

# O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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## OUR VIEW

### Tip of the hat, kick in the pants



**A** tip of the hat to COPES Crisis Center and Health Clinic in Pendleton, and other organizations that are working to fight drug and alcohol addiction.

Addiction is a plague on our society. It kills people, breaks apart families, increases crime, destroys mental health and exacerbates problems like homelessness. We aren't doing enough to make sure everyone who wants help is able to access it.

The new COPES clinic, featured in the Nov. 19 *East Oregonian*, has a crisis unit that can handle up to three people at once. It approaches fighting addiction holistically, with counseling and primary care in one location.

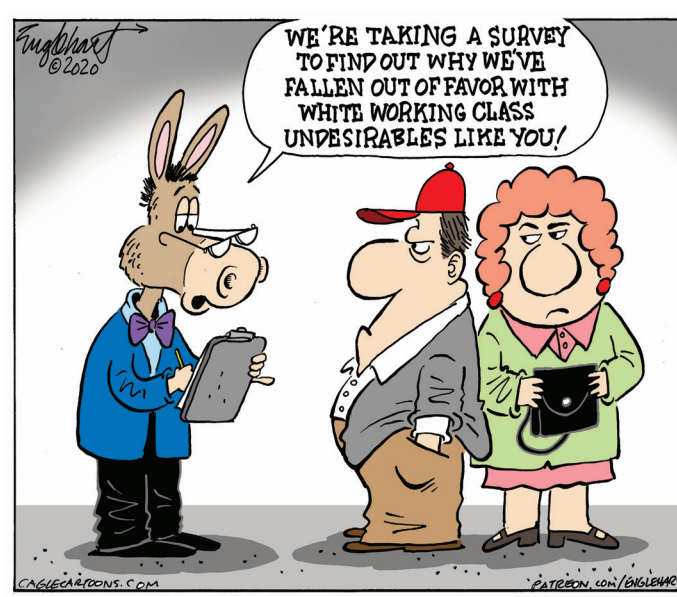
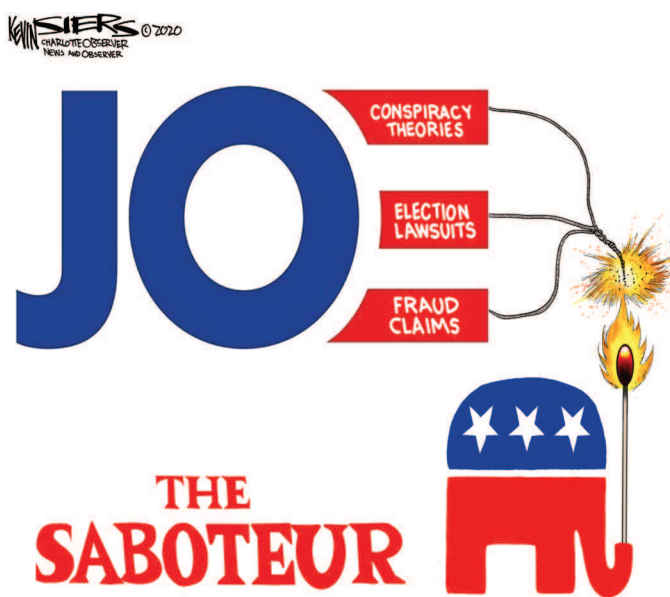
We're happy to see such a resource come to Umatilla County, and hope to see an expansion of such efforts in the future.

**A tip of the hat to all our health care workers**, as well. Despite some tokens of appreciation this spring, on the whole this country has badly mistreated nurses, doctors and other health care providers this year.

Across the country, we've heard tales from hospital employees who were sent in to face a contagious disease without proper protective gear and had to live in fear they might accidentally bring the virus home to their families. They've described the most grueling year of their career, as they worked past the point of exhaustion while patients dying of COVID-19 inside the hospital and community members outside the hospital have called them liars.

Our hospitals haven't been overwhelmed here the same way they have been in big cities and in hard-hit states like South Dakota, but employees here have still had faced difficult challenges in treating a disease with many unknowns, while many members of our community have publicly attacked their integrity. Dozens of them have gotten sick themselves in the process.

Thank you to all of you working to provide medical care to our communities.



## YOUR VIEWS

### Streets or plaza should be residents' choice

The city manager's assistant, commanding the Pendleton Development Commission and its committee, has been given free reign to direct its Urban Renewal program. The poorly conceived River Quarter Plan left property owners without a voice in how to develop their own property if they wished to do so.

The plan to build a community kitchen of sorts was purposed for the old Webb's Cold Storage area on Main Street, the justification for that idea being that the city of Portland has one, and we have so much in common with those folks. There was the plan to relocate the old Eighth Street Bridge to Main Street on property owned by Union Pacific Railroad without first getting their permission. The latest idea backed by the city manager is to spend \$85,000 on consultants for a study on breaching the levee to build a plaza with steps into the river in the area kind of behind U.S. Bank, with an estimated budget of some \$2.3 million.

For some reason, perhaps because of his close relationship with Anderson Perry & Associates and his seemingly uncanny ability to sell ice cubes to Eskimos, Bob Patterson was selected to pitch this latest proposal to city councilors, fully expecting a rubber stamp approving the initial phase and the \$85,000 consulting fee. Mr. Patterson appeared shocked when the council wisely questioned and ultimately tabled consideration of the project, perhaps since neither U.S. Bank nor the Army Corps of Engineers had been fully apprised of the city's intentions. If climate change, as many are claiming, means a continuation of the unusual flooding we experienced this year, would it really be wise to put the entire downtown area in jeopardy by breaching the levee in anyway?

Most recently, the mayor announced that street repair plans were going

into a holding pattern because of the COVID-19 pandemic effects on city resources and the Pendleton Development Commission made the decision to use Urban Renewal funds for public projects. With the repair of our streets repeatedly claimed as City Hall's number one priority, and the development commission's decision to shift resources away from projects that increase our tax base and ultimately revenue into the city's general fund, wouldn't it be more prudent to spend that \$2.3 million on streets than on a plaza we just don't need?

Rick Rohde  
Pendleton

### Confederate stamps glorify the antagonists

With respect to preserving old street names in the Byers neighborhood: Evidently, at some point in our city's past, residents chose to name a group of streets after Confederate Army officers. The street names were later changed, but the city chose to memorialize these names by establishing permanent curb markers.

I must respectfully disagree with my friends June Whitten and John Turner about whether it is appropriate to reset in concrete these old street names. These were officers of an army that took up arms against the U.S., costing 600-750,000 lives. We have battlefields, history books, and museums that help us learn about the tragedy of this war, and to honor those who fought to maintain the unity of our republic and against slavery. We do not need to further glorify these men, who led soldiers into battle against our country.

Do we see streets in the U.S. named for Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, or Osama bin Laden? No, we find a way to remember the lessons of the past without glorifying the antagonists.

As hard as I try, I cannot see the value in perpetuating this setting in

stone of the names of Confederate officers thousands of miles away from the battlefields. Like the Confederate flag, it feels sympathetic to a mindset that believes that all people are not created equal, and that the South would have been better off if slavery were never abolished. That's not who we are, and not how we should present ourselves to the future.

Bill Aney  
Pendleton

### Follow the money for salmon recovery

Another letter blaming the dams on the Snake River for the demise of the salmon. I have to call B.S. on that. The Army Corps of Engineers has run tests on the Snake and Columbia rivers. They know what to do to make the dams fish friendly, they do not want to spend the money.

Let's take a real look at the true reasons salmon are going toward extinction. Native Americans are guaranteed 50% of the run. They have done more for reestablishing runs of salmon where they were non-existent. So, what are the others doing wrong? Those fish have to go over the same dams. Then we have commercial nets in the rivers, sportsmen, and predators, many of which are protected themselves. Now, let's add in the foreign ocean fishery, and we must not forget all the pollution that drains into the rivers from streets, sewers and industry.

Wolves, eagles, sea lions, seals — all have fines and jail time if one is found killing or harming one. The salmon is on the same list, so why are we still killing and eating them? Maybe we need to follow the money. Millions would be lost if salmon fishing was stopped or more curtailed. Think of the tackle, boats, motel rooms, food and gas that would not be bought.

Phil Jarmer  
Hermiston

#### EDITORIALS

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

#### LETTERS

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#### SEND LETTERS TO:

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