

## OUR VIEW

# A tip of the hat, a kick in the pants

**A tip of the hat** to efforts to preserve the Umatilla language, most recently by putting the Umatilla Language Dictionary online where it is accessible to anyone in the world.

The online dictionary is the effort of a partnership between the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and Amazon Web Services, but there are also many individuals who were key in putting it together. A full list of their names can be found at [dictionary.ctuir.org/about](http://dictionary.ctuir.org/about).

As humans we worry about the extinction of animals and plants, but languages can also go extinct if care is not taken to pass them down to new generations. The dictionary will help make sure the words preserved there are not lost over time.

**A tip of the hat** to the Dream Team program in Hermiston, which brings athletes with intellectual disabilities together every week in the spring and pairs them up with Little League athletes for a game of softball.

Kids, parents and coaches alike have a great time and we're glad to see athletes of all abilities mingling on the field with whatever accommodations they need to participate. Communities should always be striving to provide inclusive opportunities, and the Dream Team is a good example of how that can be done.

**A kick in the pants** to the drought and early start to fire season we're seeing this spring.

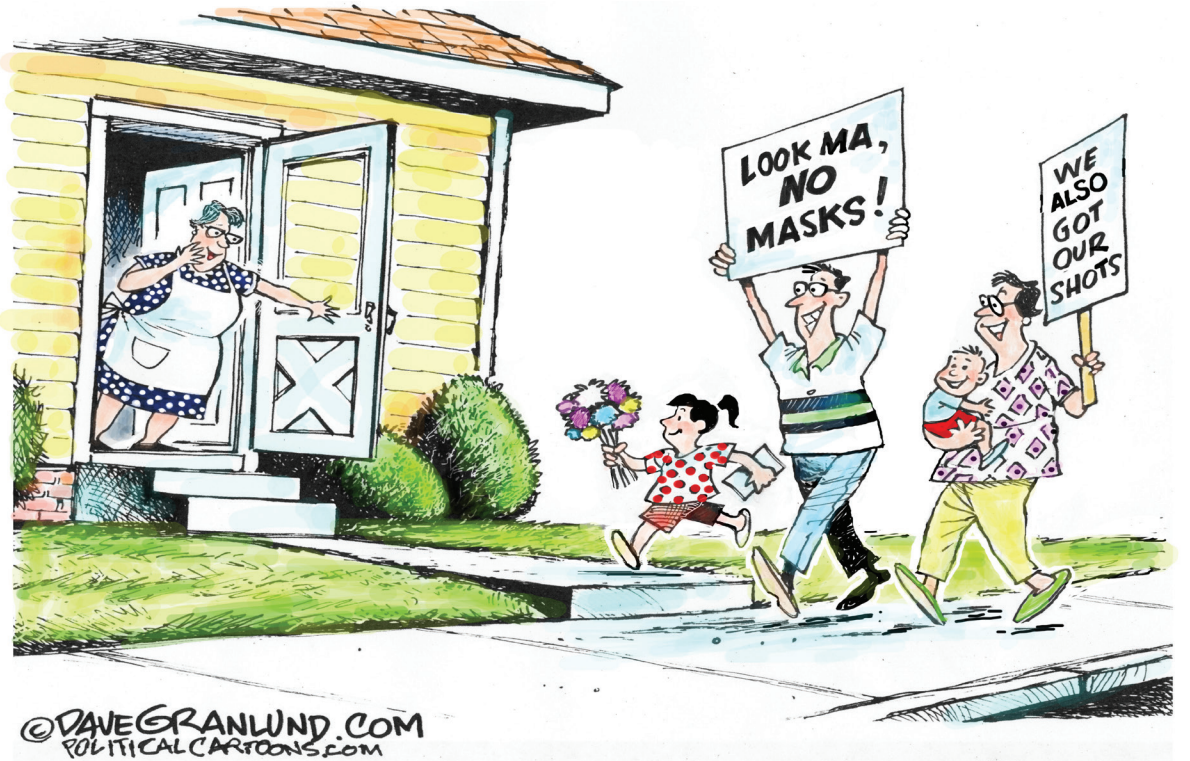
We're likely in for a rough summer on those fronts, and it's imperative we work together to mitigate the damage.

That includes being a good neighbor when it comes to water usage, as an individual, family or business. Think now about how you can cut back, whether it's running your sprinklers less often or only running the washing machine when it's full.

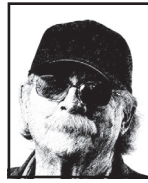
It also includes being exceedingly careful with fire — no leaving burn piles unsupervised or figuring charcoal in a grill will burn out on its own eventually.

These problems also need much bigger solutions, too. Power companies must do all in their power to stop their lines from sparking wildfires. The agricultural community must work together to find the most efficient ways to use the limited water coming their way. Government leaders must provide sufficient resources toward fire prevention measures.

There is no time to waste in addressing these problems head-on.



# Doing the rain boogie



J.D. SMITH  
FROM THE HEADWATERS OF DRY CREEK

**O**K, my garden is in at about the same time the county is trying to get drought status for the farmers. So, here is a little rain dance, a riffing on other folks' thoughts about weather, in the hope that ours gets a bit wetter soon.

"Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating; there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather." — *John Ruskin*

"A lot of people like snow. I find it to be an unnecessary freezing of water." — *Carl Reiner*

"Let the rain kiss you. Let the rain beat upon your head with silver liquid drops. Let the rain sing you a lullaby." — *Langston Hughes*

"Rainbows apologize for angry skies." — *Sylvia Voirel*

"The trouble with weather forecasting is that it's right too often for us to ignore it and wrong too often for us to rely on it." — *Patrick Young*

"To be interested in the changing seasons is a happier state of mind than to be hopelessly in love with spring." — *George Santayana*

"Weather is a great metaphor for life — sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad, and there's nothing much you can do about it but carry an umbrella." — *Pepper Giardino*

"The best thing one can do when it's raining is to let it rain." — *Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

"It is one of the secrets of Nature in its mood of mockery that fine weather lays heavier weight on the mind and hearts of the depressed and the inwardly tormented than does a really bad day with dark rain sniveling continuously and sympathetically from a dirty sky." — *Muriel Spark*

"Don't knock the weather; nine-tenths

of the people couldn't start a conversation if it didn't change once in a while." — *Kin Hubbard*

"Weather forecast for tonight: dark." — *George Carlin*

"Anyone who says sunshine brings happiness has never danced in the rain." — *Author Unknown*

"Some people walk in the rain, others just get wet." — *Roger Miller*

"Coal lay in ledges under the ground since the Flood, until a laborer with pick and windlass brings it to the surface. We may will call it black diamonds. Every basket is power and civilization. For coal is a portable climate." — *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"Rain! whose soft architectural hands have power to cut stones, and chisel to shapes of grandeur the very mountains." — *Henry Ward Beecher*

"When snow falls, nature listens." — *Antoinette van Kleeff*

"Many a man curses the rain that falls upon his head, and knows not that it brings abundance to drive away the hunger." — *Saint Basil*

"A rainy day is the perfect time for a walk in the woods." — *Rachel Carson*

"There's always a period of curious fear between the first sweet-smelling breeze and the time when the rain comes cracking down." — *Don DeLillo*

"The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in San Francisco." — *Mark Twain*

"There is a muscular energy in sunlight corresponding to the spiritual energy of wind." — *Annie Dillard*

"The best kind of rain, of course, is a cozy rain. This is the kind the anonymous medieval poet makes me remember, the rain that falls on a day when you'd just as soon stay in bed a little longer, write letters or read a good book by the fire, take early tea with hot scones and jam and look out the streaked window with complacency." — *Susan Allen Tot*

"For the man sound in body and serene of mind there is no such thing as bad weather; every day has its beauty, and

storms which whip the blood do but make it pulse more vigorously." — *George Gissing*

"My favorite weather is bird-chirping weather." — *Loire Hartwoud*

"Any proverbs about weather are doubly true during a storm." — *Ed Northstrum*

"It is best to read the weather forecast before praying for rain." — *Mark Twain*

"The snow doesn't give a soft white damn whom it touches." — *e.e. cummings*

"What dreadful hot weather we have! It keeps me in a continual state of inelegance." — *Jane Austen*

"Clouds come floating into my life, no longer to carry rain or usher storm, but to add color to my sunset sky." — *Rabindranath Tagore*

"Where does the white go when the snow melts?" — *Author Unknown*

"A snowflake is one of God's most fragile creations, but look what they can do when they stick together!" — *Author Unknown*

"Snowmen fall from heaven ... unassembled." — *Author Unknown*

"Bad weather always looks worse through a window." — *Author Unknown*

"Only those in tune with nature seem to pick up on the energy in wind. All sorts of things get swept off in the breeze — ghosts, pieces of soul, voices unsung, thoughts repressed, love uncherished, and a thousands galore of spiritual ether. Wind is an emotional rush because emotions are rushing by." — *Drew Sirtors*

"There's one good thing about snow, it makes your lawn look as nice as your neighbor's." — *Clyde Moore*

"Perfect winter weather is a great caffeine, while perfect summer weather is the best sedative." — *Amethyst Snow-Rivers*

"Walking through puddles is my favorite metaphor for life." — *Jessi Lane Adams*

"There is little chance that meteorologists can solve the mysteries of weather until they gain an understanding of the mutual attraction of rain and weekends." — *Arnot Sheppard*

*J.D. Smith is an accomplished writer and jack-of-all-trades. He lives in Athena.*

# Senate Bill 499 should become law



EARL BAIN  
OTHER VIEWS

**F**or over six years of my life, I was wrongfully incarcerated in an Oregon prison. I was convicted in Malheur County of a crime I did not commit and falsely labeled as having abused my own child. I was living a nightmare, but I couldn't wake up.

Last year, Gov. Kate Brown granted me a pardon on the grounds of my innocence, the first time she has issued a pardon on that basis. I no longer carry the labels of "felon" or "sex offender" but the problems stemming from my wrongful conviction are far from over.

Due to my conviction, I lost the good career I had in the military and can't go back to it. I am a combat veteran who served my country in Afghanistan, but that didn't count for anything when the state took everything from me and sent me to prison.

Since returning to the community, I have spent thousands of dollars on polygraph tests, which my parole officer repeatedly forced me to take, assuming I was lying

when I said I was innocent.

The greatest loss, though, was time with my daughters while they were growing up. During my time in prison, I was not allowed to see or talk to them at any time. I wasn't even allowed to send them a letter.

Trying to overcome all of this has been a tremendous struggle for me and my family. The stigma of my wrongful conviction is such that every time I meet someone new, I have had to worry about what they are thinking about me. I have had to try to find words to explain that I'm not who my conviction said I was.

I'm free now, and my innocence has been recognized, but I'm still trying to rebuild my life. I had to start over when I got out of prison and the challenges I face have not come to an end just because I no longer have the wrongful conviction on my record.

People like me are just asking for a fair shot. We lost everything and it was the criminal justice system that took it from us. I believe it's time for Oregon to recognize exonerates and address the harm that has been done to us. I am an innocent man, but those are just words. How can the state be allowed to take everything away from me and shrug its shoulders after I am exonerated?

Fortunately, there's an opportunity for

Oregon to do the right thing. A bill currently being considered by legislators, Senate Bill 499 by Sen. Kim Thatcher, R-Keizer, would provide a fixed amount of \$65,000 in compensation per year of wrongful incarceration to exonerates who meet certain criteria, as well as \$25,000 for years spent on parole, post-prison supervision or the sex offender registry.

Our neighbors in Idaho passed similar legislation this year, and the governor recently signed that bill into law. If Idaho can do it, so should Oregon.

Seeing SB 499 become law would mean more than just financial compensation that would allow me to get back on my feet and give me a chance to support my family the way I should have been doing all those years I was locked up.

This bill represents the state of Oregon admitting they sometimes get it wrong. And for wrongfully convicted people like me, that means more than words can say.

*Earl Bain was wrongfully convicted in Malheur County in 2009 and spent six years in prison. After the complaining witness in his case recanted her story, with the help of the Oregon Innocence Project he was pardoned on the grounds of innocence by Gov. Kate Brown in August 2020.*

## 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.

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