

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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Mass timber movement aims high

A mass movement is underway in Oregon — a mass timber movement.

Mass timber is cross-laminated timber — called CLT — mass plywood and other types of engineered wood that turn lumber into large, strong building materials that can support multi-story buildings. It’s been called “plywood on steroids” and is substantial enough to replace steel and concrete. It’s “green” because it comes from a renewable resource — trees — and sequesters carbon. It also emits less carbon dioxide during its production than other materials.

While mass timber has been used in places like Europe and Australia for decades — huge mass timber structures, buildings and houses have been built across those continents — it’s just starting to catch on in the U.S. That’s because U.S. building codes typically don’t include it.

Now, however, Oregon codes allow its use. National codes could also allow it within a few years, opening the door to wider use of mass timber.

The U.S. mass timber movement had its beginnings in tiny Whitefish, Montana, in 2011, when a 4,863-square-foot commercial building was constructed using CLT. It was completed at a cost of \$145 per square foot and took five days to build, according to the Wood Products Council. The CLT panels came from



A 100-story mass timber building proposed for London, England.

Europe — there are now several sources for it in the U.S. and Canada — and the building was designed using international building codes.

A person doesn’t have to be a construction engineer to see the value of CLT — and the potential of mass

timber in general. They are cost-effective, easy to install and strong.

Oregon State University and the University of Oregon have created the TallWood Design Institute to take the lead in mass timber research and development. The U of O College of

Design and OSU’s College of Forestry and College of Engineering have a platoon of researchers working on new products and designs, testing materials and helping to chart the future of mass timber.

The institute’s new \$79 million building is also made of CLT, though a glitch in its production has set back the construction schedule.

Elsewhere in the state, Freres Lumber Co. in Lyons, Ore., has patented a new type of mass timber called mass plywood. The company’s owners say the plywood panels can range up to 48-feet long, 12 feet wide and 24 inches thick, use 20 percent less wood and are as strong as CLT.

Other companies in the U.S. and Canada are also pressing ahead with innovations, making the future of mass timber virtually unlimited.

Already in the U.S., buildings as large as 156,000 square feet and eight stories tall have been built in Portland. Seattle allows the use of CLT in buildings up to six stories.

But that’s just the beginning. A 270,000-square-foot mass timber structure is proposed for Chicago, and a 220,000-square-foot seven-story apartment complex is planned for Minneapolis.

And a 100-story mass timber tower has been proposed for London, England.

Now that’s aiming high.

Measure 105 impedes immigration reform

Recently I attended a Regional Workforce Summit. People from the private and public sectors came together to discuss myriad aspects necessary to having a ready, willing, able, and qualified workforce in the region.

The economy here is doing well. Unemployment is low. Housing needs are being addressed. Educational providers continue to respond to everything from literacy and basic skills to customized technical training.

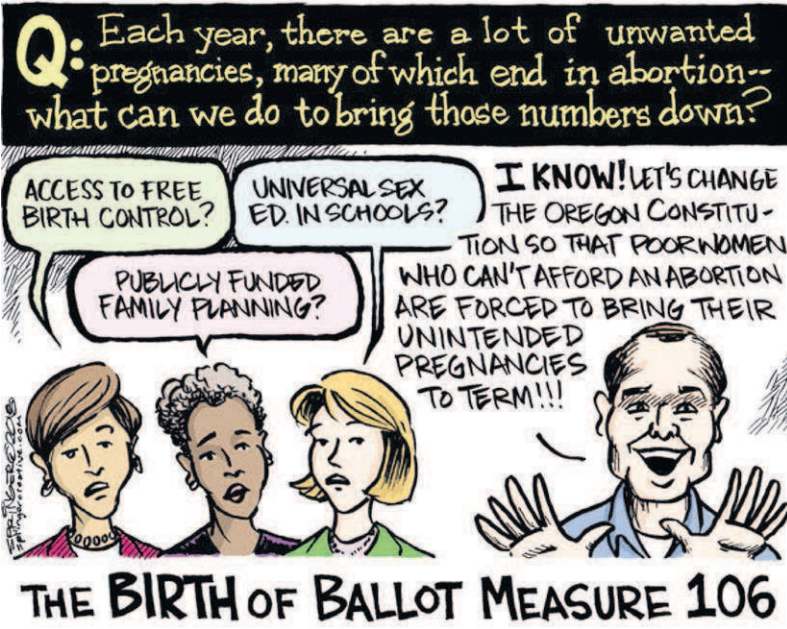
We discussed how some employers and places of business are being hampered by not having enough qualified applicants in terms of skills, but also in the sheer lack of available workers.

The idea of available workers reminded me of the work of Nicholas Eberstadt, a political economist at the Harvard School of Public Health. He has done significant research on the effect of fertility rates on the workforce, economy, and immigration patterns.

In basic terms, the population replacement fertility rate is 2.01. The highest recorded historical fertility rates in the United States were immediately after World War II at almost 3.8, hence the designation “Baby Boomer.” The U.S. fertility rate fell to 1.9 in 1979 and has continued downward. Most of the European Union is between 1.3 and 1.9. The implications are that total population will decrease over time.

Bond measures, social security programs, retirement funds, infrastructure investments, and business ventures of every type are based on models of a growing population.

When fertility rates fall below the levels of population replacement, immigration becomes one of the ways to address workforce needs. In both the eastern and western hemispheres we have observed a northern migration of immigrants seeking asylum and economic



opportunities.

The citizens of Oregon recognized the need and dilemma of workforce shortages based on falling fertility rates in 1987 with the passage of sanctuary law. Oregon Measure 105 seeks to repeal the sanctuary law while ignoring the effects on workforce needs.

There are other reasons to oppose Measure 105, but two are related to the economy and the needs of a sufficient workforce in the region. Immigration reform speaks to our history as a nation of immigrants, the greatness of our diversity — remember our national motto: E Pluribus Unum — compassion for families, opportunities for asylum from repression, the need for great minds and hard workers, and a growing economy in the midst of falling fertility rates. Measure 105 is an impediment to reform. I hope you’ll join me in voting “No” on Measure 105.

Kim B. Puzey
Hermiston

Elect Pullen for County Commissioner

It’s been a busy summer and these days no self-respecting travois would try to use our farm-to-market road. It has returned to primal dust.

It’s a county road, the responsibility of our three County Commissioners. Their job is to better conditions for business and for the people of Umatilla County. Good roads and good decisions are to be expected from them.

Their tasks are executive in nature, with no legislature as check and balance. They have a great amount of local power. We are dependent on the wisdom, integrity and ability to these men (“no woman need apply”?).

The only way we can hold commissioners accountable is through elections. The term for on of the incumbents has ended. He thinks he has done a job that deserves another term.

Frankly, based on what I read and see and experience there is no evidence to support that idea.

Let’s instead, all of us, vote for Rick Pullen for Umatilla County Commissioner. He can provide new insights and more awareness of the needs of the people.

Don Reese
Echo

Reaction to big game hunting is uninformed

There was immediate backlash at a photo on Facebook with a lady posing with a leopard she had taken in Africa. Two Hollywood actresses blasted the lady

for cruelty to animals. So sad these Hollywood elitists are so ignorant and that they always have a media platform eager to spread their ignorance. I am a long-time hunter who has been to a number of countries to hunt big game. I never hunted dangerous game such as leopard, lion or hippo. I had no interest in that and those hunts are very expensive. Hunters can’t all be thrown into the same category of being ruthless killers. I saw a number of giraffe while hunting in Namibia — drove up close and took several photos while they stared at me. Killing a giraffe was a terrible thought even though it was a legitimate game animal. While visiting the lard taxidermy business, a whole team of black folks were working on a giraffe hide spread out on the floor. Actually, that disgusted me. But a lot of black folks were employed there.

The truth is — hunting big game is a huge source of revenue to guides and local population. All the meat from the game I hunted was processed and sold to area restaurants to be resold to diners. I paid a lot in travel costs, hunting and trophy fees, and taxidermy expenses. There is a sustainable population for each game animal, and any overpopulation causes problems such as depletion of cover and habitat and starvation. The classic example of wildlife biology failure is the Kiabab National Forest where biologists decided to create a game heaven by eliminating all predators. The government hired professional shooters to kill off cougars, bobcats, coyotes by airplane so the game would live in a worry free paradise and hungers would find lots of big trophies. This fiasco resulted in a massive winter die off where game animals suffered while starving to death. Overpopulation destroyed their food sources, and there were no natural predators to control populations. Every College wildlife and fisheries program now cites this example of what not to do to sustain a viable population of game.

The leopard is a wonderful and beautiful animal. I would never

hunt one. African guides will tell you they are one of the most dangerous of all game hunted in Africa. They are smart, extremely agile and strong — they can carry an adult gazelle fr up into a tree. They can be on you in an instant. No African guide would ever allow hunters to take more leopard than the habitat can support. Interesting what a bit of education and fact can tell you, but then Hollywood has never been interested in facts because they deal in fantasy.

David Burns
Pendleton

Education should go beyond politics

Please join me in supporting public education.

Funding isn’t the only factor when it comes to our students’ success in public schools, but it is a critical one.

Oregon schools have made significant gains in recent years to make better use of data and better approaches to learning to help raise student success and close gaps in achievement.

But schools can only stretch resources so far, and the truth is that our Oregon schools have operated for decades at a funding level significantly below that recommended by the state model for providing a quality education.

Oregon’s public education system is the cornerstone of providing a productive workforce and informed citizenry. All of us, no matter our profession or our station in life, benefit from strong public schools.

I strongly urge every candidate, regardless of political affiliation, running for state office to share with voters their commitment to fully fund our public schools and detail specific plans for how to meet that commitment. Unless we show our elected leaders that we expect them to step up and support public education, I worry deeply about our ability to lift student achievement and ensure that our young people can succeed.

Scott Rogers
Chair, Athena-Weston School District, Board of Directors

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