

# O EAST OREGONIAN PINION

ANDREW CUTLER  
Publisher/Editor

KATHRYN B. BROWN  
Owner

ERICK PETERSON  
Hermiston Editor/Senior Reporter

SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2022

Founded October 16, 1875

A4

## OUR VIEW

# Take the time to fill out the ballot

Midterm elections have a habit of collecting less than stellar results in term of voter turnout, but we hope this year, at least, residents make becoming involved in their democracy a priority.

This year's election is of course Tuesday, May 17, and many probably already have cast their ballot in the local and state election.

Elections, especially off-year elections, tend to be regulated to a kind of weird purgatory where there is a sense they don't matter as much as a year when American voters choose a president.

Yet, every election matters.

That's because our system of government only functions as well an array of different mechanisms work in concert. One of those mechanisms is the press. There must be an active, free press that functions to hold elected leaders and others accountable. Another mechanism is interaction between voters and elected officials. Voters need to be able to talk and, at times, even debate with their elected representatives.

Voting and elections represent one of the key pillars of our democracy. When we, as a nation, do not exercise our right to vote we are short-changing democracy and sending a subtle message of indifference.

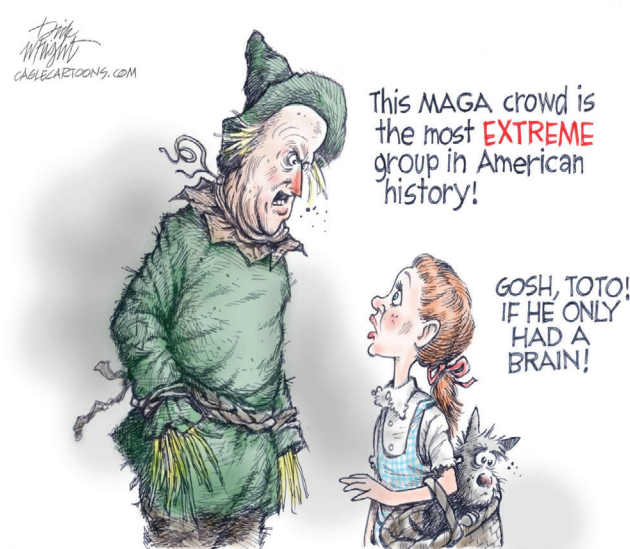
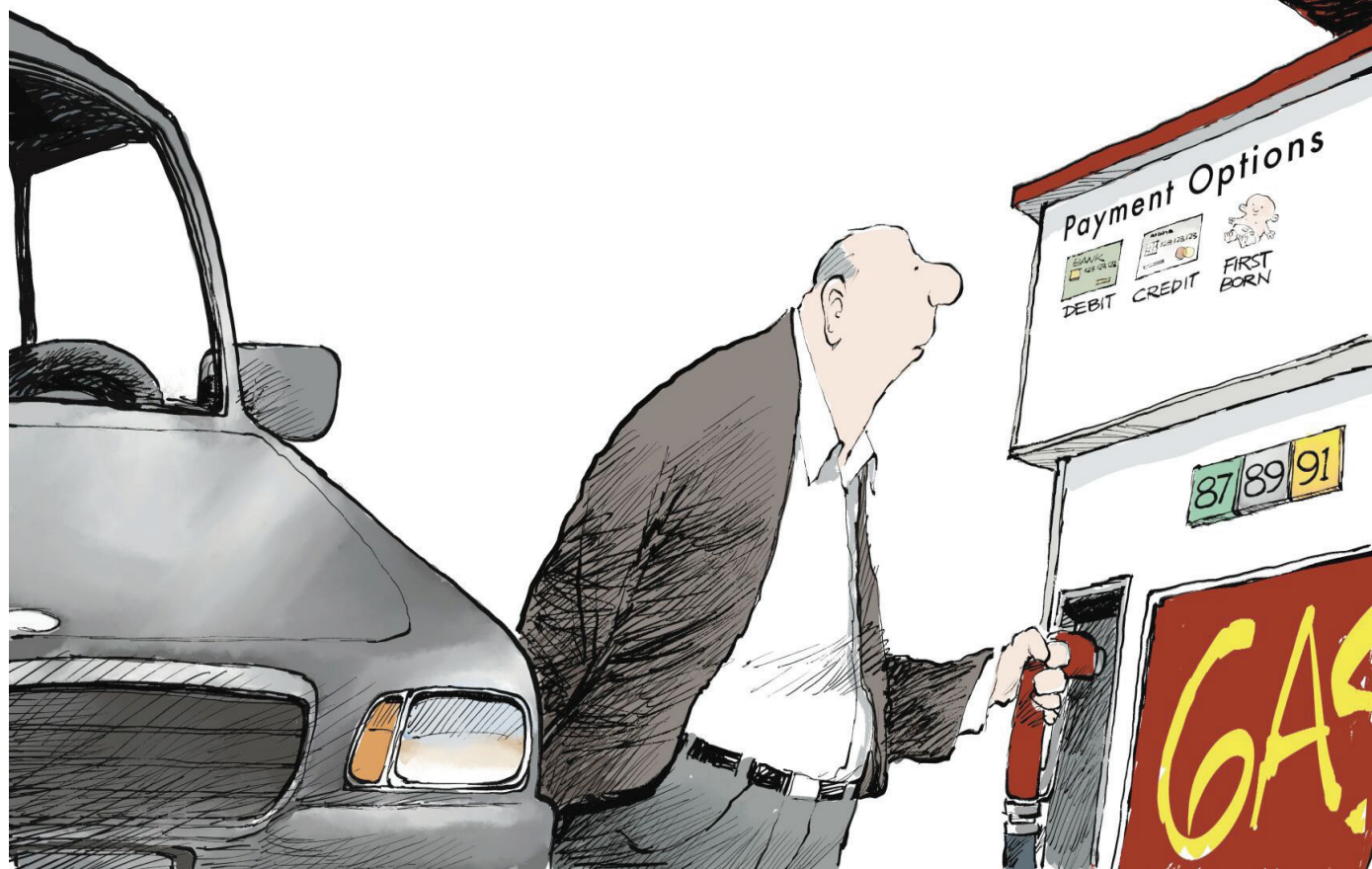
Democracy doesn't function well inside a pool of indifference.

Granted, the May primary doesn't have — at least on the surface — any flashpoint, controversial issues. Oregon's primary is a closed one, which means voters must choose along party lines when they cast ballot. So, in a sense, choices may seem limited but they are in reality not so.

Every citizen of the nation, state and county carries a sacred obligation to cast a ballot. That privilege — and make no mistake, it is a privilege — isn't some obscure, pie-in-the-sky type of concept. Our right to vote is the single key element to our democracy and a down payment on that right has been put down by millions of men and women of our armed forces over our 200-plus year history.

If you have yet to vote, dig out that ballot and spend a few moments going over the selections and then take the ballot to a drop-off box in your town. Oregon has made voting extremely easy, so don't pass up a choice to participate in our system of government.

RIVERS  
COLLECTIONS



## YOUR VIEWS

### I endorse Michael McNamee

I endorse Michael McNamee for Morrow County commissioner. Mike has lived, worked and built a life in Morrow County for decades. He is a proud farmer, husband, father, grandfather and all around great guy.

I have known him for 30 years. He is a good businessman, a faithful church member, a local guy who knows how our Morrow County should work for the people. He is an independent thinker. He listens to people.

We need his voice in county government. He knows how to budget, how to look forward, how to cut waste, how to care for the people and do what is right. I believe that's what Morrow County needs. A man of the people.

He decided to run because he sees the need for a change as you know as well. Please vote for Michael McNamee for Morrow County commissioner.

Jack McWhinnie  
Umatilla

### Sen. Wyden let the whole state down

It is with controlled emotion that I call out the opinion of the East Oregonian regarding Sen. Ron Wyden's representation of everyone. It is a falsehood that is supported by factual history.

Having resided in this state for 70 years and active in everything that has been intended to make Oregon the best that it can be, Wyden's commitment to the full state has not only waned but is none existent. Town halls and routine visits are simply a facade.

I whole heartedly agree there was a time when Wyden was an ally to the things that make Eastern Oregon tick. His choice to be supportive changed drastically when the U.S. Senate positions for Oregon were all filled by the Democratic Party. His allegiance to nothing represented by conservative views and democracy is best demonstrated of late by his inability to condemn the total destruction of democratic values represented by the attacks on the Mark O. Hatfield Courthouse in downtown Port-

land. Yes his actions throughout the state demonstrate his commitment to Oregon and his failure to call out the destruction, chaos and life-threatening acts of a band of thugs reflects his true colors.

He cares less about the state of Oregon than his own political career that flows with the political currents that keeps him in his senatorial chair safely. In my sincere opinion Sen. Wyden has not only let Eastern Oregon down he has let the whole state down.

Carl R. Culham  
Athena

### Bower is the type of professional we need

I have known and worked with Susan Bower for a number of years on numerous levels. Susan is the type of professional we need in county government because of her fantastic leadership skills and talent. She demands accountability, and that's just one of the traits I appreciate from her. She has no axe to grind like other candidates and stays focused on the priorities with results-oriented actions.

It's crucial that we replace the strong leadership we've enjoyed with another strong leader and that person is Susan Bower. I urge you to cast your ballot in a direction that will count for a continued progressive county administration and government.

Arne L. Swanson  
Pendleton

### 'We will look back — ask for forgiveness'

A documentary from the 1940s tells of German citizens who have been invited to tour an incinerator that had operated in their neighborhood. As the people file toward the entrance, they talk, smile and look around, perhaps curious about the black smoke that had billowed from the chimney for months.

As they exit the building, they do not smile or chat or look up. Some are weeping.

If Americans today could tour the abortion clinic in their neighborhood to find out what exactly happens

there, would they exit the building unchanged? Would they continue to vote for candidates who promise to keep the purveyors of "choice" in business?

Two centuries ago, William Wilberforce devoted his career in Parliament to ending the British slave trade. In 2008, his great-great-grandson, Fr. Gerard Wilberforce, wrote:

"I truly believe we will look back in years to come, repent and ask forgiveness for what we let happen to the unborn child."

Mary K. Maley  
Condon

### Susan Bower for Umatilla County commissioner

I would like to express my support for Susan Bower for Umatilla County commissioner.

I have had the opportunity to work closely with Susan over the last several years at Eastern Oregon Business Source — her small business. During this time we have developed and facilitated Umatilla County's award-winning professional development program, conducted hours of one-on-one leadership coaching sessions with leaders across the region, helped countless organizations develop strategic plans to help guide them into the future and train members of local nonprofits in fundraising and grant writing so that they are ready to raise money to support their organization's goals.

Something that all of these tasks have in common is that they are about developing people and putting them in a place to succeed. This skill set is particularly important in an organization like Umatilla County where each of the commissioners are responsible for directing — and ideally developing — about one-third of the county's departments. Commissioners are not simply elected decision makers for the county. County department heads each report to one of the three commissioners. Susan has the experience necessary to help direct any department head at Umatilla County, to help them develop as leaders and to put them in a position to succeed.

Nick Nash  
Pendleton

## EDITORIALS

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.

## LETTERS

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published.

## SEND LETTERS TO:

editor@eastoregonian.com,  
or via mail to Andrew Cutler,  
211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801