



BETTE HUSTED
FROM HERE TO ANYWHERE

Paying it forward comes in many guises

Someone — it wasn't me, I swear — introduced our granddaughter to the pleasures of vanilla bean frappuccino, so here we were, waiting in a line of cars at Starbucks. When we reached the window, we learned that the woman in the car ahead of us had already paid for our treat. I'm not much of a coffee drinker, so this was my first experience of what's become a not-uncommon practice at Starbucks and McDonalds.

Paying it forward, people call it now. But "casting your bread upon the waters" has been around for a long time. And indigenous cultures, among others, have always known "the gift must always move."

It feels good when it happens, even in small ways. Like the copy of a book I had bought 20 years ago — Molly Gloss's "Wild Life" — that arrived in my mailbox this week. I'd passed it on to a friend — but which one? When we share books, they tend to disappear. But here it was. This bread returning to me felt even more special because I'd been re-reading that book in a re-issued copy, savoring it even more now that I've tried my hand at writing a novel myself.

A small thing, yes. Like a free drink at Starbucks. But small gifts can feel large, and this one did.

Then it happened again. I had thought of what seemed a perfect gift for my friend Caroline, who is retiring from teaching literature and writing at Portland Community College. A book, of course: "Literary Chickens," a collection of Beth Moon's amazing photos of heritage-breed chickens paired with quotations from literary classics — ideal for Caroline, who loves both chickens and literature.

I wanted to give her the book when our poetry group met in person for the first time in months, so everyone could see it. Caroline's mother Ursula had long ago christened us the "poultry" group, a joke about the way people pronounced "poetry" in her days at Radcliffe. So we've been "the poulters" for years. Several members of our group actually keep chickens, too — and we all know and appreciate their ways.

So I ordered the book — and when it became clear that it wasn't going to arrive in time, my friend Elizabeth, who had introduced me to this treasure in the first place, gave me her copy. I could pass it on to Caroline and replace hers when the new copy arrived. Her act of generosity made not just two but seven people happy.

Of course, we are all familiar with larger, more obvious examples of paying it forward, of giving without expectation of in-kind reward. Teaching comes to mind. Parenting. Volunteering at the warming station. Getting vaccinated to protect others as well as yourself. And, of course, writing.

All writers hope their book finds a publisher, and it's true that some make a lot of money. But as Cheryl Strayed told the editor of the book "Scratch: Writers, Money, and the Art of Making a Living," "There's no other job in the world where you get your master's degree in that field and you're like, 'Well, I might make zero or I might make \$5 million!'"

The writers who share their work at the First Draft Writers' Series hope we will buy their books, but that isn't why they come. They know their words need to be not just written but read — and if they're lucky, heard. Listen closely as they're reading, watch their faces, let the words flow into you, and you'll feel it too: the circle of story.

Many successful writers have jobs, or supportive partners, to help pay the bills so they can write. "Being a writer is great because you always have homework and then you die" is a Twitter joke, but it's true. Artists don't retire. Their gifts have to keep moving.

I'm happy to live in a community that supports the First Draft Writers' Series, a community of folks who pay it forward both at Starbucks and at Pendleton Center for the Arts. We've kept the series going on Zoom, and we'll be able to meet in person soon.

Meanwhile, I think I'll buy someone a cup of coffee. Better yet, a book.

Bette Husted is a writer and a student of Tai Chi and the natural world. She lives in Pendleton.

A look at our nation's existential situation



ERWIN ROBERTS
OTHER VIEWS

I am a political dichotomy. Red side, I'm the third generation living on a ranch deep in the coast range with timber and cattle. I chose this life.

Blue side, I'm an electrical engineer who believes in science first and foremost, and my dedication to science is "a good life."

President Donald Trump successfully weaponized the enormous growing-for-decades gap between our liberal, diverse urban citizens and our conservative, white rural citizens. Social science research attributes this gap to differing "moral foundations" with liberals being motivated simply by "fairness ... justice" and a do no harm philosophy. Whereas conservatism is more complicated. It's "embraced to reduce fear, anxiety, uncertainty, change ... and to justify order and inequality." Conservatism also requires "in-group loyalty, respect for authority and purity which leads to self-righteousness and contempt." Additionally, conservatives are "repulsed by liberal ideology" (example: change for "social justice").

When Trump chose not to bridge this gap but, instead, to exploit it for his personal gain, he failed both as a president and as a decent, ethical human being. Therefore, we now have a vast and unfortunate divisive situation of cause and effect.

The cause: Trump supporters used Facebook, Twitter, Fox News then switched to Parler, MeWe, Gab, BitChute, Telegram, CloutHub (and others) plus Newsmax-TV and OANN-TV to spread many lies to many millions already

filled with many understandable fears and anger stemming from the rapid (one generation) massive social and economic changes they believed were threatening their futures.

These millions were essentially white: the evangelicals (some said Trump was "sent by God to save their way of life"), white supremacists and neo-Nazis, white militias, white Q-wackos, white stop-the-stealers, plus all the other angry white "Trumpers."

The Jan. 6 insurrection riot clearly

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exemplified this. And we continue to see the spreading of more egregious, absurd and very dangerous lies, especially "the big lie" (with zero proof) ... election fraud, plus more conspiracies, more science-denying, more voter suppression, and more CPAC+Q, etc.

The effect: The "new" Republican party — the GOPQ — is displaying alarming enabling and/or dysfunctional behavior that is severely restricting their contribution(s) to competent reality-based governance. For instance, some Qwackos believe Oprah Winfrey

was wearing an ankle monitor during her royal interview, "proving" she had been arrested for child sex trafficking.

Originally it was believed we would eventually "reunite" our country. But, with the many fear-based or simply delusional beliefs found in Trumpers, is it possible (or even desirable) to "reunite" with millions of citizens who do not believe facts are important?

Also, when addressing problems requiring national and/or global solutions (climate change, pollution, COVID-19, racism, etc.) Trumpers seem to hear only "blah blah blah socialism," then right-wing trolls and fear-mongers whip them into a panicked frenzy (I have witnessed this).

Trumpers respond: "Just because we don't agree with you doesn't make us lunatics." "It's challenging to have respectful conversations with people who don't respect us back." "Different perspectives are a good thing."

During normal times, of course these statements would be understandable. However, during today's abnormal times, the Republican Party must understand that having meaningful productive conversations with a perspective that believes facts are not important is fundamentally impossible. How is it possible to connect intelligently with people who grossly ignore facts?

It took America centuries to achieve global leadership. It took Trump four years to severely damage it. The GOPQ has welcomed fact/reality deniers with open arms. Therefore, it is complicit in this damage.

Please. Fix. This. Then please return to reality-based governing. Thank you.

Prebttal: Not supporting dangerous lies or misinformation is neither censorship nor cancel culture. It's simply supporting reality.

Erwin Roberts is an electrical engineer and lives on a ranch near Corvallis.

Keep children writing by sending them notes



SCOTT SMITH
EDUCATION CORNER

It's hard to believe school is out for the summer or soon will be. There was no in-person schooling all year in some places, and others had all different modes of learning happening.

No question as far as education goes, this was one atypical year worldwide, and here we are back to summer vacation and that age-old question, "How do I keep my child/children engaged in academics?"

Writing is the highest form of language processing we have in communication, making it one of the most challenging skills for some students, and is why children often resist it. Writing is a learned skill, not a natural skill like eating. Therefore, it requires more brain power and work.

The question becomes how do we keep children writing over the summer or other times when they are not in school? One thought might be through letter/note writing during the summer. They can write one or two notes each day. They can write to family and friends or even members of your household. The objective is to have them write.

Having children write cards to others no matter what age forces them to use multiple cognitive skills they will need in

their adult life. Because it's hard, you can expect some possible resistance because they have to recall information, transcribe that information into words, and then write it. Taking the time to tell you who they are writing to and what they are writing about first scaffolds the skills to assist them in writing to the person.

Their card/note should be at least three

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to five sentences. With real young children, you can have them draw a picture and then tell you about their image, while you write it out for them, but older students need to write their own. Also, having them tell you and writing it out for them can be beneficial for younger children. They can read it back and, better yet, copy it to their card or paper.

Recycling bill poses unnecessary expense for newspapers

Laurie Hieb

BRIGITTE SCHMIDT GWYN

OTHER VIEWS

Newspapers and magazines go to every corner of this state. Notwithstanding increased digital access, paper publications are delivered to tens of thousands of homes that lack broadband internet and homes where readers simply are more comfortable with the familiar format of paper or want to save magazines on travel, food, world events or hobbies.

Oregon's newspapers and magazines care deeply about environmental responsibility. Newsprint and magazine stock paper come from certified forests, are fully compostable and biodegrade in a manner of months. Newsprint is so safe that it can be used as vegetable garden mulch. Inks are linseed oil-based and nontoxic, and adhesives are water soluble.

A well-intentioned but misguided piece of legislation in the Oregon Senate, Bill 582, would create an extensive Extended Producer Responsibility system for municipal solid waste. The bill recognizes that magazines and newspapers are different from other

materials by allowing fees to be paid through advertising, but the fees simply should not apply to nontoxic, biodegradable materials — again, newspapers and magazines biodegrade within months.

News is vital to American civic life, and legislation causing financial hardship to newspapers and magazines will erode citizen access to factual and trusted news and information. News-

"NEWSPAPERS ARE THE SOLE SOURCE OF LOCAL NEWS FOR MANY COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE."

papers are the sole source of local news for many communities throughout the state. Coverage of town meetings, food pantry locations, classified ads and business news are the lifeblood of community newspapers. Yet this legislation discriminates against news and information published on paper, as opposed to information that is circulated in digital formats.

EPR systems in other jurisdictions

have failed to increase recycling rates for paper, which already are much higher than other products. In British Columbia, recycling rates are trending downward while producer fees have increased markedly. This is not tenable in Oregon, when economic conditions related to the pandemic have caused significant reduction in advertising revenues for magazines and newspapers. To offset marked increases in cost, the legislation could force publications to eliminate home delivery to rural areas, exacerbating the digital divide, and cut journalism jobs.

A recent study by Broadbandnow ranks Oregon 34th among states based on broadband deployment, speeds and access to low-priced plans. Those without broadband depend on paper.

We strongly urge the Oregon Legislature to consider the impact of this legislation on magazines and newspapers. There are more appropriate ways to reclaim post-consumer waste without disadvantaging the state's vital news and information sources.

Brigitte Schmidt Gwyn is president and chief executive officer of MPA — The Association of Magazine Media, and Laurie Hieb is executive director of the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association.