

Big issues in short session

Oregon’s third short session kicked off Monday, and it will be an important one for the state.

It will also be just 35 days long, by voter mandate, so the important work that needs to get done will be under the gun right from the start. So, too, will be the entire concept of the short session.

EDITORIAL
Voice of the Chieftain

Oregon has only had these special sessions biennially since 2010. That was the year that Measure 71, a legislatively referred constitutional amendment, passed with 68 percent of the popular vote. The measure called for changing Oregon’s every-other-year legislature into an annual one, but with a short session in even-numbered years.

Proponents argued that the state was just too complex and too large an organization to leave unmoored for a full calendar year, and they convinced the electorate on that issue.

But they also promised that these short sessions would be limited in scope. They would just be used just to check in on the economy and emergencies, and make changes to the state budget — even cut checks for residents in the case of a surplus.

This special session will be much more than that.

Legislators have the intensely controversial, economically and socially impactful discussion of the significant hike to minimum wage at the forefront. If nothing gets done this session, the blunt instrument of an initiative is sure to pass — long-term effects be damned.

Of course, that may happen anyway. But the best chance of rural Oregon getting a fair shake will be through the legislature.

Yet if that’s not enough, bills will be pushed forward to restrict gun sales, deal with the state’s housing crisis and — if there’s still time — deal with a little thing called climate change.

Good luck with that, Salem.

Sen. Bill Hansell (R-Athena) has a narrower focus on two bills he hopes to get passed next month.

He intends to use the first of his two allotted bills to reaffirm the delisting of the wolf. He said if the legislature renews its support for the Oregon Wolf Plan and the decision of the citizen board to delist, it may give it more weight in the courts, where it is sure to head because of environmentalists. Rep. Greg Barreto (R-Cove) likely will be working through the house on the same issue.

Hansell’s other bill has to deal with water requirements for homeowner associations when a municipality is in a designated drought. When that’s the case, Hansell wants to allow state law to supersede homeowner association agreements, which could help reduce water usage during emergencies.

If issues big and small get dealt with in a professional manner during this type of time crunch, maybe the short session is working. If legislation is rushed, debate hurried and there is little to show for it, then Oregon may have to rethink the purpose and usefulness of the short session.



‘PATIENCE, BESSIE, PATIENCE — ONCE I DECIDE ON THE NEXT LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD AT MONDAY’S CAUCUS, WE WON’T SEE THESE FELLERS FOR ANOTHER FOUR YEARS....

Pursuing the Fountain of Youth

For centuries explorers have searched for the legendary Fountain of Youth, that secret spring with water that guarantees perpetual youth.

It was Mark Twain who noted that “life would be infinitely happier if only we could be born at the age of 80 and gradually approach 18.”

But is this Fountain of Youth — reversing the aging process — simply folklore, or is there really something to it?

Of all the lifestyle habits you control, regular, moderate physical activity is your best bet to hold back the aging process. We don’t need to become marathon runners or even have to climb Chief Joseph several times a year. We simply need to get out and walk at a moderate pace each day.

According to Michael Greger M.D. of NutritionFacts.org: “There is irrefutable evidence of the effectiveness of regular physical activity in the prevention of several chronic diseases — cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension, obesity, depression and osteoporosis, as well as premature death, adding an additional one or two years onto our lifespan, helping to add years to our life and above all life to our years.”



GUEST COLUMN
Dr. Kenneth D. Rose

So, how much exercise do we really need? Generally, the more exercise the better, but a moderate intensity pace for a minimum of 30 minutes a day is sufficient. Moderate intensity is defined by being able to talk, but not sing when you walk, which, by the way, is the best way to exercise — walking and talking with a friend or spouse, building relationships and helping the time go by faster.

Our goal should be to walk five days a week, but walking seven days a week may be even better in terms of extending one’s lifespan.

“Exercise is so important that not walking an hour a day is considered a high-risk behavior, alongside smoking, excess drinking and being obese,” Dr. Greger says. “Having any one of these effectively ages us three to five years in terms of risk of dying prematurely.”

As it turns out, exercise is medicine, a powerful medicine to be sure. Research-

ers from the London School, Harvard and Stanford compared exercise to drug interventions and found that exercise often worked just as well as drugs for the treatment and prevention of heart disease, rehabilitation after a stroke, treatment of heart failure and the prevention of diabetes.

There are many other beneficial effects of exercise — improved blood flow through the body, strengthening heart muscle, building stronger muscles and joints, strengthening bones and preventing osteoporosis, helping eliminate excess fatty tissue (loose weight), reduced blood pressure, decreased total cholesterol and the bad LDL cholesterol while increasing the good HDL cholesterol, improved blood sugar control, reduced risk of colon and breast cancer, increased cognitive (thinking) functions and decreased dementia, improved sleep quality, reduced stress, anxiety and depression. And most of all it is associated with improved longevity.

So, get out there and take your daily dose of exercise, not only to “add years to your life” but to add life to your years.

Kenneth D. Rose, MD, is a general surgeon at Mountain View Medical Group in Enterprise.

Takes a village to grind an elk

The best things in life may be free but they sure do take a lot of maintenance. The latest best free thing I’ve got going is a meat grinder my neighbor Gene hooked me up with. So far my friends and I have processed three elk and one deer worth of hamburger and sausage meat through this bad boy. Pretty sure this grinder could double as a wood chipper. It’s heavy duty. Also just heavy. I don’t know what it weighs, but I need to take a few deep breaths and make an appointment at the chiropractor before attempting to move it. And that’s how the trouble began.

I lifted the grinder onto a rolling kitchen island, swept up my vertebrae that had shot out during that process, then left the house for a while. When I came back I found the grinder on the floor and the kitchen island tipped over. It was upright when I left, so I guess the only explanation is that the weight of the grinder slowly compacted the earth’s crust, that squished the lava around down in the mantle, threw our planet out of balance, we got a wobble in the orbit and, boom, kitchen island tips right over and grinder down.

An oil spill had oozed out, covering my kitchen floor. Never crossed my mind that an appliance would have crankcase oil but, like I said, this thing is stout. Hard to describe how ancient this oil was. It had more of an absence of light than any color. Like it may turn



AND FURTHERMORE
Jon Rombach

back into a dinosaur before too long. I made the mistake of going to the Internet for advice on gear oil for a meat grinder. That was a mistake.

Some people swear you should have food-grade lubricant for such an application. Sounds right. So I spent a day or so trying that route. Called friends with local restaurants. Went by or talked to nearly every Wallowa County business that sells any kind of oil. Then I heard you should just replace all the seals and use regular gear oil. Seals? That took more days off my life and sent me on another round of visiting local hardware and parts dealers.

I ended up taking everything entirely apart. Got a part number off a seal made when Eisenhower was president of his elementary student body. Got that part ordered. Figured I’d clean ‘er up inside and out, repaint everything and go for the total overhaul while she was in pieces.

Found out the original part number no longer means the same thing. The guys at NAPA are patient. I mean real patient. Finally figured out the proper size, then I went ahead and broke that

trying to put Humpty Grindy back together again. Bent the next one, too, but by now I didn’t care if my elk burger was marinated in gear oil or not.

My favorite part of getting it all re-assembled was when I went to clean up the meat grinder after finally getting it operational again and running some elk through. When I repainted the grinder, I chose the color according to which can of spray paint was closest to me at the time. Kind of a dark maroon. Or, as I discovered, you could describe it as exactly the color of raw meat. The one thing I would like to show up against the background of this machine is precisely the color I chose to paint the machine. Literally any other color in the world would have been fine. But I went with raw meat color.

But, hey. It was free. Just took a little elbow grease, a new kitchen floor, messing around for the better part of a week and the kind assistance of nearly every Wallowa County business that has anything at all to do with hardware, kitchen supply, auto parts, petroleum products and meat-colored spray paint.

That last batch of elk turned out pretty good. I may start adding a drop or two of SAE 80W-85W-90 Premium Performance to all my meat dishes. Got a nice mellow flavor.

Jon Rombach is a local meat grinder restoration expert and columnist for the Chieftain.

More plastic is the price we pay

LETTERS to the EDITOR

planet. She is the ultimate victim of this insanity — already bloated by indigestion from the congestion — and now smaller packaging is adding tons daily. If they think recycling is going to counter this stupidity, how about the cost and energy that pollution will require?

I wonder how many billions of dollars were passed on to the consumers to redesign all of those packaging machines just to create all of this additional waste.

Where are all those environmental

activists when we really need them? Busy stealing irrigation water and making sure we have enough wolves to deplete the already dwindling food supply in states with high unemployment and hungry children?

The people allowing these trends toward self-destruction are the same ones responsible for the extinction of the Made in USA label and the rotting/burning of our natural resources. Doesn’t that frighten you?

To quote Merle Haggard: “We’re rolling downhill like a snowball headed for hell ...”

Patty Engelking
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