

Quick takes

House stolen from truck stop

Who steals someone's house? Maybe a homeless person? Just so messed up.
— Lauren Moran

I'm from Pendleton and I'm pretty sure I saw that being towed towards Pilot Rock this morning. Didn't see what kind of truck just noticed it and thought that it was a great idea.
— Robert L. Chapin, Jr.

Below-zero temps hit town

We were -22 here in Baker City. North Pole was 19.
— Lynette Warneke Gray

It warmed up. When I went by Meacham about 6:30 a.m. it was -28.
— Joe Batty

Old city hall rehab fined

There's always bound to be delays, dealing with insurance or having to pay out of pocket can slow things up, not to mention doing work in this kind of weather is difficult and dangerous and slow. Maybe the next ordinance should be to fine the city for all projects not done quickly and on time.
— Brian Fullen

It is so sad this has been allowed to drag along for almost two years. This beautiful historic building is ultimately going to be demolished because the owners have been allowed to kick the can down the road. Now, when the weather is poor, they want more time.
— John E. Thomas

Homeless camps cleared out

It's only going to get worse until mental illness and drug addiction issues are addressed. Current methods just move the problem around the city, county and state.
— Warrine Terpening

I only have empathy to a point. I agree they need a place to camp. These people also need to make an effort to help themselves.
— Lindsey Evans

One of the great lessons of the Twitter age is that much can be summed up in just a few words. Here are some of this week's takes. Tweet yours @Tim_Trainor or email editor@eastoregonian.com, and keep them to 140 characters.

Pomp and unusual circumstances for inauguration

I've received an invitation to the inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th president of the United States. It didn't come from The Donald himself — or other members of the immediate family — but it does include observation of the ceremonies and a reception hosted by the National Association of Counties.

Still, I am checking my Twitter account on an hourly basis in case the prodigious first tweeter himself decides to extend a more personal invite.

As with sporting events, I could probably get a better view of the proceedings in front of my television set, although prior to the invitation I hadn't given much thought to watching the event at all. However, like going to sporting events, there's a different spirit in the air if you are present in person, even if you are one of an estimated 240,000 people who will be milling around behind those who are provided with actual chairs — an accommodation my invitation did not include.

At the moment, I'm assuming my participation will look a great deal like the experience of boarding an airline these days with most major carriers. I understand families with children and those needing assistance and even those who serve in the military, but by the time they get through six or eight grades of first class, medallion, platinum, gold, silver and bronze and finally announce that it's time for the ruffraff to hurry on to the plane, you don't feel particularly special.

The prospect of attending is intriguing because half the people in America believe Donald Trump's ascendancy to the office spells the end of this country as we have known it. This might be my last chance to ever witness such an important event.

Besides being a monumental, if not surprising moment, in the history of the nation, the planners have put together a rather unique combination of performers.

I haven't seen the Rockettes perform since 1954 when my parents took me to Radio City Music Hall in New York some 63 years ago this summer. I'm anticipating that most of the cast will be new.

I've never seen the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in person although I've visited their primary venue in Salt Lake City on a variety of occasions. I do, however, have several of their tapes. I will miss the soprano who resigned in protest, but I'm



GEORGE MURDOCK
Comment

told almost 100 percent of the choir will be participating.

If I do attend — or watch the proceedings — it will also be the first time I have witnessed a performance by Jackie Evancho of "America's Got Talent" fame — a show I've honestly never seen.

Beyond that, I understand the planning committee is having trouble finding performers. Perhaps that is due to the fact several dozen prominent

celebrities announced last fall they would leave the country the day after Trump was elected. Since the group, which included Madonna and Miley Cyrus, are surely now living abroad, the potential list of possibilities becomes more challenging. Or, were they just kidding?

In the end, it is probably a matter of potential financial losses and higher tax structures that are trumping their no doubt thoughtful ideological beliefs. At the very least, I am hopeful no one voted one way or the other solely because Miley Cyrus might flee to Canada. Her new wardrobe choices would never work in the frigid north.

I checked out hotel possibilities in Washington, D.C. and either hotels are incredibly high in the nation's capital or lodging prices during special events follow the same pricing principle as rooms in Pendleton during Round-Up or rooms in Pullman when the Cougars play at home. I think I could rent an apartment in Pendleton for a month cheaper than a one-night stay within reasonable commuting distance of this January spectacle.

I was also a bit amused to learn the list of parade participants includes both the U.S. Customs and Border Protection office of field operations and the U.S. Border Patrol pipes and drums. With those groups preoccupied in the capital for several days, who knows what might happen along the Rio Grande while they are gone.

If I did go, an important consideration would be what to wear with temperatures predicted to be on the cooler side. One fashion consultant says elegant and classic

would be a good place to start but does that mean elegant and classic Foggy Bottom wear or elegant and classic by Pendleton standards for those of us traveling 3,000 miles to represent Eastern Oregon?

Then there is the fact the average attendee, other than those in the seats, spends about seven hours roaming around the immediate area of the capital and until late evening trying to get home. Since moon boots went out 30 years ago and don't look good with either jeans or a suit, muck boots have become a common site in bad weather but they, too, don't make a real fashion statement. And cowboy boots aren't that comfortable on concrete or for long walks.

I can't find much about suggested head wear either, although I can order a red, "Make America Great Again" hat from Amazon for \$11.99 with free shipping thrown in. None of the models come with ear flaps and there are no ski masks, although you can get a Donald Trump latex face mask for \$16.99, which would stave off the wind but might be

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considered in bad taste. So many decisions and so little time.

Perhaps my efforts might be better spent praying for the future of our nation and doing what I can to help people come together with a greater degree of mutual understanding and tolerance.

In that vein, I have been reminded of the words of a 13th century Persian poet named Rumi who said: "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there."

This might be a good time to find friends who share different political beliefs in order to search for common ground and understanding. While there is a measure of comfort to be had surrounding ourselves only with like-minded people, it does little to expand our horizons of learning and productive thought.

And most of all, it is critical we remember that a sense of humor can help us all through the worst of times.

George Murdock is a Umatilla County Commissioner and former East Oregonian publisher. He lives in Pendleton.

Pendleton must focus goals to find success

Action is more important than words, but I liked many of the comments that came out of the first meeting of the 2017 Pendleton City Council this week.



MIKE FORRESTER
Comment

City Manager Robb Corbett is trying to increase the flow of information between city hall staff and residents of the city. Starting to produce a city newsletter looks like a good step. A more complex and key thing is for city hall to accommodate citizen questions and concerns promptly and with a minimum of defensiveness. All parties need to acknowledge human frailty: local officials do not always make smart decisions, and members of the public do not always think clearly. Newspapers and radio also bear some responsibility when communications foul up.

You need to strengthen an economy one brick at a time.

New mayor John Turner and others are working to change city goals that are too broad into ones more targeted and easier to address. Chief goals in the draft document are expanding the economy, figuring out how to run utility lines to prospective business sites and providing more housing. A fourth goal — develop high quality properties — should follow if the other three are addressed effectively.

As Turner said, you need to strengthen an economy one brick at a time. His list — a more vigorous downtown, increases in visitor activities, new grade school and college facilities, growth in the drone program at the Pendleton Airport — is impressive.

Seems to me an important point in all this is to remember that adding jobs, housing and investment are what fill classrooms, fill storefronts, and add names to club and organization

rosters. I believe the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce, Pendleton Downtown Association and the Round-Up have done great jobs boosting growth. But it takes more jobs and investment and housing to increase numbers of shoppers and schoolchildren in any community.

The Turner team is working on making economic development goals more specific. I think that unburdening Steve Chrisman's workload should be one of those goals. Chrisman's jobs include corporate recruitment, airport management, running the convention center and drone program oversight.

Finally, a piece of advice not invited but maybe relevant anyway: Mayor Turner addressed negativity in Pendleton. He urged people in city government to tune out "professional critics" of city hall decisions. He even went so far as to say city residents should be elated that such high quality individuals serve the community.

Pendleton city government does have people who make strong commitment to this town. But those folks are not entitled to automatic, unquestioning approval from members of the public.

From city hall's side, what helps relations most are well thought out decisions, a chain of command that can be followed, and opportunities for asking questions and making comments. Those in the news media also of course play roles in affecting community morale.

Mike Forrester Mike Forrester is a former editor of the East Oregonian. He lives in Pendleton.

President Trump should be given a chance

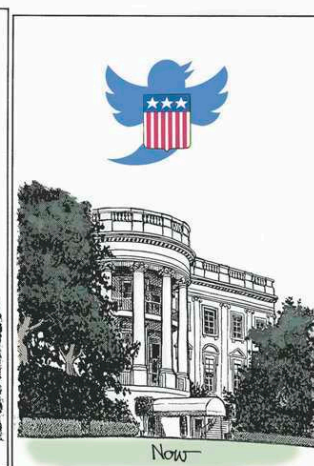
The Eagle (Bryan, Tex.)

Last year was long and often ugly. Tensions around the world were high, with terror attacks in numerous places, a humanitarian crisis in Syria, the never-ending strife between the Israelis and the Palestinians and heightened strain between Russia and the United States.

At home we witnessed questionable police shootings of black Americans and retaliatory murders of law enforcement officers, including five in Dallas. We recoiled with horror at the massacre of some 50 people in an Orlando gay nightclub. We witnessed a rising tide of killings in Chicago.

Then there was the presidential election, full of ugliness all around. There was more than enough nastiness to last several lifetimes.

And when the election ended in a surprise, the nastiness continued unabated. As we start this new year, many Americans



refuse to accept the legitimacy of the election, refuse to acknowledge Donald Trump as our 45th president. He lost the popular vote, they note, as if that matters. He is going to destroy America — the world — they worry, and Trump certainly has played into their fears with his embrace of Vladimir Putin, his cabinet appointments and his threat of a renewed nuclear arms race.

But this is a new year, one we should enter with hope, not fear. No one knows what 2017 will bring, but we should give it

a chance.

In a few weeks we will have a new president — our 45th — and a new direction for our nation. There are concerns, to be sure, but President Trump should be given a chance to be, well, president. It is to be hoped that the mantle of the presidency will soften Trump's strident side, will mellow his more outrageous traits. This isn't to say that the president shouldn't be challenged when he does something with which we disagree, but he must be given the chance to lead. He just

might surprise us. Those of us who proclaim Donald Trump is not my president should remember how they felt when others said Barack Obama was not theirs. Thanks to the beauty of our Constitution, Trump will become our president on Jan. 20, just as Obama became our president on Jan. 20, 2008. That's how it works, and it works so well.

The fact is we are one nation, one people striving for a better life, a more equitable society. Our political parties often try to divert us from that goal and we must not let them. We should reject the partisanship that gridlocks Washington and reach out to people of different philosophies, different faiths, different colors, different orientations and relearn how to work together for the good of all of us.

Reject the politics of division and embrace the reconciliation of unity. Look not to the past, but to the future, a future that should be bright for each and every one of us.

How will Trump handle rules on driverless cars?

Sacramento Bee

For all of President-elect Donald Trump's campaign promises about bringing back millions of jobs to middle America starting in 2017, this year is shaping up to be one of the machine, not the human.

Artificial intelligence is almost ready for prime time — and the impact will be felt a lot sooner than many people think. For proof, look no further than the burgeoning industry for driverless cars.

Merrill Lynch is projecting that fully autonomous taxis could account for more than 40 percent of all new vehicle sales within the next two decades, potentially putting millions of cab drivers and truck drivers out of work. And that's to say nothing of the highly automated factories where these vehicles will likely be built. Car ownership will begin to move from something personal to something people think of as an Uber-like service, a notion that's generally shared by old-line automakers such as Ford and upstarts such as Tesla.

Google is shooting for 2020 to start selling its autonomous vehicles. Ford says it's rolling out driverless cars

for a ride-sharing service by 2021. Tesla has similar plans. The industry is expected to balloon to a \$42 billion global market by 2025 and only grow from there.

So far, 20 companies have jumped at the chance to test some 130 driverless cars on California's roads. They all agreed to apply for a special permit from the Department of Motor Vehicles, and to abide by rules that require a driver with a clean record to be present at all times and for malfunctions to be reported to the state.

But the question now is, can California, with its regulations, keep this going in 2017 and beyond?

Normally, this wouldn't even be concern for this state, with its long track record of fostering innovation. But with Uber's abrupt departure for Arizona in December, the result of a silly feud with regulators over filing for a permit to operate its driverless Volvos in San Francisco, it's a question that must be asked and answered.

Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey, of course, sees Uber's pending road tests near Phoenix as a sign his state is "paving the way" to successfully pilfer

more tech businesses from California. Ducey unfairly claims California "puts the brakes on innovation and change with more bureaucracy and more regulation."

California rules certainly are more prescriptive than those of Pennsylvania, where Uber has been letting customers hail driverless cars, or Florida, where autonomous vehicles can operate on public roads without a driver behind the wheel.

Michigan went a step further when Gov. Rick Snyder signed bills that will let companies test vehicles without steering wheels or pedals. Dearborn-based Ford, with its fleet of reconfigured Fusion Hybrids, is ready to do just that.

The truth is Uber pulling its Volvos from California isn't a huge deal. It's only 16 cars, after all, and Uber's argument about why it didn't need a permit is shaky at best.

But the dust-up should serve as a reminder to regulators and the Legislature to tread carefully on innovation.

Even in the new world Uber envisions and despite its image as an innovator that breaks the rules, protecting public safety is a must.