

# O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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## OUR VIEW

## A deadly reminder of surf-zone dangers

A weekend clam-digging adventure came to a sorrowful end for two families last weekend when women drowned in Pacific County. Questions are being raised about how two deaths occurred miles apart within minutes of one another under startlingly similar circumstances.

It should first be said that residents of the Northwest are, for the most part, fairly familiar with the rewards and risks of ocean beaches. In particular, some razor clam diggers have characteristics in common with ardent football fans, who attend games and tailgate parties in sometimes-appalling conditions. Most clammers would be irritated if a “nanny state” were to be overly zealous in curtailing the hours and conditions in which digging is allowed.

These aren't the first fatal incidents involving clam diggers. For example, in late January 2004, a couple drowned while clamming together at Leadbetter Point, where one of this weekend's deaths also happened. In addition, there are countless accounts of clammers and other recreationists of all ages and physical conditions being tumbled in the surf. If anything, there is considerable wonder that more fatalities don't occur. Children and adults who aren't entirely sure of foot are perhaps the most vulnerable, but even strong and confident adults have close calls.

At all times of the year, visitors not used to the ebb and flow of the ocean are far more likely to have trouble than locals. However, summertime drownings tend to impact overly confident young people, whereas fall and winter clamming places a wide range of age groups in and near the ocean. The desire to access clam beds at low tide, in areas usually covered by surf, tempts diggers to go westward where they will certainly be partially submerged by incoming waves. Enthusiastic diggers willingly accept getting wet to their knees or even thighs.

But this means they violate advice from local safety and rescue experts, who say that it is never safe to swim — or even wade — at local beaches. Due to cold water temperatures, the lack of lifeguards, floating logs and other debris, and a very strong rip current, the water here is dangerous, even when it appears to be calm. Additionally, large “sneaker waves” can occur at any time.

It may have been a sneaker wave that was responsible for last Friday's nearly simultaneous drownings on either side of the mouth of Willapa Bay in southwest Washington. More detailed analysis in coming days may pinpoint other risk factors.

For now, clam diggers, surfperch fishermen and anyone else who comes into contact with the surf zone should



Nighttime clamming places people near the ocean's dangerous surf zone.

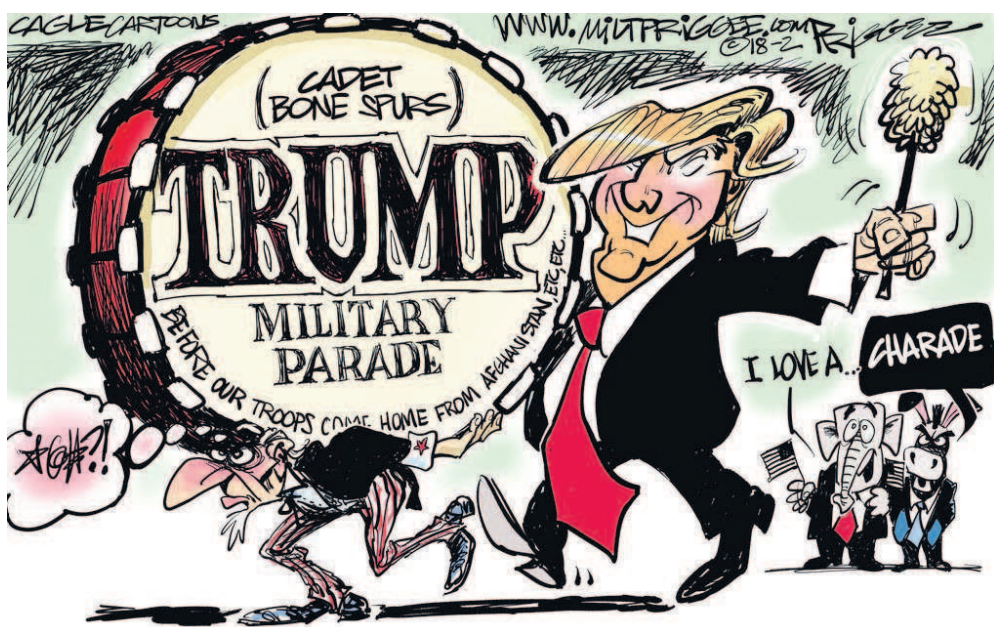
obey these common-sense precautions, which is true for vacationers from all parts of the state:

- Always keep a close watch on the ocean for sneaker waves, the incoming tide and floating debris.
- It's best to avoid going more than knee-deep in the water in this area, which is notorious for drownings. If recreational activities necessitate contact with the ocean, strongly consider wearing a life preserver. Clammers must always be aware that hip and chest waders contribute to mishaps if they are over-topped by seawater.
- Parents who do allow children to wade should have a sober adult stay within arms' reach of them at all times.
- Anyone who spots a swimmer in

distress should call 911 immediately, rather than attempting to rescue them. Stay on shore and try to provide emergency responders with as much information as possible about the victim's location, activity and appearance.

• Diggers should bear in mind the ratio of risk to reward in going into the surf zone. Nighttime digs can be especially problematic. No clam is worth risking or losing your life.

This weekend's drownings were deeply upsetting to all involved. Beyond the families and friends of the victims, emergency responders feel anguish and strain while trying to save lives or recover bodies. These were grueling hours for all.



## YOUR VIEWS

### The Donald has no right to wrap himself in the flag

In consideration that the commander-in-chief is a military draft evader, it is hypocrisy that he just loves to wrap himself in the flag. The Donald even has the nerve to refer to some duly elected United States senators and House representatives as being “treasonous” and “un-American.” The reason for this is because they did not wildly cheer his every word, and give him a standing ovation at his recent State of the Union speech. Petty and petulant? Of course it is. The Donald already has plenty of lackeys and “coffee boys” in his cabinet and White House staff.

Here is the extent of The Donald's military “experience:” When the Vietnam War was at its height and he was not in college or graduate school, The Donald was eligible to be drafted. However, he shopped around for a doctor who, for the right price, wrote a letter to his local draft board attesting that The Donald had “bone spurs” that were “very painful,” and he should receive a medical deferment from military service. The scheme worked, so The Donald evaded military service by literally buying his way out. Who says money cannot buy everything?

Now, there are transgender citizens who wish to continue with their military service careers, or are trying to join up to serve our country. However, the evader-in-chief does not want them to serve. The Donald is blustering “not in This Man's Army!” (or whichever branch of service is relevant). So, who is being un-American here? Those who wish to serve in the military, or someone who deliberately evaded military service?

Also, little Donald Trump now wants to throw a big, expensive military parade. Our country has never had a tradition of making

a splashy show of our military power. Based on his record, The Donald would try to make a military parade all about him. It is surprising that The Donald has not taken personal credit for the Allies winning World War II. At least he hasn't yet.

Bob Shippentower  
Pendleton

### Still waiting on drone jobs

I did not stay long at the council meeting Feb. 6, but I did stay long enough to ask one question. It was, “How many Pendleton residents will the drone companies employ when they are in full operation?”

The answer I got was, “We don't know.” As of Feb. 6 there were two. Both are city employees. We have spent millions of dollars on the airport and only two government employees. Maybe it's time to look elsewhere for jobs for Pendleton. Drones are fine and we are glad they are flying. If it is going to take a college degree to work for these companies, we are not getting our money's worth out of the millions we have invested.

There are companies that will train people for jobs they have to fill. We have a college in Pendleton — why don't we work with them to see if we can bring companies here that the college is training students for? I know they have new facilities for agriculture. Maybe since we are a farming community that would be best.

Mayor Turner did say that the airport is making money now. Maybe the airport can start paying back the millions of dollars it owes to other city funds. That is a good thing.

We want to see Pendleton grow, and to grow we need good paying private sector jobs.

Rex J. Morehouse  
Pendleton

## OTHER VIEWS

## Everyone a changemaker

Bill Drayton invented the term “social entrepreneur” and founded Ashoka, the organization that supports 3,500 of them in 93 countries. He's a legend in the nonprofit world, so I went to him this week to see if he could offer some clarity and hope in discouraging times. He did not disappoint.

Drayton believes we're in the middle of a necessary but painful historical transition. For millenniums most people's lives had a certain pattern. You went to school to learn a trade or a skill — baking, farming or accounting. Then you could go into the work force and make a good living repeating the same skill over the course of your career.

But these days machines can do pretty much anything that's repetitive. The new world requires a different sort of person. Drayton calls this new sort of person a changemaker.

Changemakers are people who can see the patterns around them, identify the problems in any situation, figure out ways to solve the problem, organize fluid teams, lead collective action and then continually adapt as situations change.

For example, Ashoka fellow Andrés Gallardo is a Mexican who lived in a high crime neighborhood. He created an app, called Haus, that allows people to network with their neighbors. The app has a panic button that alerts everybody in the neighborhood when a crime is happening. It allows neighbors to organize, chat, share crime statistics and work together.

To form and lead this community of communities, Gallardo had to possess what Drayton calls “cognitive empathy-based living for the good of all.” Cognitive empathy is the ability to perceive how people are feeling in evolving circumstances. “For the good of all” is the capacity to build teams.

It doesn't matter if you are working in the cafeteria or the inspection line of a plant, companies will now only hire people who see problems and organize responses.

Millions of people already live with this mindset. But a lot of people still inhabit the world of following rules and repetitive skills. They hear society telling them: “We don't need you. We don't need your kids, either.” Of course, those people go into reactionary mode and strike back.

The central challenge of our time, Drayton says, is to make everyone a changemaker. To do that you start young. Your kid is 12. She tells you about some problem — the other kids at school are systematically mean to special-needs students. This is a big moment. You pause what you are doing and ask her if there's anything she thinks she can do to solve the problem, not just for this kid



DAVID BROOKS  
Comment

but for the next time it happens, too.

Very few kids take action to solve the first problem they see, but eventually they come back having conceived and owning an idea.

They organize their friends and do something. The adult job now is to get out of the way. Put the kids in charge.

Once a kid has had an idea, built a team and changed her world, she's a changemaker. She has the power. She'll go on to organize more teams. She will always be needed.

Drayton asks parents: “Does your daughter know that she is a changemaker? Is she practicing changemaking?” He tells them: “If you can't answer ‘yes’ to these questions, you have urgent work to do.”

In an earlier era, he says, society realized it needed universal literacy. Today, schools have to develop the curricula and assessments to make the changemaking mentality universal. They have to understand this is their criteria for success.

Ashoka has studied social movements to find out how this kind of mental shift can be promoted. It turns out that successful movements take similar steps.

First, they gather a group of powerful and hungry coleading organizations. (Ashoka is working with Arizona State and George Mason University.) Second, the group is opened to everybody. (You never know who is going to come up with the crucial idea.) Third, the movement creates soap operas with daily episodes. (The civil rights movement created televised dramas with good guys and bad guys, like the march from Selma.)

I wonder if everybody wants to be a changemaker in the Drayton mold. I wonder about any social vision that isn't fundamentally political. You can have a nation filled with local changemakers, but if the government is rotten their work comes to little. The social sector has never fully grappled with the permanent presence of sin.

But Drayton's genius is his capacity to identify new social categories. Since he invented the social entrepreneur category 36 years ago, hundreds of thousands of people have said, “Yes, that's what I want to be.” The changemaker is an expansion of that social type.

Social transformation flows from personal transformation. You change the world when you hold up a new and more attractive way to live. And Drayton wants to make universal a quality many people don't even see: agency.

Millions of people don't feel that they can take control of their own lives. If we could give everyone the chance to experience an agency moment, to express love and respect in action, the ramifications really would change the world.