

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

CHRISTOPHER RUSH
PublisherKATHRYN B. BROWN
OwnerDANIEL WATTENBURGER
Managing EditorTIM TRAINOR
Opinion Page Editor

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Tip of the hat, kick in the pants



A tip of the hat to the Pendleton Round-Up's plans for the old Albertsons building and surrounding property. No one wants to see an asset, such as a large building, meet the wrecking ball. But that bland and too-large former grocery store was never going to fit the bill for what the Round-Up wants and needs for the space.

And it's too close to the Round-Up, and therefore too valuable, to be anything but just right.

That's why we like the idea of moving on, tearing it down and seeing the immediate benefit of additional parking. Down the road, they can expand on the plaza created by the bucking horse statue and museum. And upgrading to a more digital-friendly ticketing system makes a lot of sense.

We hope the longterm plan for the former Albertsons property includes more green space, more party space and more market space. If the westward expansion includes more space for rodeo participants and equestrians, it only seems natural to balance that with more space for the fans.

Now we just need to fill the other major holes in downtown Pendleton, most notably Pendleton Grain Growers and the former JC Penney. Hopefully a wrecking ball isn't necessary in either of those renovations.

A tip of the hat to the international summit between the United States and North Korea, the first time the heads of those two countries have met in their history.

We breathed a sigh of relief as it came to an end. After all, Trump and Kim are known for their bluster and bravado, and sometimes a room isn't big enough for two men with that personality.

But the summit came and went without a catastrophe, which makes us all feel better.

No, we don't think the United States got anything in return for climbing out on this limb, and we don't trust the North Korean government will hold up their end of the bargain. But the fact that these two heads of state met and spoke and got to know one another is a helpful step toward peace.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Pendleton Round-Up Association has purchased the old Albertson's store across from the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds. The store has been vacant since 2014.

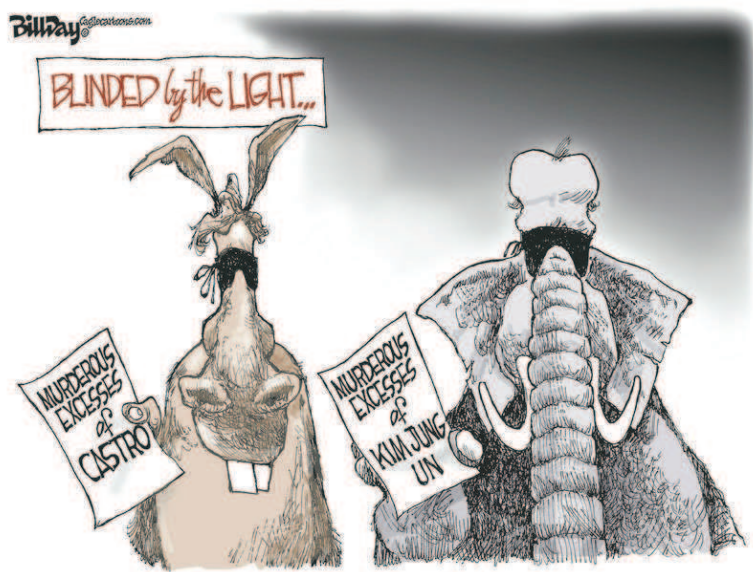
Or at the very least, it will help deter their former plan of insults and threats that could have escalated into disaster.

A tip of the hat to the successful if long-overdue plan to connect clean water to a Milton-Freewater trailer park.

The Locust Mobile Village has been struggling through a dangerous water situation for years. State laws were enacted to make sure Milton-Freewater wouldn't be forced to connect water to the park, which is inside the urban growth boundary but

outside city limits. It would have been expensive to do, and it could have set an expensive precedent for other small cities. Then federal dollars were cobbled together to pay the cost, but the city council balked on doing the right thing. And this week, finally, they moved forward with a \$457,000 forgivable loan to connect the trailer park to the city's water system.

It's good for the city — both its future expansion and its current budget. And its good for the people at the Locust Mobile Village, who will soon again have clean, fresh water.



YOUR VIEWS

Price of rents, mortgages is out of control

I read the recent paper about the HUD proposal for rent hikes, "to move people out of poverty," and had to laugh. I heard years ago, no more than 30 percent of your wages should go for housing. I still believe that should be true. Is holding to that 30 percent even possible these days?

Housing (rents and mortgages) have gone nuts all over the country. That is why we are seeing more multi-generational families living under one roof, people living full-time in travel trailers, and people still working into their late 70s. We have lived in Portland, Long Beach, Washington, Pendleton, and now Milton-Freewater. In all those places we saw a large population of people young and old living in travel trailers, and in Long Beach I personally knew several people in their 70s working to supplement their income, and some of them were living full-time in travel trailers. It was how they got by.

The people at the top are seriously out of touch with what is really going on.

Lenore Moody
Milton-Freewater

Oregon, local rivers benefit from salmon recovery funds

The Milton-Freewater region, and also much of Oregon, has benefited from the federal funding investment of the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds that have come to Oregon to restore salmon and steelhead populations in our rivers. Locally, in the Milton-Freewater area, the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council has competed for, and received, PCSRF dollars offered by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board through a competitive grants program.

The Watershed Council matches these PCSRF funds with property owner

cost share dollars, Bonneville Power Administration funds, other state grants, and private foundation funds to enhance the Walla Walla River and its tributaries. Project improvements have included irrigation district water delivery efficiency, on farm water use efficiency, fish passage, fish habitat, and monitoring the improved stream flows and water quality.

The Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council is a non-profit in the Milton-Freewater area that has been working with the local community for the last 23 years to implement locally acceptable watershed restoration projects. Competitive grants pay for designing and constructing projects that put Oregonians to work. As much as possible, the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council, and other watershed councils and soil and water conservation districts in the region, use local contracting companies and locally sourced materials such as fencing, irrigation pipe, quarry rock, and trees to build projects.

We appreciate our Oregon congressional delegation's work (Senator Jeff Merkley, Senator Ron Wyden, and Representative Greg Walden) in past years to secure these funds for Oregon. Locally, the Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council has used these dollars to implement river habitat restoration, fish passage, irrigation efficiency, managed aquifer recharge projects, and surface water and groundwater monitoring work in Northeast Umatilla County. Many of these projects have reduced Endangered Species Act (ESA) liabilities for people that live along, or use irrigation water from, the Walla Walla River where ESA listed aquatic species are present.

The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds received and used across Oregon have typically been \$10-15 million a year. Hopefully this successful program that benefits Oregon will continue.

John Zerba, chair
Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council

OTHER VIEWS

How to lose the midterms and re-elect President Trump

Dear Robert De Niro, Samantha Bee and other Trump haters:

I get that you're angry. I'm angry, too. But anger isn't a strategy. Sometimes it's a trap. When you find yourself spewing four-letter words, you've fallen into it. You've chosen cheap theatrics over the long game, catharsis over cunning. You think you're raising your fist when you're really raising a white flag.

You're right that Donald Trump is a dangerous and deeply offensive man, and that restraining and containing him are urgent business. You're wrong about how to go about doing that, or at least you're letting your emotions get the better of you.

When you answer name-calling with name-calling and tantrums with tantrums, you're not resisting him. You're mirroring him. You're not diminishing him. You're demeaning yourselves. Many voters don't hear your arguments or the facts, which are on your side. They just wince at the din.

You permit them to see you as you see Trump: deranged. Why would they choose a different path if it goes to another ugly destination?

Of course this is broader than De Niro, bigger than Bee and about more than profanity. It's about maturity, pragmatism and plain old smarts — and the necessity of all three when the stakes are this high.

Many Democrats get that. Maybe even most do. In the primaries last week and on Tuesday, Democratic voters by and large chose House candidates whose appeals were tempered and whose profiles make them formidable general-election contenders. They're the best bets for wooing less partisan voters and snatching seats currently in Republican hands.

The results in Virginia on Tuesday were a perfect example. State Senator Jennifer Wexton, a former federal prosecutor, won, and will take on the Republican incumbent, Barbara Comstock. That was precisely what Republican strategists didn't want, and at the beginning of the year, they chattered hopefully about Wexton's being thwarted by Democratic rivals to her left. But she beat the second-place finisher by almost 20 points.

I'm buoyed by that and by what I've witnessed when I've met with candidates in potentially red-to-blue House districts. They're not getting bogged down in impeachment talk, which can sound to many voters like a promise of ceaseless partisan rancor and never-ending



FRANK BRUNI
Comment

Washington paralysis. They're not frothing at the mouth about Trump.

They understand that they don't need to. He's the most exhaustively chronicled and psychologically transparent president in the lifetimes of most American voters, who already know how they feel about him. What they're less certain about are their alternatives. If you want to make sure that at least one chamber is a check on Trump, talk

to them about that.

And do so in a vocabulary that's measured, not hysterical. Enough with "idiot" and "moron." They're schoolyard and splenic.

Enough with Hitler, too. Has Trump shown fascistic tendencies? Yes. Is he the second coming of the Third Reich? No. Nor are the spineless Republicans who have enabled him Nazi collaborators.

I'm not urging complacency. But when you invoke the darkest historical analogies, you lose many of the very Americans you're trying to win over. What you're saying isn't what they're seeing. It's overreach in their eyes.

And when you make the direst predictions, you needlessly put your credibility on the line. The stock market didn't go into free fall after Trump's election. We're not at war with North Korea. I'm not ignoring the grave flaws and galling giveaways in his tax overhaul, and I'm not minimizing his disregard for norms, including his unwarranted verbal attacks on American allies. I'm noting that when you extrapolate too wildly, you sometimes wind up distracting people from what's happening here and now.

The more noise, the less discernment. The more fury, the less focus. Proportion and triage are in order, and that means an end, please, to the Melania madness. Floating the idea that she's a victim of domestic abuse merely supports Trump's contention that his critics are reflexive and unfettered in their contempt for him, and that all of their complaints should be viewed through that lens.

"When they go low, we go high," said another first lady, Michelle Obama in 2016. It's a fine set of marching orders, disobeyed ever since.

De Niro wrested the spotlight from the Parkland, Florida, teenagers, so that his negative message, not their positive one, was the big story. He squandered a chance to model a bearing more dignified than Trump's.

— Frank Bruni, *New York Times*