

EAST OREGONIAN

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OUR VIEW

Same product, new delivery

The end of an era in newspaper delivery has arrived. As of Nov. 1, the print version of the *East Oregonian* will be delivered exclusively by mail.

The reasons for this change are both financial and practical: Carrier delivery is far more costly than USPS delivery, and we have had ever-increasing difficulty finding reliable carriers.

There are deeper reasons for this change as well, which are affecting the entire newspaper industry in the United States. The *EO* is not the first daily newspaper to transition to all-mail same-day delivery, and we certainly won't be the last.

For over a century, the business plan for the *EO* was pretty simple. Revenue = subscription income + single copy sales + classified and display advertising revenue. The major expenses were newsprint, employee salaries and benefits, and press equipment maintenance. Since newspapers were the main — and often the only — source of news in many communities, there was a captive audience, willing to pay for the news and advertising that only their local paper could provide.

But then, a new delivery method for news arrived in the late 1990s: Online delivery.

In the last decade of the 20th century, newspapers had to invest in the computer equipment, software and training to make publishing online possible — while still producing a print newspaper on printing presses using technology that hasn't changed much in the last hundred years.

With the internet came Craig's List, eBay and Amazon — new ways of buying and selling that did not depend on newspaper advertising.

The internet also brought the news of the world to everyone with a computer, or in recent years, everyone with a smartphone.

In many ways, the internet has broadened the average citizen's knowledge of the world, but may have disconnected them from their local communities. Across America, readers have dropped their paid newspaper subscriptions. Plenty of people perceive news of their local city council meeting or school board election to be far less interesting than entertainment news, gossip and scandals coming out of Hollywood or memes on Facebook.

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.

U.S. taxpayers should not add Puerto Rico

How sad to see the devastation in Puerto Rico. They have now been hit with two terrible storms, leaving the island in near total ruin. The U.S. is struggling now to pay for our own disasters in Texas and Florida but is now making an attempt to help in Puerto Rico as well. The president has flown there and promised to help rebuild this island because, of course, Puerto Rico is a U.S. "territory." It is not a state, although the island has lobbied hard for that status for many years.

These folks are U.S. citizens but don't vote in our elections. They are exempt from paying U.S. federal income tax but do pay into Social Security and Medicare. A half million of them have migrated to the U.S. in the past decade, and the island has 12 percent underemployment. The U.S. taxpayer subsidizes Puerto Rico to the tune of \$10 billion each year.

Puerto Rico is a tiny island 1,000 miles from Miami. The U.S. occupied this island after the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the population was granted citizen status in 1917. They have a governor and elect a commissioner who represents the island in our Congress but has no vote. There is a military base there, and Puerto Ricans do serve in the U.S. military.

However, it is difficult to see any strategic military significance or benefit this little

As the publisher and an owner of the *East Oregonian*, I'd love to see our circulation and advertising revenue grow so that I can hire more journalists and cover Umatilla and Morrow counties in greater depth than we do now. However, in a region with slow population growth, growing circulation is a challenge. And in an

environment where some of our biggest advertisers have gone out of business over the years (car dealers in Pendleton, K-mart, Albertson's, Pendleton Grain Growers, JC Penney and Del's to name a few), growing advertising revenue is also a challenge.

After our last fiscal year, I was faced with the very real need to cut expenses. After examining other options, such as dropping delivery days, I concluded that converting to mail delivery was the best option. It affords us significant savings and allows us to continue publishing five days a week.

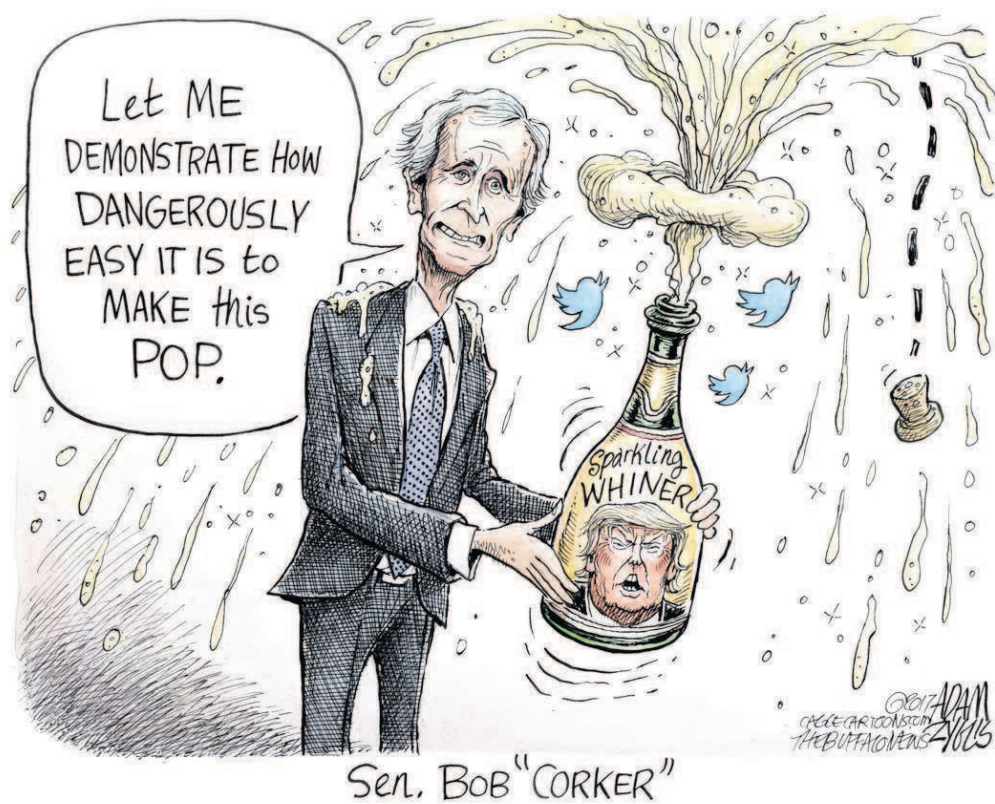
Since we switched from afternoon delivery in 2012, our readers have become accustomed to morning delivery. (We made that change when *The Oregonian* stopped home delivery in Eastern Oregon.) For many who don't get their mail until later in the day, this will take some getting used to.

If you need your news first thing in the morning, please subscribe to our email newsletter at www.eastoregonian.com/eo/newsletters so you can get the headlines and read the news online first thing in the morning. Also, our e-edition is posted online in the early morning hours each publication day.

If a print newspaper is the only way you want to read, you can still find the *EO* in single copy locations throughout both counties. Most locations in Hermiston and Pendleton will have papers by 6:30 a.m., but outlying areas will not get their papers until the mail is delivered to that location.

We know this will alter (again) the reading habits for some of our loyal print subscribers, and we hope you understand our aim is to continue bringing high-quality daily news coverage to Umatilla and Morrow counties. We see the times changing, and believe this is the best way to keep pace with them.

Kathryn Brown is publisher of the East Oregonian



Sen. Bob "CORKER"

OTHER VIEWS

Ten reasons to stay calm about those Russia Facebook ads

The latest excitement in the Trump-Russia investigation is a set of Facebook ads linked to Russia, about 3,000 in all, that some of the president's adversaries hope will prove the Trump campaign colluded with Russia in the 2016 election.

"A number of Russian-linked Facebook ads specifically targeted Michigan and Wisconsin, two states crucial to Donald Trump's victory last November," CNN reported recently. Some of the ads, the network continued, appeared "highly sophisticated in their targeting of key demographic groups in areas of the states that turned out to be pivotal" to Donald Trump's victory.

In addition, the report noted, the ads seemed tailor-made for the Trump campaign. "The ads employed a series of divisive messages aimed at breaking through the clutter of campaign ads online, including promoting anti-Muslim messages, sources said," CNN reported, suggesting that anti-Muslim content could have been designed to complement candidate Trump's message.

Put aside whether Michigan and Wisconsin were in fact "crucial" to Trump's victory. (He would still have won the presidency even if he had lost both.) The theory is that Russians could not have pulled off such "highly sophisticated" targeting by themselves and therefore may have had help from the Trump campaign or its associates.

But is that the whole story? Not according to a government official familiar with the Facebook ads, who offers a strikingly different assessment. What follows is from the official and from public statements by Facebook itself:

1) Of the group of 3,000 ads turned over to Congress by Facebook, a majority of the impressions came after the election, not before. Indeed, in an Oct. 2 news release, Facebook said 56 percent of the ads' impressions came after the 2016 vote.

2) Twenty-five percent of the ads were never seen by anybody. (Facebook also revealed that in the news release.)

3) Most of the ads, which Facebook estimates were seen by 10 million people in the U.S., never mentioned the election or any candidate. "The vast majority of ads run by these accounts didn't specifically reference the U.S. presidential election, voting or a particular candidate," Facebook said in a Sept. 6 news release.

4) A relatively small number of the ads — again, about 25 percent — were geographically targeted. (Facebook also revealed that on Sept. 6.)

5) The ads that were geographically targeted were all over the map. "Of those that were targeted, numerous other locales besides



BYRON YORK
Comment

Michigan and Wisconsin, including non-battleground states like Texas, were targeted," the government official familiar with the ads said, via email.

6) Very few ads specifically targeted Wisconsin or Michigan. "Of the hundreds of pre-election ads with one or more impressions, less than a dozen ads targeted Michigan and Wisconsin combined," the official said.

7) By and large, the ads targeting Michigan and Wisconsin did not run in the general election. "Nearly all of these Michigan and Wisconsin ads ran in 2015 and also ran in other states," the official said.

8) The Michigan and Wisconsin ads were not widely seen. "The majority of these Wisconsin and Michigan ads had less than 1,000 impressions," the official said.

9) The Michigan and Wisconsin ads (like those everywhere else) were low-budget. "The buy for the majority of these Michigan and Wisconsin ads (paid in rubles) was equivalent to approximately \$10," the official said.

10) The ads just weren't very good. The language used in some of the ads "clearly shows the ad writer was not a native English speaker," the official said. In addition, the set of ads turned over by Facebook also contained "clickbait-type ads that had nothing to do with politics." And in general, the official's view is that the ads simply were not terribly sophisticated, contrary to how they have been portrayed.

None of this proves anything about the Facebook part of the Trump-Russia affair. It doesn't prove there was no collusion, and it certainly doesn't prove there was. But it does suggest this particular set of ads might not be a very big deal.

In an Oct. 4 news conference, the Senate Intelligence Committee chairman, Republican Sen. Richard Burr, did not play up the Facebook angle. "I think if you look from 10,000 feet, the subject matter of the ads was — seems to have been to create chaos in every group that they could possibly identify in America," Burr said.

Burr elaborated, adding, "If we used solely the social media that we have seen, there's no way that you can look at that and say that that was to help the right side of the ideological chart and not the left. Or vice versa. They were indiscriminate."

Burr noted that he has no objection to Facebook releasing the ads publicly. Certainly doing so would go a long way toward clearing up the public's understanding of the issue. Like everything else in the Trump-Russia affair, people need to know what happened.

Byron York is chief political correspondent for The Washington Examiner.

YOUR VIEWS

Island offers the U.S. This past June, Puerto Rico had another referendum on their political preferences and voted over 97 percent for statehood. The final decision is up to Congress, but they have rejected that status a number of times in the past.

Americans are the most generous people on the planet and do more to help other countries than the rest of the world combined. But these storms are not over. They will return. These natural disasters will once again ravage our own country, but we will be also be responsible for rebuilding Puerto Rico over and over again in the future.

Don't you wonder how many disasters our government (sorry I meant the U.S. taxpayer) can afford — in addition to those hitting Puerto Rico? We are in debt about \$21 trillion now, so I guess we can always raise the debt ceiling again and borrow another couple trillion. I mean really — who's counting?

David Burns
Pendleton

PFLAG reaches out on National Coming Out Day

For far too long members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community have had to hide in fear, living their lives "closeted" to protect their jobs, homes, families and relationships. Constant fear of being rejected by friends and loved ones, as well as the community of which they are a part, has led to many of them remaining in

the proverbial closet. National Coming Out Day encourages all LGBTQ people and their allies to stand proud of who they are and to fight for a more equal tomorrow.

Twenty-nine years ago, National Coming Out Day was created by Rob Eichberg and Jean O'Leary as a result of the 500,000 person March on Washington DC for Lesbian and Gay Rights. The coming together of thousands of LGBTQ citizens and supporters energized many to establish this holiday.

Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays promotes the health and well-being of gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual persons and their families and friends through support, education and advocacy in communities all over the United States. We are currently 400 chapters strong and growing.

Unbeknownst to many, PFLAG has been part of Pendleton and surrounding area since the late 1980s. PFLAG Pendleton envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. With a strong desire to help people live a healthy and happy life PFLAG Pendleton will be available on Wednesday, October 11 to take calls from anyone looking for personal coming out support, support for a family member, or for parents or family on how to support someone who has just come out.

Currently one out of every two Americans has someone close to them who is gay or

lesbian. For transgender people, that number is only one in 10. Coming out — whether it is as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or allied — STILL MATTERS. When people know someone who is LGBTQ, they are far more likely to support equality under the law.

Your call is confidential and being answered by a PFLAG member who cares about you and your community. The number to call is 541-966-8414. You can also find us on Facebook- PFLAG Pendleton Oregon Chapter or email at pflag.pendleton.or@gmail.com

PFLAG Pendleton meeting information can be found in the *East Oregonian* under the community calendar or local meetings. Thank you.

Vickie and Lonnie Read
Pendleton

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.