

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

Tip of the hat, kick in the pants

A tip of the hat to those who take the time to participate in democracy. It is, after all, one key to the health of our nation. That is why it is always with a certain degree of frustration we view challenges where city and county citizen committees are short active members.

A good case in point is in Hermiston, where its budget committee has two slots that have been open for a long time. The budget committee might not seem like a big deal, but it is this committee that tackles a \$55 million budget. That budget is chock-full of taxpayer dollars. Your dollars.

Stepping up to take a volunteer position on a committee takes a lot of commitment. Let's face it, spending a weeknight poring over budget numbers probably isn't everyone's idea of a good time.

But such work is vital to the health

of our democracy. We need more people to get involved in our government. Our system is a simple one and it works best when citizen participate.

A tip of the hat to those who have turned in their ballots even though the county charter issue isn't one to grab a lot of headlines nor attention from the public. Voting is one of the best and most simple ways to participate in our little experiment called democracy, and those who took the time in their busy day to vote on this matter should be praised. Sounds pretty mundane, but it isn't. If you are an eligible voter in this county — or any other — you should be voting no matter how uninteresting the issue may seem.

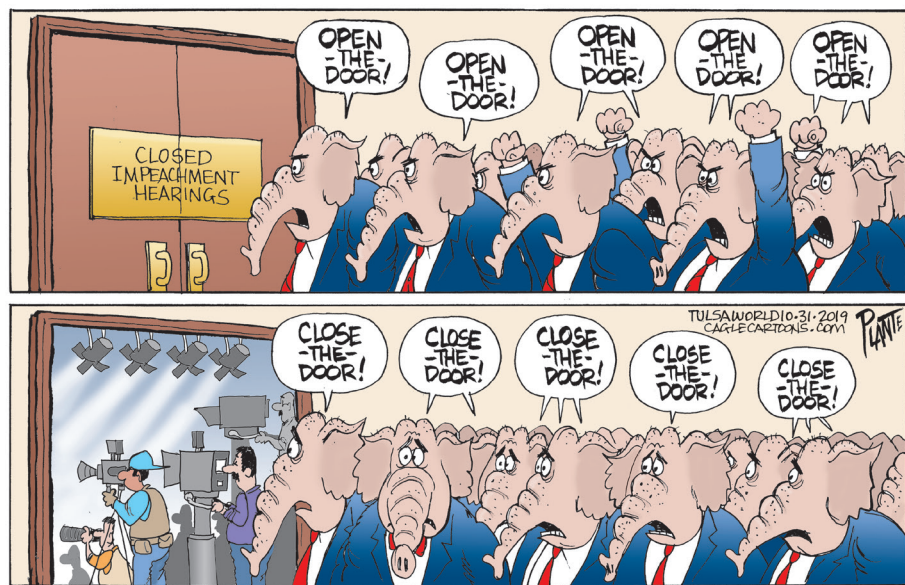
A tip of the hat to all of those ghosts and goblins that dressed up to celebrate All Hallows Eve Thursday, and especially those who went the



EO file photo
Sam Carpenter speaks to the Hispanic Advisory Committee, while members Manuel Gutierrez and Hector Ramirez look on during a 2018 meeting.

extra mile in their costumes. Every once in a while we all need to stop and lasso a little fun, and Halloween offers a great opportunity to do just that. And a special thank you to all of the business along Main Street who opened their doors to a host of robbers and ghosts and goblins and dinosaurs

Thursday night for the annual downtown trick-or-treat event. Such events are not only a good thing for all the young trick-or-treaters, but shows a high degree of community spirit. Our merchants showed they interwoven into the fabric of our community, and that is a good sight to see.



OTHER VIEWS

School bond support, from a student's perspective

This letter is about the school bond that we are going to try to pass next week. I'm speaking from the perspective of a middle school student. I believe we should support this bond because the money for it will be used to build a new elementary school, rebuild Rocky Heights Elementary School, and add on to the high school.

Why we need a new elementary school is because they just aren't made for 600 kids. For example, at Desert View Elementary School, their lunch room cannot fit 100 kids per grade for lunch. They are squished so badly at the lunch tables. So hypothetically the trays are like 20 inches by 8 inches. Most people would have the tray sitting so the 20-inch side is facing them and have a little more space on either side. The kids at DVES have it so the 8-inch side is facing them and have no room on either side of the tray. So, for the kindergarten, it is not that big of a prob-

lem; but for the fifth-graders, that is a different story. Fifth-graders are bigger so they are very squished and don't have any room to move and actually eat their lunch.

Another reason to support the bond is for the upcoming middle-schoolers. Right now, they have bigger classes than the high school grade levels. The high school is already crowded, and with bigger classes coming in, there won't be enough room for all the new students. There are already four modular classrooms at the high school. There isn't a good location to add more. And you can only fit so many kids into a room before it becomes an issue. I personally prefer to be able to sit at a desk and have my work space — a luxury we won't have if they have to cram too many chairs into the same room.

So, please consider supporting the school bond. For your own kids, or your neighborhood kids. It would be a great way to support our community.

Andrew Goller
Hermiston

FROM THE TRACTOR SEAT

For the love of the game

It happens every fall. After only cursory interest in the national pastime during the regular season, I start paying more attention to baseball as the World Series approaches. As a kid, I was not merely a fan but truly an aficionado of the game.

My interest was fueled by a favorite aunt. Born in 1927 (the year the Yankees swept the Pirates with arguably the greatest lineup ever assembled on a baseball diamond with the likes of Ruth, Gehrig, Lazzeri, Combs, Muesel), she was a better ballplayer than almost everyone, boys included, with whom she attended school (in grade school that was at Holdman). She gave me old "SPORT" magazines with guys like Eddie Mathews on the cover. A truly great third baseman and slugger who was overshadowed by Lew Burdette's three pitching wins in the 1957 World Series against the Yankees, he was my Uncle Bill's favorite player.

A certain Pendleton resident, with a downtown office full of house plans he has drawn, had a brief encounter with Mathews many decades ago — ask him about it next time you see him at my favorite brewery. Aunt Helen also passed along a copy of Roger Kahn's "The Boys of Summer," the definitive story of the Brooklyn Dodgers of the 1940s and 1950s.

My dad regaled me with stories of growing up in St. John's (north Portland) and attending Portland Beavers games at Vaughn Street Park. His favorite players were Gene and Dick Sisler, sons of George, who batted .420 in 1922. My dad also let me build a "ballpark" in our pasture between the barn (replete with a "Bull Durham Smoking Tobacco" advertisement painted on one wall) and the old milkhouse from Echo Hollow Dairy (phone 321). Home field advantage meant nothing in this year's World Series between the Nationals and Astros, but when cowpies, water troughs, fence posts and chicken coops are in play, familiarity with one's surroundings can be of paramount importance.

I listened to a lot of Seattle Mariners games on the radio as a youngster and still get a lump in my throat when I hear a replay of their great announcer Dave Niehaus. His voice, like Nat King Cole's, only improved with each cigarette — unfortunately, his health did not. I didn't mind blowout games when the Mariners were behind by 10 runs because Niehaus would sing "The Wabash Cannonball." It wasn't Acuff-esque, but I loved it, anyway.

In 1984, we got cable TV. I was late returning to school after eating lunch at home when the Chicago Cubs and San

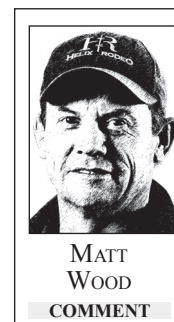
Diego Padres were playing in the National League Championship Series. When weak-hitting pitcher Rick Sutcliffe, who won 16 games after being traded from Cleveland in mid-season, hit a ball out of the park onto Waveland Avenue, I knew it was a sign from above that the Cubs were going to the World Series. Apparently, however, the Lord ain't a Cubs fan — the Padres won the next three in a row and all of us card-carrying members of C.U.B.S. (Citizens United for Baseball in the Sunshine) had to wait another 32 years for the World Series to come to the North Side of the Windy City.

All through college I watched WGN-TV from Chicago whenever possible, and vowed to one day set foot in Wrigley Field. Thankfully, I'm married to a wonderful woman who allows me to frequently indulge flights of fancy (or fantasy). In September 1993, we celebrated our impending graduation from school by driving to Chicago, stopping by Dyersville, Iowa, en route. I shagged flies and took batting practice on the "Field of Dreams" movie location with Steve from Michigan.

When the 1994 World Series was canceled on account of the Big Strike, I felt betrayed and vowed to kick my habit of following baseball. However, coaching Little League for more than a decade and, more importantly, seeing my own kids enjoy the game both as participants and fans brought me back into the fold — as did connections with other fans like my friend Mike, with whom I attended the 1999 All-Star game at Fenway Park and my fellow long-suffering Cubs devotee Kathy from Oak Park, Illinois, who recently sent me a Wrigley-Field themed "wait 'til next year" postcard.

Ultimately, I like baseball for its rich history and pastoral vibe (perhaps best described by George Carlin in his comparison with football). I also like the stories of its great personalities. One of my favorites is about Wilcy Moore. In 1927, as a 30-year-old rookie from Oklahoma, he was a sudden star with the Yankees. Though a great pitcher, he was not much of a hitter. Babe Ruth, in fact, wagered \$300 he wouldn't get three hits all season. Along about August, he eked out a weak infield grounder for his third hit of the season. Ruth, true to his word, paid the money and Moore, a cotton farmer, used the funds to buy two new mules for his agrarian endeavor back home. Now there's a practical man eminently worthy of emulation.

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COMMENT

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