

O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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OUR VIEW

State likely to look for more of your money

If playing the lottery is your thing, you could get one more chance a week. The Oregon Lottery Commission soon will vote on whether to allow an additional Powerball drawing.

It's almost certain the commission will do it. It doesn't set the rules for Powerball. It participates in Powerball along with other states. And the "Powerball Product Group" has approved an additional drawing on Monday to accompany the drawings on Wednesday and Saturday. If Oregon wants to keep selling Powerball tickets, it needs to allow the additional drawing.

What will the change mean? The states selling Powerball tickets are not benevolently trying to create more winners. They hope it will mean more sales of tickets and more revenue over time. Staff of the Oregon Lottery project increased Powerball ticket sales will mean about a 5% increase in sales in Oregon.

More drawings can mean more excitement. Lottery operators hope you buy the fantasy: Never work again. More millions than you could ever need. Raining cash down to help your family, your friends, your favorite causes.

The reality is your chances are pretty awful. The probability of winning the Powerball grand prize is 1 in 292,201,338. Winning \$4 is much easier at 1 in 38.

If you have the money to lose, Powerball can be fun. It also is like a voluntary tax. Since 1992, Powerball has generated between \$10 million to \$20 million per fiscal year in Oregon for education, state parks, services for veterans and more.

The breakdown for 2020 in Oregon was:

Gross sales: \$31,196,079
Prizes: \$15,589,343 (50% of gross)
State transfer: \$10,615,363 (34% of gross)

Retailer commissions: \$2,472,882 (sales) and \$115,176 (prizes)

The gross sales figures in 2020 were about half what they were in 2018.

If you buy Powerball tickets thinking it's the answer to bring you long-term happiness, you are likely to win disappointment. Think of it more as buying a fleeting dream that also goes to some good causes.



Artificial intelligence lacks sense of humor



TAMMY MALGESINI

INSIDE MY SHOES

I recently received a warning from Facebook regarding a comment I made in jest on a friend's post.

I want to believe the comment was picked up via artificial intelligence (which obviously isn't very intelligent given the context) and that a real human didn't read the post and take it seriously. The original post discussed respecting people's right of choice in regards to getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

At the end of the copy and pasted message, it stated:

"So whether you choose:

- CV shot
- No Shot
- Tequila shot

You're OK in my books and I respect your decision."

Given that my bestie hasn't drank in more than 25 years due to past problems with alcohol, I decided to make a joke.

"If you choose to have a tequila shot,

Ima gonna kick yer a\$\$," was my exact tongue-in-cheek response.

Shortly thereafter, Carol sent me a message asking why I removed my post. It was at that point I discovered the Facebook police flagged it, saying, "Your comment goes against our Community Standards on violence and incitement. ... We have these standards to prevent and disrupt offline harm."

I stared at the message and said out loud to myself, "You've got to be kidding, it was a joke." Then I chuckled to myself and thought if Facebook really thinks it has the ability to make an impact on whether people carry out real threats of harm, it really should have utilized that power to squelch the upheaval in Portland and cities across the country this past summer.

I decided to challenge the decision to remove my post. However, because "artificial intelligence" doesn't have a sense of humor, the original decision to hide my comment and give me a warning stood.

Seriously?!? For the better part of the past year, I can't count the number of times I read comments and statements that were incredibly demeaning — but

that's OK as long as you don't jokingly say you're going to kick someone's bum.

According to a November 2020 article on CNBC, Facebook announced artificial intelligence software detects a high percentage of the posts that are removed from its platform. However, the same report acknowledged AI doesn't always understand sarcasm or slang.

Well, there you have it — I guess I have to accept the fact that some of my attempts at being an amateur comedian may be flagged and censored by Facebook.

While I find that annoying, I'm kind of walking on eggshells. I don't want to risk getting put in Facebook jail because I utilize the platform to stay in touch with friends who I don't see on a regular basis, to find information about upcoming events in the area and, most importantly, posting photos of my canine kids.

Tammy Malgesini, who recently returned as an East Oregonian community writer, enjoys spending time with her husband and two German shepherds, as well as entertaining herself with random musings.

YOUR VIEWS

Dam breach proponents must put up or shut up

Why does Idaho Rep. Mike Simpson expect others to present alternatives to his \$33 billion plan to gut the economy of the Pacific Northwest? He claims "we need to have honest conversations." So, let's be honest.

The science has already been proven and recorded as fact — fish and dams can successfully coexist. As a matter of fact, the highest numbers of both salmon and steelhead ever recorded returning to our rivers came during a 10-year period that began 25 years after the last dam was completed.

From 1938-47, approximately 1.9 million anadromous fish returned over Bonneville Dam, the only dam in the river system at that time. From 2000-09, approximately 6.8 million salmon and steelhead returned to our river system, an increase of 358%. The last dam was completed on the Snake River in 1975 — proof positive that fish and dams can, and do, coexist.

Simpson and his minions need to prove their scheme to breach our dams and destroy our economy, at such a great cost, will result in the return of even one more fish to our rivers. The burden of proof is on them alone, nobody else. If they cannot prove their case, they need to shut up and go home.

Dick Sherwin
Lewiston, Idaho

Greater I-da-no

As we contemplate the Greater Idaho move, I would like to bring up a few consequences such an action may bring.

First is the serious pay cut some of our most hardworking citizens will take with such a move. If one earns minimum wage in Oregon, their pay could potentially decrease by \$4.25 an hour from \$11.50 down to \$7.25, or a reduction of \$8,840 per year for full-time minimum wage workers — way more than the income tax reduction the change might produce. It is common that such workers tend to be renters,

so a reduction in property tax would unlikely benefit them. In addition, the move to Idaho would also mean an additional 6% sales tax on their already reduced income.

Second is the cost to implement such a shift of borders. A quick review of past speed limit changes for a variety of states reveals such changes cost anywhere from \$75 to \$135 per sign. What would be the cost to change even more signs should we choose to join Idaho? Oregon highway signs that would need to change to Idaho, signs for cities, businesses, schools, telephone numbers, addresses, driver licenses, voter registration, etc. Who would pay for such changes?

But in the end, what are we asking? Do we want our government to spend needless hours on this issue instead of on more immediate problems that affect us all, like droughts and wildfire mitigation? One could just move to Idaho without the complications.

Jason Yielding
La Grande

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