

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

Democracy only works through participation

Democracy shouldn't be a spectator sport.

Sad to say, but that is often what our form of government becomes. Collectively, we bemoan perceived injustices or complain about a policy or law but do little to change it.

Our form of government, though, is built around the idea that voters should — and must — participate.

Thomas Jefferson — a founding member of our government — felt the people were the best protection against tyrannical forms of government. Jefferson promoted an “enlightened” nation of voters who serve as a check against government overreach.

Yet it is a two-way street and that means voters need to participate in their government. Exercising the right to vote is the single most obvious method to be involved, but it isn't a silver bullet.

Many of us, in one way or another, enjoy the fruits of our great nation. Thousands of men and women have served our nation over 200-plus years and made a down payment on our abil-



Staff photo by E.J. Harris, File

Hermiston city councilor Lori Davis reads from her opening statement as her challenger Mark Gomolski looks on during the 2017 Hermiston Chamber of Commerce candidate forum at BMCC in Hermiston.

ity to live inside a democracy. Those sacrifices stand as an example and should be motivation for the rest of us to participate in our democracy.

Granted, that is often not an easy task. Especially now in a digital age where events move at light speed,

going to a city council or county commissioner meeting after a long day of work can seem to be a daunting task. We all have lives, we are all busy, so taking three hours on a Monday or Tuesday night to listen to what appears to be boring discussion between elected

leaders can seem senseless.

The public trust, though, makes it imperative that all voters, when they can, go to such meetings to listen and evaluate how elected leaders are doing and what they are making decisions on.

Often there is a refrain of “I didn't know they were doing that” when a specific policy or ordinance is suddenly enforced. Yet we should know. Voters should never be caught by surprise by a new ordinance or law.

Our elected leaders work for us. It is that simple. They are elected by the people and serve the people and are accountable to the people. Not to their staffs, not to their friends and not to their political cronies. They serve the people.

Yet voters must take responsibility as well to ensure democracy works. That means going to the occasional council meeting. That means — at least from time to time — taking a gander at a city council or county meeting agenda.

Democracy only works through participation. So, don't get caught by surprise. Get involved.

OTHER VIEWS

Plan, money are key to success at state DAS

Bend Bulletin

Secretary of State Bev Clarno's office released its latest audit on July 3, this one on the state of cybersecurity in the Department of Administrative Services, the state's central administrative agency.

The picture the audit painted wasn't a pretty one.

It found the agency's cybersecurity efforts lacking, so much so that “as a result, DAS systems and data may be at risk for unauthorized use, disclosure, or modification.”

Auditors found that, among other things, DAS lacks a formal security management program. As a result, it has no framework for continuing evaluation of risk, putting effective procedures in place and then monitoring to see that they work as intended.

In fact, auditors noted, the agency doesn't have an inventory of authorized and unauthorized software being run on its computers. DAS does have a tool that could create such a list, but for some reason does not use it.

Also bad news: There are more than 80 different software applications in use at

DAS, but all but 16 of them are managed not by information technology staff, but by others in the various divisions. That helps explain why some divisions have the ability to install unapproved software.

Worse, the lack of cybersecurity is already causing problems.

Files at the Department of Human Services were compromised in January 2019 when an employee opened a “phishing” email.

The Secretary of State's campaign finance and business registry websites were both hacked before Dennis Richardson held that office.

DAS officials agreed with the seven recommendations made in the report and noted that the 2019 Legislature already has allocated money for an agency-wide assessment of its IT capability and security.

The assessment will allow DAS to create a program for managing both software and hardware, officials said.

Unfortunately, DAS officials don't expect to complete four of the seven recommendations until 2023, assuming the Legislature gives it the money in 2021 to do so.

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YOUR VIEWS

‘We’ deserve better than an ‘Us’ vs. ‘Them’ mentality

Each month Oregon's secretary of state publishes a report on voter registration and, much to the dismay of Democratic politicians in Salem and the national media, Oregon is not as “Blue” as they think. Oregon does not have two groups of voters — “Us” the progressive liberal socialists and “Them” the far right conservatives — but are listed into 10 different groups. The June report shows “Us” with 34.95% and “Them” with 25.30% leaving “We” the people with a 39.75% majority.

The “We” majority do not ride public transportation like CCRider or TriMet. The “We” majority do not want to live in high density housing communities. The “We” majority do not like the “Us” groups dictating “Their” urban agendas into our rural communities. The “We” majority want good paying jobs in our communities so “We” won't have to drive into “Their” communities to work.

Hard working state senators like Betsy Johnson (D-Columbia), Bill Hansell (R-Umatilla) and Dennis Linthicum (R-Klamath) understand their constituents have different political values but are trying their best to fulfill their obligations to serve their communities. Sure, “We” may not all agree to the outcomes but that is how a democracy works. Oregon has 36 different counties with vastly different needs than just the three counties, Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas, that have the highest population density. The “Us” majority in Salem and the Portland Metro area need to take a step back and listen rather than dictate “Their” agenda.

Joe Turner
Columbia City

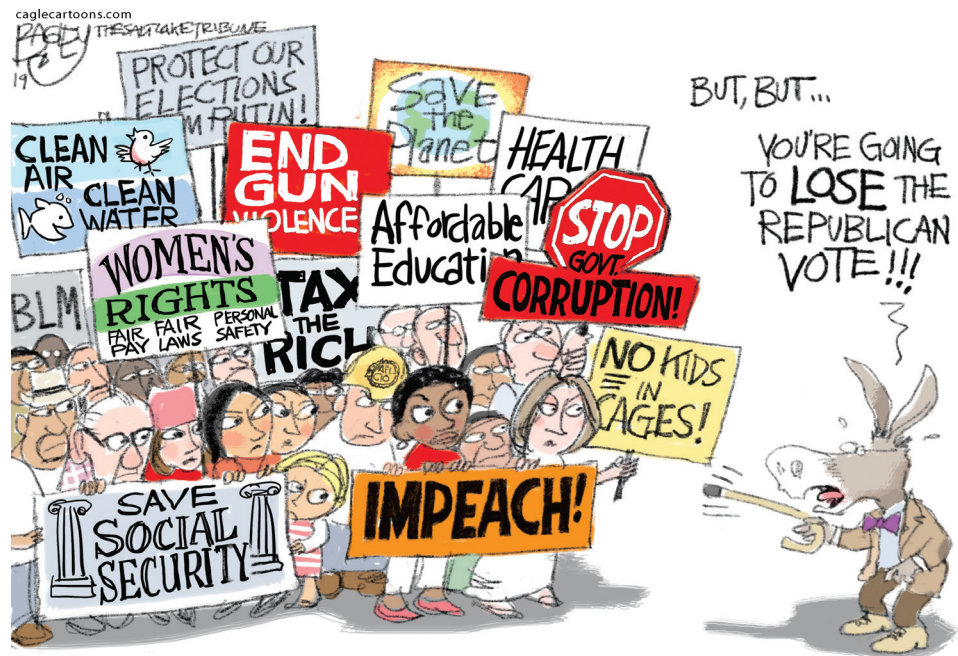
Time to rethink Walden's leadership

Recently Greg Walden held a meeting in Athena. Interestingly, he has never spoken a word about how insanely bad Trump has been treated by the left with their incessant false narratives about the fake Russia sham the left itself actually created, the many insane events by the left in Portland and Salem, as well as other places on the left coast of the I-5 corridor. So it is no surprise a congressman from Texas had to speak up for Oregonians on the Portland mayor and city council allowing the police to stand down regularly.

Prior to that he did not speak out about the missing and still unaccounted for \$305 million of federal dollars for an Obamacare exchange setup Kitzhaber never had to account for and it all disappeared except for the cost of the failed website that never even worked, for supposedly \$78 million, yet Jason Chafitz of Utah did speak out about it here in Oregon. How is it possible to completely miss all these events and have no opinion or take any actions at all? Seems a valid question, as Cruz made Walden look like a fool this week.

Probably time to look deeper, people. He was also weak and more or less missing on the Burns Finicum sham. That too was an Oregon disgrace! Business as usual and being a Chamber of Commerce front man and pharmaceutical representative is not going to fly any longer. Well past time to rethink matters.

Stephen Baze
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