

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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Tip of the hat, kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to Hermiston City Council for finally asking people what they think about mobile food vendors in the city.

As expected, a vast majority of residents (so far) want the city to do away with or at least greatly reduce the onerous rules and restrictions that limited the city to just three food trucks.

That's contrary to a growing nationwide scene, where consumers like the ease and speed of having a meal on the go, and young culinary entrepreneurs see it as a good way to gain both cooking and business experience.

We thought the regulations the city enacted in 2013 got way out of hand. They included rules for the size of garbage cans that had to be provided and forbade food trucks from being painted certain colors. And while the city regulations did sweat the small stuff, it also got the big stuff wrong. It artificially limited the number of mobile vendors that could operate in the city and didn't allow them to take care of their customers — they were not

allowed to offer a table and chairs, for instance.

So vendors were pushed to neighboring cities and states, to the chagrin of Hermiston diners.

Finally, the city council is rethinking the regulations. We hope they peel them back so they address public safety and health — and leave the pedantic stuff out of it. The results are bound to be delicious.

We tip out hat (and cross our fingers) to the folks who have helped organize Pendleton Whisky Music Fest this weekend.

The temperatures are expected to be scorching, and we hope everyone who plans to attend packs their sunscreen, drinks lots of water and drinks alcohol responsibly. On top of that, we hope they have plenty of fun and get to see a righteous Blake Shelton and Pitbull duet.

This kind of event is really beneficial to the city of Pendleton, but we know it comes with its fair share of risk and headaches, both to organizers,



Rigo Garcia, owner of Tacos Garcia, serves customers at his food truck.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

businesses and public safety. Each will be strained, but each stands to benefit too.

We welcome everyone who is in town for the show, and appreciate those who help keep the crowds coming.

A kick in the pants to the emergence of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, found just recently in Morrow County.

Public Health Director Sheree Smith said the infection is treatable with antibiotics, but the disease can cause fever, nausea, body ache, vomiting, and headache in the early stages. If left untreated, it can cause a skin rash, abdominal pain, joint pain and diarrhea.

Signs of a Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever infection include fever, rash, and a history of tick bites.

Several types of ticks found in Eastern Oregon can transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever as well as other diseases. The American Dog Tick also carries Tularemia, and the Rocky Mountain Wood Tick also transmits Colorado tick fever and Tularemia.

Ticks are going to become more and more common thanks to climate change and mild winters, so we will all have to become more aware of them and the diseases they carry and cause. Kick them in the pants when you can, but you're better off using tweezers to remove the bloodsuckers.

OTHER VIEWS

Just confirm Kavanaugh

With apologies to "Animal House's" Otter, Brett Kavanaugh's nomination to the Supreme Court is not the time "a really futile and stupid gesture be done on somebody's part."

Then again, Otter's frat brother Bluto did go on to become a U.S. senator, so maybe it makes sense. I refer to the decision of Senate Democrats to wage a tooth-and-nail battle to oppose Kavanaugh, an effort that is likely doomed to fail and equally likely to hurt Democratic chances in the fall. Who knew Chuck Schumer was so content with his job as minority leader? Let's count the ways in which the Democrats aren't helping themselves. Kavanaugh will almost certainly be confirmed. Democrats who had pinned their hopes on flipping Sens. Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski probably aren't going to get their wish, since both Republican moderates voted to confirm Kavanaugh to his current judgeship in 2006 and have since spoken approvingly of his nomination. Rand Paul can also be counted on to feign political independence, but he usually falls into line.

Of course it's possible Kavanaugh will make a bad public impression, like Robert Bork. Or maybe there will be a #MeToo revelation, like Clarence Thomas. Or maybe Democrats will figure out a way to kick a vote past the midterms. In which case, Democrats can seize their chances. For now, however, the first question Democrats ought to ask themselves is whether they really have political capital to waste on a losing battle.

Fierce opposition to Kavanaugh hurts Democrats. This was already going to be a difficult year for Senate Democrats, who are defending 10 seats in states won by Trump. Everyone knows that North Dakota's Heidi Heitkamp, West Virginia's Joe Manchin and Indiana's Joe Donnelly are vulnerable, which is why they voted to confirm Neil Gorsuch last year. Florida's Bill Nelson is struggling, too.

So please explain the logic of convincing Democratic voters in these states that the Kavanaugh nomination is the moral battle of our time — and then putting their senators to the choice of looking like political sellouts if they vote for Kavanaugh, or cowards if they don't?

Liberals always cry wolf. In 1987, the National Organization for Women declared that Anthony Kennedy would be a "disaster" for the rights of women and minorities. Yet the libertarian-minded Kennedy went on to defend abortion rights in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) and cast the decisive vote for marriage equality in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015). In 1990,



BRET STEPHENS
Comment

Judith Lichtman of the Women's Legal Defense Fund warned in a *New York Times* op-ed that "Judge Souter's confirmation must be denied" based on his evasiveness during his confirmation hearings. Over time, Souter emerged as a reliably liberal vote on the court. Similar fury greeted John Roberts' 2005 nomination — until his vote to preserve Obamacare remade him into a consensus-oriented

pragmatist.

A plurality of Americans already want Kavanaugh confirmed, according to a Rasmussen poll. The numbers will likely improve once Americans get a closer look at this temperate, intelligent, decidedly non-scary nominee. And Democrats will again play to type as mindless obstructionists and one-note alarmists — the same overheated opposition that, as the *Times* reported last month, only hardens support for Trump.

What about rallying the base?

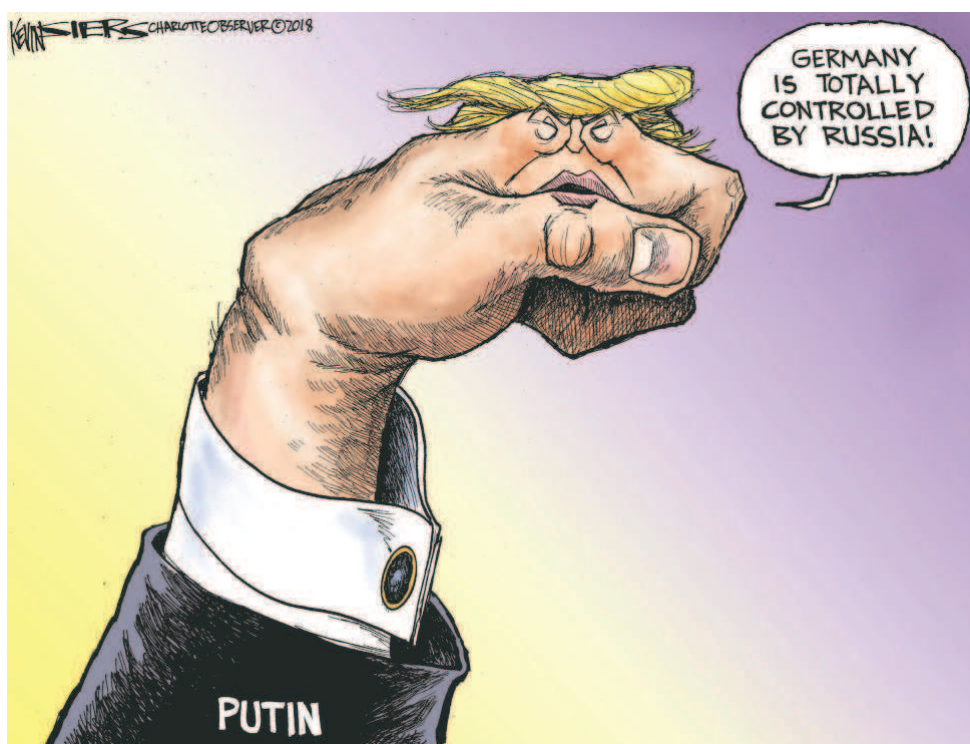
As it is, how much more rallying does the base need? The Trump administration provides its opponents, and even its friends, with daily extravaganzas of legitimate outrage, moral and political: breaking up migrant families; escalating needless trade wars; alienating historic allies while kowtowing to pathological dictators — and that's just the last few weeks. Instead of knee-jerk opposition to Kavanaugh, Democrats might focus on battles that must be fought and which they can win.

Kavanaugh deserves confirmation. There was a time when Supreme Court nominees were confirmed on the basis of merit, not ideology. For Democrats, that ended in 1987 with the Borking of Bork. For Republicans, it ended with the mistreatment of Merrick Garland.

Yet there's still such a thing as doing the right thing, even in politics. Justices such as Roberts and Gorsuch deserved their seats on the court for the same reason Ginsburg and Breyer did — they are competent, conscientious judges, irrespective of how they vote. They give the court its democratic legitimacy, and its leeway for meaningful independence, by representing a spectrum of views. Democrats would help themselves, and the country, by returning to the old standard and refusing to let Kavanaugh's confirmation become the political event of the season.

Alternatively, Democrats can proffer another futile and stupid gesture as Trump champions his manifestly qualified nominee. If someone would like to explain the political wisdom in that, I'm all ears.

Bret Stephens won a Pulitzer Prize for commentary in 2013. He began working as a columnist at *The New York Times* in 2017.



YOUR VIEWS

Hammonds part of brave Oregon tradition

In the 1800s, brave and independent individuals suffered hardships and trials to reach Oregon. These founders of our state had strongly held beliefs about their God, their county and their Constitution. Having strongly-held beliefs is still the backbone of Oregon.

It was a black eye for those strongly held beliefs when the notion of federal control for public lands exploded into a confrontation in Malheur. The situation soon became fodder for late night TV hosts and wild stories circulated the nation about a "terrorist" activity loose in Oregon. Steve and Dwight Hammond went to prison. Twice. Both of these men served their allotted time for allowing a controlled burn to spread beyond their land. In 2016, under the Obama Administration, Chief Judge Aiken ruled that these men must go back to prison in order to serve a mandatory minimum specially designed for terrorists.

What started all this? Steve Hammond started several back fires after lightning started a blaze that threatened his winter feed for his cattle. It's amusing to note that our government does similar things for similar reasons. They have controlled burns that have migrated onto private lands. When that happens, the government does not brand itself as a terrorist, nor does it call for its own arrest, conviction and imprisonment. However, Dwight and Steven Hammond were sentenced to prison. The entire situation was made of many wrongs.

I appreciate President Trump for his pardon of the Hammonds. Thank you, sir, for righting a very wrongful situation.

Thank you to Congressman Greg Walden, who has put forth the legislation H.R. 983. It would ensure that farmers and ranchers would never again be prosecuted as terrorists for range management fires.

This isn't a political letter. This is an Oregonian letter. It is applauding people who do the right thing. One of Oregon's strongly held values concern the larger issue of federal control of public lands. May Oregon always be home to brave and independent individuals with strongly held beliefs.

Zee Koza
La Grande

Thankful to Trump for pardoning the Hammonds

I appreciate the work of Representative Greg Walden, persevering until justice was accomplished in the case of Dwight and Steven Hammond. I am grateful to President Trump for reviewing this case and seeing his way clear to right a terrible injustice. Hopefully these Eastern Oregon families can put their lives back together and once again enjoy the unique life of the high desert.

I trust their experience will not be in vain and all involved will have learned from what has transpired and save other ranchers from such a fate. Government has its place but not when it overreaches to "shock the conscience," as was stated by Federal Judge Michael Hogan, who presided over the case and used his discretion in sentencing. These men have more than served their time and I am so happy to see this ridiculous decision overruled, and the Hammonds pardoned.

Cheryl Cruson
Ontario

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