate info"; 407-481-9814: Caller ID said "Out of Area."

The Federal rules allow one to report this kind of behavior on their website, and they can levy a fine. The website requires a lot of data input and is cumbersome, not allowing multiple entries on each instance. Once reported, it seems no action is taken.

Given the defeat of Measure 97 with the budgetary shortfall, I wonder if the state could make it easier to report a violation of the Do-Not-Call registry and levy their own fine, add to the bottom line, and fill in the shortfall.

Thomas L. Farnley, M.D.
Hermiston

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.