

# O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

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## OUR VIEW

# Standing up for our democracy

Serving on a public body can seem like a daunting endeavor, but there is no better way to give back to your community.

Morrow County is searching for people for its planning commission to represent the Boardman and Ione areas. The role is a volunteer one and individuals are appointed for four-year terms ending in December 2025. The planning commission meets once a month.

The board is important for obvious reasons. Volunteer commissioners hold hearings on land use applications and issues. Members also review changes to the county's subdivision and zoning ordinances and the county's comprehensive plans. Commission members also guide county staff on long-term planning linked to land use.

Members of the commission, then, play a pivotal, mostly unseen role. Land use issues are a central part of any rural county, and Morrow is no exception.

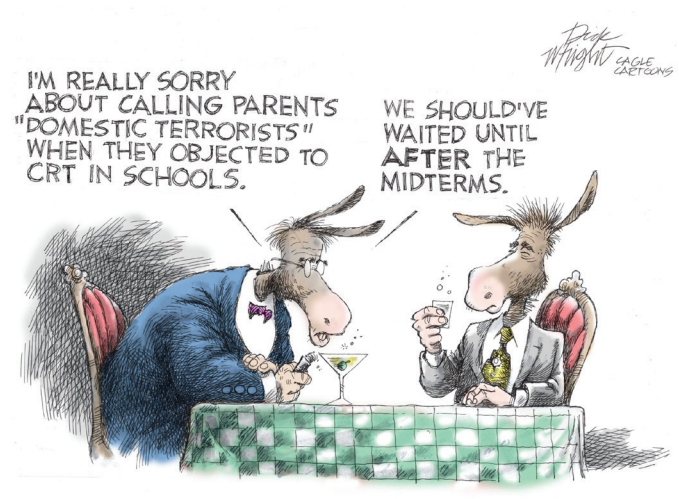
As a volunteer position, there isn't much in terms of concrete benefits that will go toward an individual who decides to step up and become a commission member. Yet that really isn't the point. At least not with this board.

The board needs community members who care — care about their county, care about the future and care enough about their neighbors that they want to be there in a crucial position to help them.

No doubt there isn't much instant gratification from working on such a board. And, as with anything connected to democracy, there always is the possibility a decision will spark controversy or push back from voters.

Still, that is the form of government we live by. Democracy can be messy, but that should never be a reason an individual shies away from an important volunteer position.

The work on such a board as the Morrow County Planning Commission isn't going to be a glitzy one, but it will be one where someone can make a real difference. Not just now, but down the road. The key, of course, is finding the right person for the job. We believe there are lots of people out there who could use their expertise for just such a role, and we hope they step up.



## YOUR VIEWS

### The day of judgment is upon all of us now

Matt Henry's column ("So tell me: what's it going to be?," Oct. 7, 2021) is first rate in my opinion when one is considering getting a COVID-19 shot or not doing so.

Henry said, "for bona fide Christians, there can only be one side. The Gospel of ultimate self-sacrifice — the greatest good for the greater good — draws a line in the sand that cannot be breached." Get the shot. It's that simple. From Henry, "only time will tell if we ultimately pull up from our headlong tailspin into destruction, or if we even have the time left to do so."

The question for those who profess to be Christians is: Are you hellbent on dying? Is it really your wish to sacrifice others for your cherished self-centered ideological viewpoint? Has Satan bound you to a selfish view? Not so, Jesus says, each controls their own heart.

Unfortunately, in control of one's heart, polls show Christians behave a little differently from non-Christians. What is the answer to this?

Selfishness is a disregard of other's interest; its cause is a lack of manifest self-knowledge and self-understanding. We live on an island, we live on this island in a community. As stated by Henry, we are not here to say, "You come for the last can of pork and beans" and I will shoot you.

The day of judgment, COVID-19 or otherwise, is not in the future. The day of judgment is now.

Ronald Gavette  
Pendleton

### Dismissing climate change won't stop the consequences

I wish the climate was not changing. I wish there was no drought causing gigantic wildfires to burn forests, range lands, houses and towns. I wish

the polar ice was not melting, causing wildlife to be decimated and raising the ocean levels endangering our coastlines.

I wish the ocean temperatures were not becoming too warm to sustain fish and sea creatures. I wish the hurricanes and tornados along the Atlantic coast and the Gulf of Mexico were not becoming worse, causing almost total destruction across huge areas. I wish we did not need to be concerned about snowpack in the Wallows.

I wish millions of refugees around the world were not desperately trying to escape starvation and the ruin of their homelands.

In a conversation last week I expressed concern about the changing climate and was met with the typical put-down: "Oh, well, the climate has always changed ... there was the ice age ..." and "it doesn't mean that humans are responsible for the changing climate."

Being a former teacher, I started to explain the scientific facts involved and that the preponderance of scientists say the changing climate is due to human behavior. But I stopped and went on about my business because I was obviously being ignored.

So I am sad, not because someone will not listen to me, but because too many people refuse to pay attention to scientists. Last week, three scientists in their 80s and 90s were awarded the Nobel Prize in physics. They had spent their lives studying and observing climate change and a variety of scientific disciplines and related their observations to human behavior.

Almost all credible scientists understand and share their knowledge about climate change, agreeing that because some of those issues are caused by human behavior, some can be changed by humans.

There are some changes we can make so that the planet can sustain life beyond 2050. I have made some changes

in my personal lifestyle, and I am willing to continue to accept more changes. But it would take everyone to be willing to make changes in their lives, not just a few, for our great grandchildren to have air to breathe, clean water to drink and agriculture to sustain life.

Wishing it was not true is not a solution. An unsubstantiated belief that climate change is unreal does not keep it from happening. It is late, but we can save our planet if we get to work. Please do not take my word for it or the word of your local politicians. Read and find out for yourselves.

Evelyn Swart  
Joseph

### Youths should simply get off social media

I just read "Equally good and equally horrible," (published in the Oct. 14, 2021, East Oregonian) and it just makes my blood boil.

If the adults are not going to man up and put some serious guardrails on social media; if they flat-out refuse to protect kids from all manner of bullying and meanness and cruelty, then there is still something very powerful and effective kids can do for themselves and each other. They can simply shut off all social media — I mean it.

If they can get through the first week, then the withdrawal of the first two to three days will be the hardest. But then they will experience a new peace that has been longed for but missing for a very long time. They will surprise themselves by finding other ways of filling their time and connecting with their friends.

I hope they do it en masse. They will be doing themselves and each other a huge favor — and who knows, they might even inspire some change with the groveling social media owners.

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