

# EAST OREGONIAN

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**KATHRYN B. BROWN**  
Publisher

**DANIEL WATTENBURGER**  
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**MARCY ROSENBERG**  
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**JANNA HEIMGARTNER**  
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## OUR VIEW

# Tip of the hat; kick in the pants

**A tip of the hat to the Beach Bill, which turned 50 Thursday.**

The bill was passed on July 6, 1967, and it guaranteed free unrestricted access to Oregon's public beaches. It has helped shape the modern Oregon character and kept the state's beaches in a relatively natural state, without undue development.



In this era of hyper-partisanship and negativity towards each and every piece of legislation, it's good to remember a time when political parties and politicians came together to put the people's interest first. Republican Governor Tom McCall worked with Oregon's burgeoning environmental movement to get it done, and the bill has found support in the court system in the decades since. Those involved

in the bill's passage were celebrated for it by Oregonians of every political persuasion, and Americans and foreigners have all enjoyed the benefits thereof.

There have been some economic drawbacks to the law — the plethora of state parks up and down the coast could instead be upscale resorts bringing in property tax dollars and bed taxes. Mansions and "no trespassing" signs could be dotting the coast.

But imagine Cannon Beach being off-limits to everyone but the wealthy — only those who can afford it enjoying Hug Point and Seal Rock and Cape Lookout and Beverly Beach. It would be just a shame, and it wouldn't be Oregon. We might as well be living in California or (shudder) New Jersey.

Thankfully we have Oregon legislation like Beach Bill that shows we're our own animal, and all are welcome to enjoy Oregon's best places.

**A kick in the pants to the intoxicated drivers that have been nabbed recently in Umatilla and Morrow counties.**

There has been quite an uptick recently, spurred likely by the long Fourth of July holiday weekend that often entails the drinking of alcohol or worse.

Perhaps some of it is due to the Rainbow Gathering, which can be fairly open-minded when it comes to ingestion of substances. But many of those who appeared in our public safety log over the last days and weeks have had local addresses — so it's not just visitors running afoul of the rules.

Long summer nights with lots of events and outdoor activities can get people traveling and celebrating. Sometimes that celebrating involves drink and newly-legal drugs. And the summer will only get hotter with big events named after and sponsored by alcoholic beverages.

It's worth a reminder to make sure that does not include driving after. If it does, expect to get arrested or worse — cause harm to yourself or others.

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

# Public remains in the dark on Medicaid cuts

*The (Brookhaven, Miss.) Daily Leader*

As with a lot of legislation coming out of Washington, the general public appears to be in the dark about the details of the health care overhaul plans being considered.

According to a poll administered by Kaiser Health News, while almost three-fourths of Americans have a favorable view of Medicaid, only 38 percent were aware that legislation being considered in the House and Senate would make major funding changes to the program.

About 25 percent of respondents said the legislation made minor changes and 13 percent didn't realize there were any changes at all.

The Senate's plan to replace Obamacare would leave an additional 22 million people without health coverage over the next decade, according to the Congressional Budget Office. Federal spending on Medicaid would drop by 26 percent over current spending projections in the Senate plan, or \$772 billion, over the next decade, according to the analysis.

Depending on your view of government and its role in people's

lives, that's either a good thing or a bad thing. We happen to think it's a bad thing.

The drop in spending would occur mainly because the Senate plan phases out federal funds for states to expand Medicaid and it puts annual caps on

federal Medicaid dollars to states, according to Kaiser Health News.

In Mississippi, more than 400,000 children are on Medicaid. Another 175,000 on Medicaid are disabled or blind. A total of 25 percent of the state's population is covered by Medicaid.

If the state loses some of its federal Medicaid funding, fewer Mississippians will have access to health care through

Medicaid. That includes many Mississippians who are no doubt Republicans and support the legislation currently being crafted by a Republican-controlled Senate.

That's the funny thing about Mississippi. We are a state full of small government conservatives, but we also can't wean ourselves off the federal government's money. We like the idea of smaller government and deficit reductions, but in reality, we really like Uncle Sam's handouts.

## 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

# In a remote village, witnessing miracles

**BUCHANAN, Liberia —** Miracles are rare these days, but I've seen them.

In a village in rural Liberia, a long and muddy road from anywhere, I came across a grandma, a mom and a baby daughter all afflicted by clubfoot. This is a common birth defect in which one or both feet are grotesquely turned inward.

We don't see it in the U.S. or Europe because doctors correct it soon after birth, and clubfoot alumni include athletic superstars like Mia Hamm and Kristi Yamaguchi. My mother (a tireless walker with perfectly normal feet) was born with a clubfoot.

Yet here, as in most of the world, kids with clubfoot weren't treated and grew up as outcasts. About one child in 800 worldwide is born with clubfoot, and in poor countries they are left to hobble on the sides of their feet; unable to work, they may become beggars.

In this village, clubfoot used to be a life sentence: The grandma, Yahin-ye Korwee, never went to school, nor did her daughter, Hannah Cooper, 26. The grandfather abandoned the family when Hannah was born, ashamed that neighbors mocked her as a cripple.

Then Cooper had her own daughter 11 months ago, also with clubfoot (it's partly hereditary), and her boyfriend left her as well. "You've got a crippled child," she remembered him saying. "I don't want it."

Yet this baby had her feet fixed. This is possible with a simple nonsurgical treatment involving a series of plaster casts to guide the foot into the proper position.

This approach, called the Ponseti method, is routine in Western countries and is increasingly available in poor countries as well, through aid groups like MiracleFeet, based in North Carolina, and Cure, based in Pennsylvania.

I wish that skeptics of humanitarian aid could have seen the baby get care from MiracleFeet and emerge with feet as good as anyone else's. Now she'll be able to walk and run, go to school and hold a job, support herself and her country.

And the total cost? Less than \$500 for transforming a life.

I'm on my annual win-a-trip journey with a university student, Aneri Pattani (who has been busily blogging at nytimes.com/ontheground — check out her posts!). I wanted us to report on clubfoot because it's an antidote to skepticism about humanitarian aid.

The dirty little secret of foreign aid is that it's hard. You can build a school, but it's hard to ensure that teachers will show up. You can build a well, but what happens when the hand pump breaks? You can provide safe birthing kits, but what if a nurse sells them on the black market?

Look, helping people is complicated.



**NICHOLAS KRISTOF**  
Comment

But I'm a strong advocate of more aid because sometimes aid is transformative. When properly done, clubfoot treatment is straightforward, succeeds 95 percent of the time and inexpensively changes a life like that of this 11-month-old girl.

"Now she'll go to school," said Chesca Coloredo-Mansfeld, executive director of MiracleFeet. "She's going to stand on her own two feet for the rest of her life."

Yet most children in poor countries still don't get clubfoot repaired. The Global Clubfoot Initiative estimates that only 15 percent of children in low- and middle-income countries get good treatment, and it aims to raise that to 70 percent by 2030. Aid groups like MiracleFeet train local health care workers to treat clubfoot, so that over time each country's own health system can take over diagnosis and treatment. But for now, thousands of children slip through the cracks.

Cooper told us that there was another child in the village with clubfoot, and soon he was brought to us. His name was Henroy, and at age 9 he had never attended school because he has trouble even hobbling. MiracleFeet is now arranging to fix his feet, too.

In another town, Ganta, we saw the toll on families of clubfoot. A small boy, Aria, was being looked after by his grandmother, Nora Glay, because his mother fled rather than raise a child she expected to be permanently disabled. "She was embarrassed," Glay said of the mother, "and that's why she abandoned the child."

But Glay heard on the radio that clubfoot could be repaired. So she borrowed money from friends and took Aria on a weeklong odyssey to get to the Ganta hospital, where Aria's feet will be corrected over the coming months so that he will be able to walk and run.

A few feet away in the hospital waiting area, Saye Willie acknowledged that he was initially devastated when his son, Bigboy, was born with clubfoot. "I thought it was witchcraft," the father said. "I accused my wife of taking a bath at night, and I thought somebody put drugs in the water."

Bigboy, 7, seems a bit overcome at the prospect that his feet will soon be normal, allowing him to walk, run, play soccer. "I want to go to school," he told me. "I want my feet to be good so I can run, too."

My friend Michael Elliott, who ran the One Campaign's fight against global poverty until shortly before his death last year, used to say that we live in an "age of miracles." I thought of that while in the village with the family suffering from three generations of clubfoot, where the baby now has normal feet.

Oh, and the baby's name?

Her mom named her Miracle.

*Nicholas Kristof won the Pulitzer Prize two times, in 1990 and 2006.*

## YOUR VIEWS

### Dangerous to toss candy during parades

I love a good parade, because since 1949 I have ridden horseback in over a 100 of them.

An obvious fact first: Pendleton knows how to produce a grand parade with great crowds of families. This year's Fourth of July parade was no exception. However, it's time to pull the plug on the Fourth of July parade's policy of allowing candy tossing, before it does itself lasting damage.

Why is that? Because we're watching our young children not watching the parade — not caring or learning anything about the parades participants — while they cadge, hustle free candy by dashing into harm's way.

In fact, children across the country are injured every year. And over the years, several children have been killed.

This year once again saw hundreds of kids — a few with little or no parental supervision — were swarming like honeybees. Indeed, one young child was seen rushing under a bus. Her mom pulled her out just before it was too late.

During the parade I talked with six parents about my concerns. And all but one parent agreed with me or, at least, was interested in what I had to say. The Westward Ho! and Main Street Cowboy's Dress-Up parades both

have very tough no-candy rules in their parade applications. The Westward Ho! states: "Any groups not following this rule will be asked to leave immediately and will not be invited to participate in future parades."

This year's Fourth of July parade application included "due to safety issues involving the throwing of candy, no entry will be allowed to throw any items to the spectators," but it also included this very problematic rule: "groups may provide people to walk along the parade route and pass out items to the crowd."

Passing out anything, anywhere to children in any parade undercuts what parades are all about.

Particularly concise are the Hermiston's Umatilla County Fair's rules and regulations: "Throwing candy puts children in danger. They are focused on catching or gathering candy and not safety. Do the right thing!"

The key to doing "the right thing" is not to simply print out a parade's rules and regulations and secure a signature, but to enforce them with official parade watchers. In a year or two, after parents explain to their children what the ban is all about, Pendleton's three terrific parades will return to what parades are all about.

**Tom Hebert**  
Pendleton