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OUR VIEW

Having a heart for the homeless

In today's paper, you hear from people without a warm, safe place to sleep at night, and from people anxiously teetering on the edge of homelessness. And you are introduced to distressing statistics that show that these kinds of dangers are more common than you might think — even here in Eastern Oregon.

Homelessness might feel like a big city concern, and it sure is more visible when you travel to Portland, Seattle or Eugene. But you don't have to walk far along the levee in Pendleton or along the river farther downstream

to see evidence of people living their lives without the benefit of shelter.

And as the temperature dips below freezing and the weather turns nasty, a lack of housing becomes a matter of life and death.

Earlier in the week we reported on the warming stations in Pendleton and Hermiston, powered completely by volunteers, that offer a safe place for people with nowhere else to turn. There's no doubt that's a life-saving effort.

Those efforts all the more important when we think of children facing those same obstacles.

Administrators, teachers and classmates in all area schools know children who are doing just that. Some are being bounced around between couches and apartments,

never having a steady address or space to call their own. Some are moving from town to town with itinerant parents so often that they can't get a consistent education. And some are living on the street or the back seat of a car, freezing beneath blankets despite nonprofit and government help available to their families.

The difficulty of their struggle must not be dismissed. There are many factors — systemic, economic and personal — at play, but withholding compassion and searching for blame as a child suffers is a sure way prolong the suffering.

But as an antidote to this trouble and mistreatment, hopefully you read the Limey Pastor's column in Friday's paper. He wrote about rescuing a man and a dog living on the street, taking the dog to a veterinarian and putting the duo up a few nights in a motel to catch up on sleep and stay warm. It was a beautiful story about a man who puts his faith into real action.

These newspapers are a reminder that during the holiday season, there are people out there who are less fortunate than us. We must care for them when we can, and sometimes when we believe we cannot.

That must be especially true about our young people, especially those who need from the community what they are not given by their family.

The holiday season is about remembering the less fortunate, and remedying when possible.

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

More wilderness permits a necessary evil

By Salem Statesman Journal

If it's accessible, they will come. And they will leave their trash and cause environmental damage.

We wish it wasn't true, but it is. And now because too many are turning to the outdoors for its free recreational opportunities, the rest of us will have to pay to preserve these spots for future generations.

The U.S. Forest Service proposed new regulations in June that would require hikers and backpackers to purchase a permit before heading into five wilderness areas between Mount Jefferson and Diamond Peak.

Oregon's outcry was fast and furious. More than 500 members of the public responded. But it's really just a case of federal land managers in Oregon catching up with their peers in Washington, California, Arizona and elsewhere across the country.

The permitting system is the most equitable way to make increased use, and overuse, pay for itself. The areas being considered for an advance-purchase

permit ranging from \$6 to \$12 are the Mount Jefferson, Mount Washington, Three Sisters, Waldo Lake and Diamond Lake wilderness areas. The proposal includes limits for the number of day hikers and backpackers.

Unlike state or national parks, wilderness areas don't have a lot of options for handling the hordes of people using the areas and the unfortunate damage that accompanies them.

Only two areas in Oregon currently require a permit to hike or backpack: the Obsidian Trail in the Three Sisters Wilderness and Pamela Lake in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness. The success of those permit programs instituted in the past, and their ability to stem overuse, influenced the proposal.

Fewer people have used these areas, and our thoughts are that the folks getting the permits are more mindful of their impact on the environment.

As is often the case, a few abusers force the majority of users to pay for the consequences for their actions. A permit system works in others states; it will work in more spots in Oregon, too.

President Trump's racism runs deep

President Trump's racism is deeply ingrained and embedded in his personality and he chooses to flaunt his racism at any time.

For example, at a recent White House ceremony recognizing the famed World War II code talkers of the Navajo Nation, The Donald could not resist using the occasion to make a racial slur. Elizabeth Warren, the democratic senator from Massachusetts, had absolutely nothing to do with the event, yet Trump found the need to twist and undermine the occasion into what he perceived to be his political benefit.

During this solemn ceremony, Trump referred to Sen. Warren as "Pocahontas." Then he stood waiting for everyone to chuckle

at his punch line. However, no one did. In my opinion, Trump used his guests, the code talkers, to mock and slur a sitting United States senator. Thus, he mocked and slurred the code talkers as well.

The reason President Trump can get away with racist stunts like this is no one will criticize or question him when he does these things. In fact, his so-called "base" will cheer him on for things like this. All the leadership of the Navajo Nation had to say in response was that Trump is "insensitive." They need to call it for what is — blatant racism.

The Navajo Nation leadership also said they appreciate the "honor" President Trump provided to the code talkers. Honor? Trump used the code talkers for his own racist purposes, of taking a cheap shot at a duly elected official

because she refuses to bow down to him.

Sen. Warren knows her own heritage better than anyone else, and why would anyone else feel the need to question it? The Donald has a racist and twisted need to question the ancestry of people of color, such as the ancestry of President Barack Obama. Although this situation has been put to rest long ago, President Trump has recently been trying to revive it again.

Bob Shippentower
Pendleton

Echo and hate crime

A crime does not have to be an illegal activity. A crime can be a senseless or shameful act, or a serious violation of a moral code. The FBI report on hate crimes

tells a sobering story according to a recent *Washington Post* article. In 2016, the FBI counted 6,121 reported incidents nationwide, an increase of 4.6 percent from 2015. In 2015 there was a 6.8 percent increase in hate crimes over 2014.

The incident involving Echo city councilman Lou Nakapalau may not rise high enough to be included in an FBI hate crime report but it is certainly of local note. His digital hate speech toward the LGBTQ was picked up by the *Miami Herald*, the *Washington Times*, the *Chicago Tribune* and *U.S. News and World Report*, among others.

Pam Reese tells us in her Dec. 2 op-ed that when she tried to address this issue at an Echo City Council meeting she was told that councilman Nakapalau's remarks "were aimed at someone half a

world away didn't really do any harm." How's that again?

We are increasingly becoming a nation of intolerance with this being an in-your-face local example. As an individual insensitivity, it may not be so bad. But it appears from Pam Reese's letter this hate crime has the Echo City Council and administration support.

To be fair, the city of Echo has issued an apology for the statements made by Councilman Nakapalau. In offering the apology, though, they still appear to lack a nobility of purpose. They still appear not able to see Nakapalau's remark "I'll spit on your grave," in speaking of a gay man, as fostering prejudicial hate.

We live in community and the world is our community.

Ronald Gavette
Pendleton



OTHER VIEWS

Trump, Israel and the art of the giveaway

I'm contemplating writing a book on the first year of President Donald Trump's foreign policy, and I already know the name: "The Art of the Giveaway."

In nearly 30 years of covering United States foreign policy, I've never seen a president give up so much to so many for so little, starting with China and Israel. In both the Middle Kingdom and in the Land of Israel, Christmas came early this year. The Chinese and the Jews are both whispering to their kids: "There really is a Santa Claus."

And his name is Donald Trump. Who can blame them? Let's start with Israel, every Israeli government since its founding has craved U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as its capital. And every U.S. government has refrained from doing that, arguing that such a recognition should come only in the wake of an agreed final status peace accord between Israelis and Palestinians — until now.

On Wednesday, Trump just gave it away — for free. Such a deal! Why in the world would you just give this away for free and not even use it as a lever to advance the prospect of an Israeli-Palestinian deal?

Trump could have said two things to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. First, he could have said: "Bibi, you keep asking me to declare Jerusalem as Israel's capital. OK, I will do that. But I want a deal. Here's what I want from you in return: You will declare an end to all Israeli settlement building in the West Bank, outside of the existing settlement bloc that everyone expects to be part of Israel in any two-state solution."

Such a trade-off is needed. It would produce a real advance for United States interests and for the peace process. As Dennis Ross, the veteran American Middle East peace negotiator and author of "Doomed to Succeed: The U.S.-Israeli Relationship From Truman to Obama," explained: "When you stop building outside the settlement blocs, you preserve, at a maximum, the possibility of a two-state outcome and, at a minimum, the ability for Israelis to separate from Palestinians. Keep up the building in densely populated Palestinian areas and separation becomes impossible."

Trump also could have said, as the former U.S. ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk suggested, that he'd decided "to begin the process of moving the embassy to western Jerusalem, but at the same time was declaring his willingness to make a parallel announcement that he would establish an embassy to the state of Palestine in East Jerusalem" — as part of any final status agreement. That would at least have insulated us from looking like we made a one-sided gesture that will only complicate peacemaking and kept the door open to Palestinians.

In either case, Trump could then have boasted to Israelis and Palestinians that he got them each something that Barack Obama never did — something that advanced the peace process and U.S. credibility and did not embarrass our Arab allies. But Trump is a chump. And he is a chump because he is



THOMAS FRIEDMAN
Comment

ignorant and thinks the world started the day he was elected, and so he is easily gamed.

Just ask the Chinese. Basically, his first day in office, Trump tore up the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) free-trade deal — clearly without having read it or asked China for any trade concession in return. Trump simply threw out the window the single most valuable tool the United States had for shaping the geoeconomic future of the region

our way and for pressuring China to open its markets to more U.S. goods.

Trump is now trying to negotiate trade openings with China alone — bilaterally — and getting basically nowhere. And yet he could have been negotiating with China as the head of a 12-nation TPP trading bloc that was based on U.S. values and interests and that controlled 40 percent of the global economy. Think of the leverage we lost.

In a column from Hong Kong in June, a senior Hong Kong official told me: "When Trump did away with TPP, all your allies' confidence in the U.S. collapsed." After the U.S. stopped TPP, "everyone is now looking to China," added Jonathan Koon-shum Choi, chairman of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Hong Kong. "But China is very smart — just keeping its mouth shut."

Just to remind: TPP was a free-trade agreement that the Obama team forged with Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam. It was not only the largest free-trade agreement in history, it was the best ever for U.S. workers, closing loopholes NAFTA had left open. Some 80 percent of the goods from our 11 TPP partners were coming into the United States duty-free already, while our goods and services were still being hit with thousands of tariffs in their countries — which TPP eliminated.

As I also noted last June, the other people we disappointed by scrapping TPP, explained James McGregor, author of "One Billion Customers: Lessons From the Front Lines of Doing Business in China," were China's economic reformers: They were hoping that the emergence of TPP "would force China to reform its trade practices more along American lines and to open its markets. ... We failed the reformers in China."

Trump is susceptible to such giveaways, not only because he is ignorant, but because he does not see himself as the president of the United States. He sees himself as the president of his base. And because that's the only support he has left, he feels the need to keep feeding his base by fulfilling crude, ill-conceived promises he threw out to them during the campaign. Today, again, he put another one of those promises ahead of United States' national interest.

Thomas Friedman, a *New York Times* columnist, was awarded two Pulitzer Prizes for international reporting in Beirut and Israel and one for commentary.

YOUR VIEWS