



J.D. SMITH
FROM THE HEADWATERS OF DRY CREEK

Enjoying a bear feast

Forty years ago, a fellow with California plates showed up in the parking lot of a bar in McCall, Idaho, piloting a new Buick with a steaming radiator. He announced that he hit a small bear about 5 miles up the road, that he didn't stop to lend assistance, that he desperately needed a drink to calm his nerves, and could anyone spare a clamp to fix his bottom radiator hose?

Near where the fellow had hit the bear was a small tent city in an old gravel pit, settled by working folks who could not afford to live in more conventional housing in a tourist town. A couple of these were fixtures of the bar and viewed the prospect of a wounded bear wandering around their camp as bad medicine. They ordered a case of beer to go and asked me if I wanted to tag along on a bear hunt. In those days I would have followed a case of Hams into a leper colony.

The accident was easy to spot. A couple of hundred yards above the lake, skid marks in the southbound lane pointed directly toward where a 2-year-old black bear was curled up in the borrow pit, eyes wide open like its final wish was to catch one last glimpse of the Big Dipper.

The brew was gone before any decision was made about the disposal of the bear. One of the tent dudes remarked that a bear was his totem animal, assigned to him by his shaman in Cleveland, and that he intended to remove its claws and pay homage to the spirit of this animal by making a necklace of its fingernails. The other said that ever since childhood he had wanted a bear rug and that he was claiming dibs on the skin to make cozy floor for his tent.

I mentioned that this particular bear would probably not skin-out to much more than a bath mat and that it looked to me as though when the bear and the Buick collided that the critter's front set of necklace charms had been broken up pretty well by Mr. Goodyear.

I also noted that Idaho Fish and Game might figure that the bear was theirs, somehow, and that the proper thing to do was to go back to the bar, use the payphone, and let them deal with the dead bear. Meanwhile, we would have a perfect opportunity to purchase more beer.

My comrades balked at this suggestion, except for the beer part. To them, what we had here was akin to finding a shipwreck. Laws applying to salvage took precedence over any arbitrary roadkill laws. The sensible thing was to reap the bounty that had fallen in our laps. We hadn't killed the bear, after all, but had every much of a right to the spoils as did the ravens and coyotes that were bound to appear. The Cleveland Indian went to the glove box to retrieve a toad stabber that he often wore strapped to his leg.

Having spent a few winters in the high country living on mashed potatoes and elk jerky, I figured that I had a couple more chevrons on my Amateur Pathfinders uniform than two guys who were a month out of Chicago, so I pulled rank and pointed out to them that there was more than a necklace and a rug laying down there in the granite chips. I wasn't talking of the primeval soul of a sacred beast. My concerns were more practical than that.

What about the next car that came along? Did they really want to be down in the ditch, with ridiculously long knives, bent over something about the size of their mother, smeared with blood, when a carload of tourists putted past on their scenic midnight drive? And what about the rest of the bear? Steal its coat and paws and you still had a hundred pounds of flesh left over. Were they the kind of fellows who were going to waste the chance for a roasted bear party?

I proposed to help them to load the critter in the back of their rig if they would take me back to town so I could get my old Ford stock truck and at least a case of beer, then we would convoy back to their camp where I would teach them how to butcher the bear and whatever I knew about cooking its flesh.

It took several more beer runs to get the job done. During the process the one fellow gave up on the bear rug notion when he realized that bears are prone to ticks and that our little buddy had several hundred of them burrowed into the nape of his neck and down his backbone where he couldn't reach them. The kid from Cleveland abandoned the necklace idea when his girlfriend screamed while he was hacksawing bear knuckles.

We did have a fairly good bear feed though. I showed the city kids how to treat bear meat as though it is dark pork, how to fillet off strips of butt muscle and tenderloin and hang the strips from willow sticks over a small fire, how to roast them until very, very well done, just in case the little bear had committed suicide after discovering that bears can carry trichinosis. Personally, I've never really enjoyed bear meat. Tastes too much like bear.

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

FIRST NATIONAL BANK? I'D LIKE TO NOT PAY LAST YEAR'S BILLS.



A new era of family policy in Oregon



MARJORIE SIMS



ANNE MOSLE

OTHER VIEWS

We are at a moment in the nation — and in Oregon — when a paradigm shift is in reach to update ineffective, top-down systems to be more responsive, effective and equitable for all families.

Today, the American Rescue Plan provides unprecedented resources to improve the lives of families who are still reeling from COVID-19 and its economic impact as well as long-standing inequities that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. And now Congress is debating a \$3.5 trillion budget resolution which, if passed, will increase these resources even more.

Luckily, there is a bold, pragmatic and proven strategy already in place that can serve as a model — the two-generation approach.

For the past 10 years, Ascend at the Aspen Institute has embraced the 2Gen approach to accelerate family prosperity. As illustrated in a recently released report, “The State of the Field: Two-Generation Approaches to Family Well-Being,” the 2Gen mindset and approach can drive forward-thinking, actionable policies that advance economic mobility for all families.

It's a modern approach to governance that includes and invests in the potential of all people across race, gender, ability, income and geography. 2Gen fosters human development and human potential, and if done well, will not only allow us to live up to our highest values but also yield tangible, pragmatic benefits. More impor-

tantly, it provides a proven blueprint for moving forward.

The 2Gen approach defines well-being holistically, just as parents themselves define it. As a mom told us, “Well-being is happy, healthy and safe and family well-being is having a balanced life.” 2Gen strategies are shaped by parents' voices and lived experiences and meaningfully work with families in five key areas: physical and mental health; early development, learning, and care; postsecondary and employment pathways; economic assets; and social capital. Advancing racial and gender equity is central to the 2Gen approach.

Over the past decade, the 2Gen approach has shown that it is transformative and practical. 2Gen leaders and practitioners have wrestled conceptually with what it means to place racial and gender equity at the core of our work and then applied those big ideas with purpose in pragmatic, tangible ways, from changes to intake forms to increase access to services to shifts in program titles and imagery to attract more fathers to parenting programs.

In the process, across all levels of government and the public and nonprofit sectors, 2Gen leaders have listened and learned a lot about how to support and engage families in ways that foster and unleash their potential for health, wealth and well-being.

The modern, equity-centered 2Gen approach is being explored, implemented, and advanced by the Ascend National Network of over 440 partners across the country, including Friends of the Children, Home Forward, Multnomah County – Multnomah Idea Lab and National Crittenton, here in Oregon.

To date, 12 states, including here in Oregon, have implemented 2Gen approaches to align and coordinate their agencies and strengthen programmatic supports for families, including linking child care and early learning programs

to workforce development and economic pathways, adopting new models of home visiting, and creating effective parent and child supports as states seek more effective and equitable outcomes for children and families.

The 2Gen approach has provided state agencies with a pragmatic and purpose-driven way to drive equity and well-being by shifting and aligning the gears of early childhood, K-12 education, postsecondary success, health and mental health, economic assets and social capital.

State momentum is having three major effects.

First, many states are reviewing and aligning child- and adult-serving programs to put families at the center. A 2Gen analysis identifies ineffective practices that force families to navigate fragmented systems, inconsistent eligibility rules or contradictory expectations, all of which set up barriers to good outcomes. Second, 2Gen has fostered new family-centered collaborations across public agencies to produce better child, parent, caregiver and family outcomes. Third, 2Gen has catalyzed new community- and county-level partnerships.

It's time to place family well-being at the center of our national agenda. With new resources from ARP and possible additional investments from the Budget Resolution, we can pursue opportunities on what is actually working and open up a better way of serving parents and children together. As one mom told us about navigating the pandemic, “If we make it out of this, we will be unstoppable.”

As Oregon (and America) rebuilds, let's make sure parents and families will have the tools and conditions they need and deserve to be unstoppable.

Anne Mosle is vice president of the Aspen Institute and executive director of Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Marjorie Sims is managing director of Ascend at the Aspen Institute.

Fine tuning format, content changes



PHIL WRIGHT

FROM THE NEWSROOM

You may have noticed recent format and content changes on the East Oregonian's records pages.

We're working to make the records information more reader friendly with a simpler, more unified look. That means using more of the same fonts, using more indentations or bullet points and not having as much text in all caps. We're also implementing The Associated Press style when it comes to dates and street addresses, which is the same style we use in news articles and briefs.

In the meetings sections, we are replacing long and complicated Zoom meeting web addresses with shorter addresses via bitly.com, the website link shortening platform. Not only does that look better, but shorter addresses are easier to copy.

The content we run in records also is changing.

We've moved away from running all civil claims that credit companies and banks make against locals. The majority of the U.S. population carries some sort of debt, and it's all too easy to fall behind. We also are taking that route when it comes to publishing monetary judgments stemming from credit debt. That situation is newsworthy, but running in print each week the names of everyone in Umatilla County facing a small claim from a credit card company is not.

We're making similar changes to what we run in court sentences.

We will continue to run most felonies, but we're going to run fewer misdemeanors. Some of this stems from the news industry reexamining its reporting of criminal cases and outcomes and some stems from changes in Oregon law. With Oregon voters approving the decriminalization of small amounts of certain drugs, which went into effect in February 2021, running the sentencing of someone arrested in 2018 on a drug charge that now amounts to a traffic ticket does not seem a fair practice.

For that reason, we're also noting the year of the original criminal charges. Sometimes a case can take years to conclude. Publishing names, crimes and sentences without a reference to when the case began can imply all the cases are recent.

We recognize some readers value these records, but as with much else during the past year-and-a-half, the EO also had to question if gathering and collating all the records we were running was the best use of our staff's time and providing real value to our readers. Collecting information from Oregon's electronic court system, which is where we obtain state court records, is time consuming.

Cutting out records that have little value allows a better use of our staff's time and means we can add court records from Morrow County. Sentences and lawsuits also matter there, and with Umatilla County makes up Oregon's 6th Judicial District.

You also will see fewer mugshots

throughout the paper. The EO, like much of the news industry, is changing its stance on running photos of people in jail. Sometimes a photo can imply guilt, sometimes it just shows someone on the worst day of their life, and too often we and other news outlets lack the resources to check on the outcome of every case we initially report on.

Plus a new Oregon law will make it more difficult for news media to run booking photos.

House Bill 3273 goes into effect Jan. 1, 2022, and prohibits law enforcement agencies from releasing booking photos except in specified circumstances. That law also requires publish-for-pay publications to remove and destroy booking photos upon request within a specified period. Newspapers and the like will not be able to charge for removing and destroying certain booking photos. And the bill provides publications are liable for fees, costs and statutory damages for failing to remove and destroy photos as required.

The EO's website, www.eastoregonian.com, also is a place to find more records. In the menu that opens on the left side of the page, we have our Data Center. There, you can find building permits, food inspections and property transactions.

For us, this distills down to one objective: making the East Oregonian the best provider of news it can be. Getting there, however, means balancing journalist integrity, our resources and reader interests. We think these changes to records reporting achieve that balance.

Phil Wright is the news editor of the East Oregonian.