

EAST OREGONIAN
Founded October 16, 1875

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OUR VIEW

Protect your privacy

Your microwave is not spying on you.

But your television might be. And your cellphone. And your car. And your thermostat.

As our world becomes increasingly digital and increasingly connected, we are increasingly at risk of having our privacy invaded.

Those invaders can be corporations or governments, and those government can be foreign or domestic. They can also be hackers and scammers, those who live in our neighborhoods or across the world.

Late night comedians had plenty of laughs at the expense of Kellyanne Conway, the truth-averse advisor to President Trump, after she said this: "There was an article this week that talked about how you can surveil someone through their phones, through their — certainly through their television sets, any number of different ways," Conway told the *Bergen Record*. "And microwaves that turn into cameras, et cetera. So we know that that is just a fact of modern life."

Microwave ovens, which are not connected to the internet, cannot spy on you for many reasons.

Conway's response to the laughter was even better

"I'm not Inspector Gadget. I don't believe people are using the microwave to spy on the Trump campaign," she told CNN. "However, I'm not in the job of having evidence, that's what investigations are for."

While it is disturbing to note that a presidential advisor does not believe she is in the "job of having evidence," what is even more disturbing is her misunderstanding of Inspector Gadget.

Because really, that's the crime here: Conway thinks Inspector Gadget is an inspector *of* gadgets, not an inspector *with* gadgets.

Still, perhaps Conway is on to something, that a new kind of Inspector Gadget is needed for the digital age. An inspector who actually does inspect gadgets.

It's more important than ever to be sure your internet-connected home is safe and secure. Lots of detailed information is available online about the subject and in tech magazines.

The basics, however, are clear: Never connect your appliances to the internet without a firewall. Check your security updates regularly. Consider creating your own virtual private network, or VPN. Make sure your home network is secure, no matter what it is. Safeguard your data with encryption tools. The FCC has compiled a handy guide for how to do all of the above, and become educated about the topic. Find it by searching FCC and 'How to protect yourself online.'

Although some evidence-less claims are laughable, you owe it to yourself and your family to understand just what data is being collected from your home and why.

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.

YOUR VIEWS

Better schools lead to better education

The Hermiston School District is asking voters to approve a school bond to replace 55-year-old Rocky Heights and 37-year-old Highland Hills elementary schools, construct a new elementary school, and make significant upgrades to Sandstone middle school and Hermiston high school. The request is due to aging buildings and seriously inadequate student capacity.

Since 2008, when the last bond passed, the district has grown by more than 600 students. This increased student population has been addressed with 34 modular classrooms. However, due to the overcrowded conditions the district recently was forced to cap 10 elementary classrooms, which increased transportation costs to shuttle students to non-neighborhood schools and caused undue disruption to many families.

A 2014 population projection study by Portland State University predicts 800 additional students by 2023, according to a middle-growth rate scenario. The study forecasts more than 1,250 new students under a high-growth rate. The current student population increase is greater than the "high-growth" rate used in the PSU study. If the present-day growth rate continues, the district's population will increase 24 percent, with more than 1,200 additional students in seven years.

Without new construction and renovation, the district will need 56 modular classrooms. However, the use of modular classrooms does not address subsequent overcrowding of common areas such as cafeterias, gyms, labs, etc., which were planned to support the student populations for which the buildings were intended. The lifetime of these "temporary" classrooms is reduced compared to permanent construction, and maintenance costs are greater. More importantly, the educational environment may be reduced.

I strongly urge the voters to consider the current situation, look to the future, and vote to approve the proposed school bond. For as Thomas Jefferson reportedly said: "An educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as a free people."

George Clough
Hermiston

Speak up for voiceless animals

I would like to formally thank the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office for removing the huge amount of bulls in with the now-calving cows that were seized in January. It was called to my attention mid-week of last week that these bulls were literally breeding the open cows and heifers there into the ground, breaking hips and backs by being bred by a gang of bulls — the big bulls and the young bulls. Once they were hurt or broken down, they were fair game to whatever was going to come.

After learning of at least two deaths from this, I could not keep quiet. I called the DA in Pendleton, the DDA in charge, the brand inspector, the sheriff, and Deputy Rachel Faber, who is a gift to this county. I called the *East Oregonian* and they did a small article. I made people angry and I didn't keep quiet; I believe that's how these cattle got in that horrific situation in the first place.

Deputy Faber is working on a program to educate the deputies to know what to look for and what questions to ask in animal neglect cases. I think that's a great step toward helping our animals in this county. They are also working on a list of people to foster, as they do not work with the local dog pound in Hermiston. I've been on that list for a couple years now.

We have no animal control in this big county full of neglected, abused, dumped and thrown away animals. I work in animal rescue every day, and I don't care what our city manager and his assistant say ... we have a terrible problem with strays and abuse. I did make a stink and I made people angry with me.

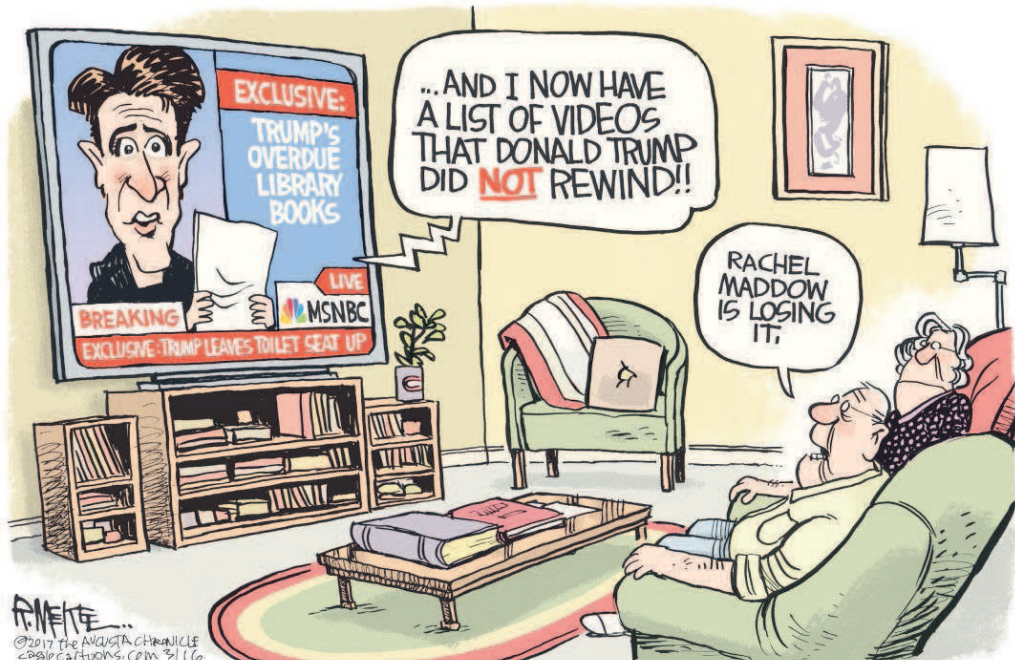
After speaking with the brand inspector, I was told the bulls could go to the stock yard to be housed until possession is settled. First thing Monday morning, the 13th, those bulls were removed and taken to the stock yard. No more unnecessary deaths on their watch.

What I'm saying is this; sometimes all it takes is speaking up. I doubt I'm the whole reason it was done, but I like to think my voice made a difference. Yours can, too. Speak up for the voiceless and make a difference.

Debi Shervey
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.



OTHER VIEWS

New Trump executive order hurts Hawaii's feelings

There's a race going on for states to file or join new lawsuits against President Trump's second executive order temporarily halting entry into the U.S. for some people from a few terror-plagued countries. The new actions promise to be rehashes of the states' earlier suits against Trump's original order. Washington State, for example, which managed to stop the first order, has gone so far as to argue the new order and the now-rescinded original measure are identical, and has asked a judge to simply apply his emergency stop to the new order as if nothing has changed.



BYRON YORK
Comment

But the first state to file suit against the new order, Hawaii, has taken a new tack from the suit it filed on Feb. 3 against Trump's original order. The new Hawaii suit, which came before a federal judge Wednesday, relies not only on claims of economic damages to the state resulting from the Trump order but also on claims of damages to Hawaii Muslims' feelings and perceptions of the world.

The original Hawaii suit was simply the state versus the president and his administration. The new suit adds a new plaintiff, a man named Ismail Elshikh, who is identified as "an American citizen of Egyptian descent" who has lived in Hawaii for more than a decade and is now imam of the Muslim Association of Hawaii.

The Trump order "inflicts a grave injury" on Elshikh and other Muslims in Hawaii, the suit says, by subjecting them to "discrimination and second-class treatment."

"The order denies them their right to associate with family members overseas," the lawsuit alleges, and forces Elshikh and other Hawaii Muslims "to live in a country and in a state where there is the perception that the government has established a disfavored religion."

Elshikh's particular problem is this: His wife, the suit says, is an American citizen "of Syrian descent and is also a resident of Hawaii." She and Elshikh, who has a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from an Egyptian university, have five children, all of whom, according to the suit, are American citizens and residents of Hawaii.

Mrs. Elshikh's mother, Ismail Elshikh's mother-in-law, is "a Syrian national, living in Syria." According to the suit, she wants to come to the United States. "Elshikh's mother-in-law last visited the family in 2005, when she stayed for one month," the lawsuit says. "She has not met two of Dr. Elshikh's children, and only Dr. Elshikh's oldest child remembers meeting her grandmother."

The suit says that in September 2015, Elshikh's wife filed an I-130 petition on behalf of her mother in Syria. United States Citizen and Immigration Services describes the I-130 as a form "for citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States to establish the relationship to certain alien relatives who wish to immigrate to the United States."

The mother-in-law's I-130 petition was approved in February 2016, according to the suit, but so far, the suit says, "Elshikh's mother-in-law does not currently hold a visa to enter the United States."

Eleven of the 12 months during which Elshikh's mother-in-law's I-130 petition was approved but she was not granted a visa occurred during the Obama administration, which boasted of the thorough, time-consuming, multiyear vetting process it applied to Syrians attempting to come to the United States. Elshikh did not sue the government during that

time. After Trump declared a 90-day moratorium on visas, Elshikh went to court.

On January 31, 2017 — after the first Executive Order was put in place — Dr. Elshikh was notified by an individual from the National Visa Center that his mother-in-law's application for an immigrant visa had been put on hold. Then, on March 2, 2017 — after the first Executive Order was enjoined — Dr. Elshikh and his family were notified by the National Visa Center that his mother-in-law's visa application had progressed to the next stage of the process and that her interview would be scheduled at an embassy overseas. Under the new Executive Order, however, Dr. Elshikh fears that his mother-in-law will, once again, be unable to "enter" the country under Section 2(c) of the Executive Order.

The suit says that Elshikh's children, who were apparently not harmed by the Obama administration's (and Congress's) action to make it difficult and time-consuming for Syrians to come to the U.S., are "deeply affected" by Trump's executive order. "It conveys to them a message that their own country would discriminate against individuals who share their ethnicity, including members of their own family, and who hold the same religious beliefs."

"We feel both bans, Version 1 and Version 2, are delivering on Trump's promise to some of the far-right groups that he is going to have a Muslim ban," Hakim Ouasani told me by phone Thursday. "Our viewpoint is that any discrimination is not acceptable. It is not the way to keep our country safe."

"How can you explain to a daughter that your grandmother will not be able to visit?" I asked Ouasani whether the temporary nature of Trump's action made it less burdensome. "If my daughter is graduating in 90 days, then it is a burden," he answered. "If the wedding is planned for May, that is a burden. I don't think Muslims should plan their lives around Trump's decision."

On the other hand, Elshikh's mother-in-law has not visited in 12 years — for whatever reason, she did not visit for the births of grandchildren or the various milestones in their lives. And now this 90-day delay is a violation of her family's constitutional rights?

The plaintiffs did not file suit over earlier government actions that made coming to the United States a difficult and drawn-out effort. Some in the Obama administration made clear that it could take years for a Syrian to be admitted to the U.S. But when Trump announced a 90-day delay, the Hawaii plaintiffs went to court. Why?

Perhaps there is a clue in some of the words in the lawsuit that convey emotion. Elshikh and other Muslims feel this or that, or they are devastated, or there is this or that perception, or this or that message conveyed. It could be that much of the energy behind the lawsuit is emotional, caught up in a hysteria about Donald Trump as much as a rational reading of the new executive order.

Now the Hawaii case goes to court. The new Trump order was amended specifically to address some of the legal objections raised against the original order in court challenges across the country. But how to craft an order to protect feelings?

Byron York is chief political correspondent for *The Washington Examiner*.

