


**BETTE
HUSTED**
FROM HERE TO ANYWHERE

Our stories are time capsules

Our stories are time capsules. They hold scenes that stay with us, moments when time has slowed long enough to let us see and better understand. This is why I love learning about the events of other people's lives and letting their stories become part of my own memory.

I once heard the poet Naomi Shihab Nye describe traveling to her home in San Antonio just after 9/11, when planes weren't flying and the Greyhound bus had become her alternative. The young man who took the seat next to hers was heading home, too. He had just been released from prison, and because he'd been segregated to make sure nothing interfered with his release, he was perhaps the only person in the country who had not yet heard the news.

For him, the twin towers were still standing. And he was full of hope. This time, he said, he was not going to blame anyone or seek revenge for anything, ever.

Each of us remembers images from that September day, but for me it's this one — two people on a bus just talking, or not talking (how could I tell him? Nye asked) — that resonates.

And I know I'll remember the story Brigit Farley shared in her recent column Past and Prologue, where she condemned the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection that tried to prevent the certification of our last election and violated our country's long-held tradition of peaceful transfer of power.

"You get some sense of how rare and precious the American electoral experience is," Brigit wrote, "when you interact with people from abroad. A friend of my parents, newly arrived in the U.S. from Germany, was terrified when she learned of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy."

Recalling her turbulent childhood, she prepared to batten down the hatches, anticipating political turmoil, maybe tanks in the streets.

"She watched in astonishment as President Lyndon Johnson stepped off Air Force One to calm a shocked and grieving nation," she wrote.

Later, Brigit said, other European friends were surprised when, after President Richard Nixon resigned, the next headline was simply "Ford Takes the Reins."

I suppose I have been thinking about the connection between stories and memory because in the past two years I have lost both a sister and a brother. Last week my niece, who has been sorting her father's belongings, called to ask, "Why did Dad have Uncle Fred's army jacket?" and I found myself on the verge of answering, "I'll ask Jill; she'll know."

My brother was a wonderful storyteller, but when I think of the stories he told me in his last year I realize there were so many more that I would never hear. When we lost John we lost his memories of our family's past, too. John was the one who knew the land we grew up on most intimately, the one who had been taught how to shingle the log cabin and make the Christmas mincemeat from the neck of the deer he hunted on the Upper 40, the one who knew the history of the ancient tools in the homestead outbuildings.

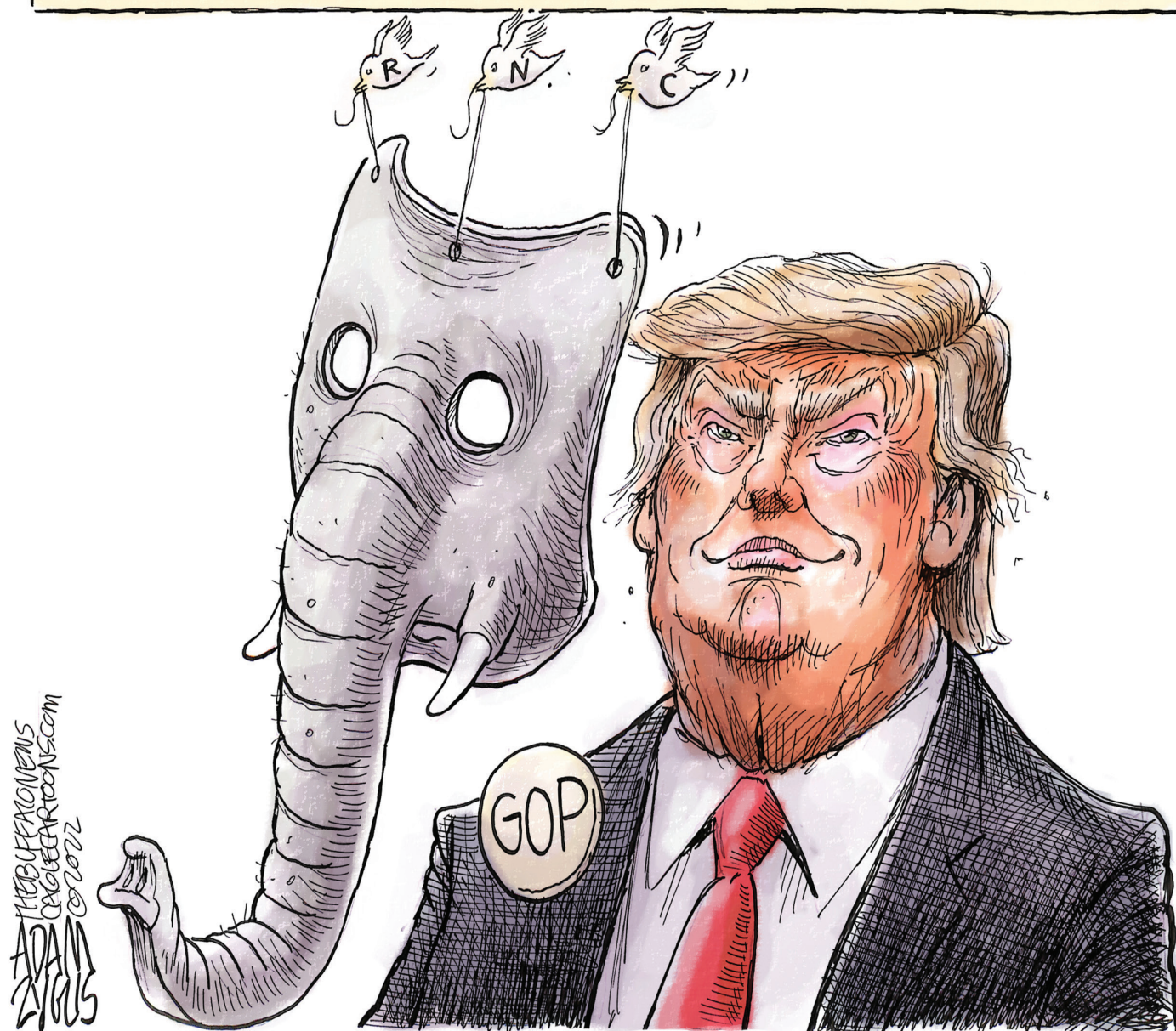
Jill and I, closest in age, often gave each other the gift of shared memories. "Help me, will you?" she asked once. "People don't believe me. Do you remember the winter of pink snow?"

Immediately the scene returned, a memory I had long forgotten. It happened in the years when above-ground atomic testing was taking place; perhaps dust of Utah's red rock was what colored our Idaho snow. We ate some, enthralled, and took handfuls in to ask Mom to make pink snow ice cream. I remembered her shock, the cups of cocoa she made for us as we warmed our stocking feet on the wood-burning cook stove door, the way she finally let us go outside again after we promised not to eat any more snow.

Now two dear friends are going into what we call memory care. I'm grateful they will receive the help they need, but I wish "memory care" meant a way to care for and preserve their memories. Maybe there is: Those of us who love them can try to pass on their stories.

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

MASK REQUIREMENTS Being LIFTED ACROSS COUNTRY



Urban renewal. What does it mean?


**KEVIN
MARTIN**
OTHER VIEWS

Urban renewal. What does it mean, especially when you live in what is considered rural Oregon? Urban renewal describes programs that receive property taxes to pay for a special project or special purpose. In the case of Pendleton's urban renewal program, which got started in 2003, the special focus has been to promote the cultural and tourism heart of Pendleton — economic development.

During the past 17 years Pendleton's urban renewal program, guided by the Pendleton Development Commission, the same individuals who make up our city council, has invested in nearly five dozen downtown commercial buildings, using urban renewal funds to make them more desirable as a place to do business. The PDC also has helped businesses start. The list of who has received a jump start from urban renewal funding is beginning to read like a who's who of downtown businesses.

But after a great start for the first six to eight years, after a lot of buildings had been improved on the outside, the program slowed. Fewer buildings were needing the improvement. So, the PDC began new grants for building improvements inside upstairs and downstairs, and even for constructing new buildings.

Today, the Pendleton Development Commission has more than overcome its "dry period." In the past four years, several large building grant projects and a program to reconstruct streets within Pendleton's

urban renewal district have added new housing and newly smooth streets. So much demand for urban renewal funding support has meant the PDC has begun to take a sharper pencil to its budget and to the projects it funds.

New programs

In the last 10 years, the PDC added an upper story grant to encourage the owners of downtown historical buildings to restore their empty upper stories and make them economically useful. Multiple upper story housing restorations took advantage. Then it added a grant to encourage new building construction, and three building projects followed. More recently it added a grant to restore entire historical buildings, plus a program to repair blighted housing in the urban renewal district. All of these programs have funded projects.

COVID-19 relief for businesses

The pandemic did toss Pendleton and our businesses on its commercial ear. But it did not completely knock us down, in part thanks to urban renewal funding, the city was able to create special, COVID-19 relief grants. These were carefully guided to downtown businesses in need, using the partnership of business organizations, including the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce and the Pendleton Downtown Association.

In fact, urban renewal staff also took responsibility for guiding Pendleton businesses to COVID-19-relief grants from Umatilla County and the state's Business Oregon department. Restaurants especially felt the COVID-19 impacts. But contrary to what you've seen in the state's urban areas, Pendleton has lost virtually none of its fine restaurants to the pandemic's pres-

ures. Urban renewal funded a special grant program just for those businesses.

Street reconstruction

Finally, in the past two years, the PDC began to use its funds to reconstruct badly deteriorated streets. Urban renewal programs, by state law, must confine their spending to an urban renewal district, designated in Pendleton's case when the program was approved by the city council in 2003.

We've been reconstructing as many streets as will qualify, but we can only tackle projects within the urban renewal district. Nonetheless, by spending urban renewal funds to reconstruct those streets in the district, the city has freed up more of available street funding to be spent outside the district.

For streets the PDC spent \$1.4 million in 2020 and another \$1.2 million in 2021. The plan had been to spend \$4.6 million in summer, 2022, but that will now be reduced to about \$3.4 million to continue providing funding to a variety of economic development projects. The remaining street projects planned for this summer will be postponed to 2023.

In the meantime, the PDC has sufficient funds for several street reconstruction projects this coming summer, as well as funds to cover existing grants approved for restoring more historic buildings and even adding new housing units to our thriving downtown.

Despite the pandemic we plan to continue our urban renewal programs to increase economic vitality in Pendleton.

Kevin Martin is a member of the Pendleton City Council and has served as the chairman of the Pendleton Development Commission for the past two years.

Oregon needs climate action immediately


**KURT
SCHRADER**
OTHER VIEWS

Oregonians saw millions of acres of our forests go up in smoke in 2020. In my district, the Beachie Creek Fire engulfed 193,500 acres, destroying farms and homes families had lived in for decades. The skies were thick with black smoke for weeks.

That was the worst summer I had ever seen — until last year. Most of us will never forget the devastating heat waves that struck across our state, killing nearly a hundred Oregonians after temperatures topped 116 degrees Fahrenheit, the highest we have ever recorded. Fires also raged for weeks, producing more smoke. We lost more loved ones, and homes and livelihoods were destroyed.

Oregonians are feeling these real costs and consequences of climate change every day. From 2010 to 2020, our state experienced 12 extreme weather events, costing us \$5 billion in damages. This proves we must act and finally address this growing threat.

Wildfire mitigation long has been a priority for me. For instance, my legislation, the Electricity Reliability and Forest Protection Act, helped the Forest Service and power companies streamline the process to remove hazardous trees to boost the electricity grid's reliability and help reduce the threat of wildfires. I also worked with Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, to allow responsible fuels thinning and facilitate prescribed burns, and to increase the funding for wildfire response. And most recently, I led the charge in Congress to pass the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law which makes important strides in tackling the climate crisis. This bipartisan law makes historic investments in transportation, water and broadband.

It also makes significant investments in climate-caused catastrophic wildfire management and the largest-ever contribution toward energy transmission and electric vehicle development. This is the biggest investment in the nation's future in decades, and it will create millions of good-paying, family-wage jobs.

Climate action is vital to preventing extreme weather events and mitigating their effects. This is one of the core reasons I supported the Build Back Better Act, which is the largest effort to combat climate change in American history. It invests \$555

billion in renewable and clean energy initiatives, including electric vehicle expansion, building new clean energy transmission and creating more energy-efficient homes and businesses, which will save the average family \$500 a year on their energy bills.

Unfortunately, the Build Back Better package is stalled in the Senate over disagreements on individual pieces, but I remain confident we can find a solution that builds off the powerful foundation the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law lays out. Together, we can make America a global clean energy leader, cut pollution fueling the climate crisis and avoid a growing disaster, all while boosting our economy, creating jobs and putting real money back in Oregonians' pockets.

Congress must come together to deliver a transformational climate bill in addition to the historic infrastructure investments we've already enacted to protect our environment and our economy. I am committed to being a leader in this fight because the future of Oregon and our planet depends on it.

Kurt Schrader is a Democratic senator, who serves as the U.S. representative for Oregon's 5th Congressional District since 2009.