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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to Hermiston's downtown, soon to undergo a massive makeover that we believe is for the better.



If there's one thing Eastern Oregon's largest (and fastest growing) town needs, it's a central hub. Growing up along Highway 395 has been a boon for businesses looking for a spot to set up shop, but it has robbed the soul from the downtown core.

Projects like the festival street, Harkenrider Center and remodel of the Carnegie library are good steps. Starting the process with a livability study was also a smart move.

It was also smart to find federal funding for the senior center and build a facility that can be used for additional purposes down the road.

And it was smart to create an urban renewal zone to pay for the festival street.

When the dust settles on these projects next year, downtown will have a new feel and a new place for citizens to enjoy their town.

A kick in the pants to sign thieves.

A couple examples of the sophomore political action have taken place in Hermiston recently, mostly targeting signs in support of a \$104 million school district bond.

In this country, everyone is allowed to signal their opinions in speech and writing and signage. It's part of the democratic way, and part of every community. Public proclamations help inform our friends and neighbors, and hopefully spark discussions of the real issues behind candidates and measures.

This page of the newspaper is always open to dissenting opinions. That's one way to respectfully disagree. But it's the height of intellectual laziness to not come up with your own argument, but instead try to silence someone else's.

Oh, and it's also illegal.



A tip of the hat to scientific endeavor, which has been a focus in the past week specifically in the pages of this paper.

In Eastern Oregon it's not just Earth Day when we stop to think about the environment. You can bet anyone with a job in agriculture spends their day trying to get the most out of Mother Nature. And with our wealth of watersheds, forests, farmland and wilderness areas, paying attention to the world around us isn't a hobby but a way of life.

And whether you took up a sign and marched for science last weekend or simply took a walk with your child and taught them the names of a

few birds or flowers, we tip our hat to you.

A kick in the fake mud pants to Nordstrom, which is trying to sell pre-muddied jeans for \$425 a pair.

On its website, the luxury fashion retailer is selling a pair of working class-inspired jeans with what the company calls "caked-on muddy coating."

In the description of the pants, the company states they "embody rugged, Americana workwear that's seen some hard-working action" that show "you're not afraid to get down and dirty."

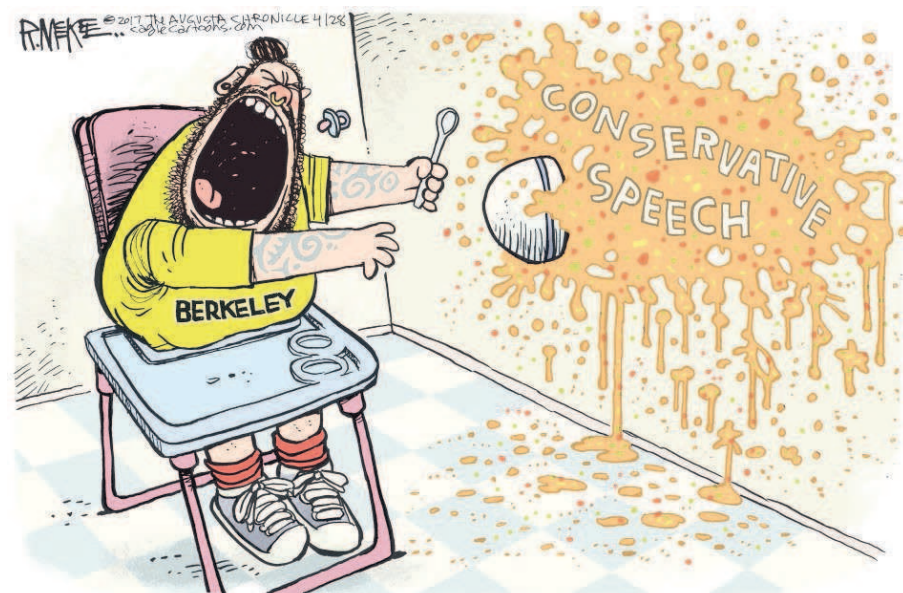
Puh-lease.

These jeans perfectly encapsulate the sheltered, rich urban ninnies who are very, very afraid of getting down and dirty. How sheltered have upper-class Americans become that they can't find any mud to roll around in? And that's not even asking the most obvious question: Who wants gross splashes of brown mud on their \$400 pants?

But, fashion being fashion, this stunt probably qualifies as a win. Like wearing a flamingo on your head, the goal is to get people to notice, and these dumb jeans certainly did that.



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.



LETTERS POLICY

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CARTOONS BY RINKE



WE LIKE TO PRETEND WE PROMOTE
DIVERSITY
BUT IF YOU ARE PRO-LIFE, YOU WILL NOT FIND ANY
TOLERANCE
HERE AND UNLESS YOU SUPPORT ABORTION, YOUR
INCLUSION
IN OUR PARTY WILL NOT HAPPEN, SO YOUR
ACCEPTANCE
OF OUR PRO-CHOICE AGENDA IS MANDATORY!

YOUR VIEWS

Commissioners need to stop adding taxes to equation

I think the reckoning in the *East Oregonian's* headline might be missing something.

Looks like the Umatilla County commissioners have forgotten an important subtrahend. The difference might really look like this: Jobs + People + Housing – Infrastructure = ???? (Enough taxes).

Carl Culham
Athena

Scared Pendleton councilors could have done right thing

A federal judge on Tuesday blocked the Trump administration from enforcing a threat to take away funds from sanctuary cities.

So you see, councilmen John Brenne and Neil Brown, you could have seconded the motion regarding the ACLU's nine "model" state and local law enforcement policies and rules at the last council meeting instead of saying nothing, thus killing the request for discussion.

Oh, councilwomen Becky Marks, you need not be scared either. The "sanctuary state" of Oregon would have protected you and Pendleton funding.

Thank you, Councilman Scott Fairley, for wanting more information. You were the only one thinking outside the box.

Sue Peterson
Pendleton

Renters, homeowners gouged by Hermiston school bond

Regarding the proposed Hermiston school bond on May 17, potential yes voters better think long and hard. The facts are that the current percentage of property taxes for a county resident toward schools is already 65 percent of the total tax bill.

The proposed bond will increase your tax by (at a minimum) one dollar per thousand, and that's just an estimate given by the proponents of this bond. That it will be more is almost a given.

Those who rent will pay for this through higher rent. We believe the school district is biting off more than they will be able to chew.

Remember bigger, newer and fancier schools do not improve the quality of education. Buildings just look nicer and that's all. Increased property taxes will most certainly drive property values down and lessen the potential for sales.

I say fix what's there and move in a more conservative manner, which should begin by requiring the state to live up to the promises made regarding lottery profits and a no vote on the bond issue.

Bob Stanley
Hermiston

New station gives firefighters safe place to work

I urge you to vote yes to build a new fire station in Pendleton. The men and women who risk their lives to save our homes and property deserve a station free of carcinogens and one that meets current fire and building codes.

A new station would also provide more space for expanded volunteer and rescue programs improving services for those in need. That's us. You and me. Our families. Our friends. Our neighbors. The cost is less than the price of a fancy dinner for two. Per year! It really is a no-brainer. Vote yes!

Cary Wasem-Varela, Pendleton

Old Pendleton fire station has outlived its usefulness

I am writing in support of the bond for the new fire station. To begin with, that building was built in 1959 and has served its usefulness. It is old and not big enough to accommodate the new larger fire trucks. It also was not designed to have both women and men firefighters, which I believe we currently have. Office space is tiny at best and was never designed for computers, printers, etc., which is the office norm now. Paying an arm and a leg for the muffler shop property will not solve all the problems that are plaguing the current location.

As we read in the paper within the past month, a fire truck was involved in an accident while it was exiting the fire station headed to a fire. If the station had already been built on the old St. Anthony location this wouldn't have been so likely to happen.

Part of the bond money, as I understand it, will go for new equipment, which Pendleton has needed for a very long time. It is time to think of the comfort and safety of the men and women who are employed by the city as firefighters and EMS workers and vote for the new fire station and new equipment. With the retirement of two other bonds the cost

per \$1,000 assessment will only be 14 cents, not the 64 cents that some think we will be paying.

Several years ago we lost a very good firefighter/EMS person because of old rotten hoses that blew apart under pressure and tore up his shoulder bad. Let's vote in the new station and new equipment before this happens again.

Barbara Wright, Pendleton

Don't tread on native plants

Native Plant Appreciation Week is the end of April. It's a good time to learn more about them and their importance. Native plants are indigenous to an area and the ones commonly seen (like sagebrush and bunch grasses). In short, they're wild, that is, they make it on their own without any help from people — no irrigation, fertilizer or pesticides. Native wildlife — from the smallest insect to the largest mammal — have evolved with them and depend on them for food, shelter, etc. Did you know that sage grouse and other birds eat sagebrush and will die without it?

Many people think native plants are boring and not important. Distracted with gadgets, people are forgetting their connection to nature. At epidemic levels is one malady called plant blindness, taking plants that provide so many services from feeding wildlife to preventing erosion to simply beautifying our world for granted. Worse, plant blindness can lead to unconscious plant murder as people tramp on them. Plants can take some abuse. But they'll die when constantly trampled by bikes and people's and dogs' feet when off-trail.

Show plants some respect. Stay on designated trails when hiking and biking. Keep your dog on the trail, as four legs can significantly harm plants too. If we all did this, trails would stay the width they were designed and not grow increasingly wider, even washing out when plants are no longer there to hold the soil. We'd have more beauty to enjoy instead of bare dirt.

Lynn Putnam, Bend

Ivanka Trump must separate herself from business interests

One wonders where the issue of ethics really lies when considering Ivanka Trump's role in business and her official role in the White House. Retailers are moving carefully in dealing with her business. Is business making its merchandise decisions based on someone's political beliefs?

To address ethical concerns, Ivanka Trump has shifted her assets to a family-run trust valued in the millions of dollars and has said she will recuse from issues that present conflicts. She says she has shifted her business responsibilities to employees.

Ivanka's husband, Jared Kushner, has taken steps to distance himself from his New York real estate business, divesting some of his business interests, including his interest in a major Fifth Avenue skyscraper. Both Ivanka and Jared are deeply involved in Chinese contacts and policy. This kind of situation never occurred during the Obama administration, according to Obama's White House ethics lawyer Norman Eisen, or any other administration. Both Ivanka and Jared have close business ties to China where Kushner pursued hundreds of millions of dollars in real estate investments, according to Eisen.

As a government employee, Ivanka's involvement in trade with China does appear to have a conflict of interest. She has a legal obligation to refrain from interfering with foreign trade policy. The United States Constitution prohibits federal officials from accepting anything of value from foreign governments or individuals without congressional approval.

Recently 3.4 tons of Ivanka Trump hand bags, wallets, and blouses arrived in the United States from Hong Kong and Shanghai, according to global shipping records. What is her legal status in this trade?

As a government employee is she liable under the employment rules of the constitution?

We have no concept of the global trade in which the Trump family is involved. Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, a watchdog group, recently expanded the scope of its federal lawsuit against President Trump to include trademark approvals from China in its list of alleged constitutional violations. As a White House employee, Ivanka is subject to the same rules, yet she has some 180 pending and registered trademarks in foreign countries.

The actual structure of Trump's domestic and foreign business and trade is unknown and complete disclosure has not been available.

Ivanka's merchandising is a political minefield. It is essential that she separate her business from politics in her employment at the White House. It's a simple matter of ethics.

Dorys Grover, Pendleton