



# OPINION

## New arrivals can expect Oregon's complexities

BY JON STINNETT  
The Cottage Grove Sentinel

Oregon is tops once again. For the third straight year, United Van Lines' Annual National Movers Study has named Oregon the "Top Moving Destination" in America, and those of us who already call this great state home are left to ponder the implications of all those inbound travelers and wonder just what's sending them our way.

According to the study, Oregon is the top moving destination of 2015, with 69 percent of moves to and from the state being inbound. Washington State found itself at No. 10 on the list with 56 percent of its moves inbound.

"This year's data reflects longer-term trends of people moving to the Pacific West, where cities such as Portland and Seattle are seeing the combination of a boom in the technology and creative marketing industry, as well as a growing 'want' for outdoor activity and green space," said Michael Stoll, economist, professor and chair of the Department of Public Policy at the University of California, Los Angeles. "The aging Boomer population is driving relocation from the Northeast and Midwest to the West and South, as more and more people retire to warmer regions."

Of course, life in Oregon is about more than just a technology boom and a love of the great outdoors, and it was eye-opening last week to read another article, this one released by the Oregonian last month, that detailed the "10 legit reasons you shouldn't move to Oregon." Among the reasons for opting for another locale besides the Beaver State were high rent, expensive and hard-to-find houses, a high cost of living, lots of rain and a low ranking in education compared to the rest of the nation (No. 38 nationwide, according to a recent study).

Additionally, Lane County's Community Health Needs Assessment, unveiled before crowds in Eugene, Cottage Grove and Florence last week, listed plenty of challenges to healthy living to go along with the opportunities that living here provides. In a survey of 2295 respondents, many stated that the area's availability of parks and recreational/natural areas, its clean environment and strong sense of community and engagement were what they liked most about life in Lane County, while its biggest problems were listed as alcohol and drug abuse, lack of affordable housing and homelessness, poverty and lack of access to healthcare.

Taken together, these facts describe a state where the intangibles represented by amazing outdoor and cultural opportunities can collide head-on with life's often darker realities.

As a quintessential timber town

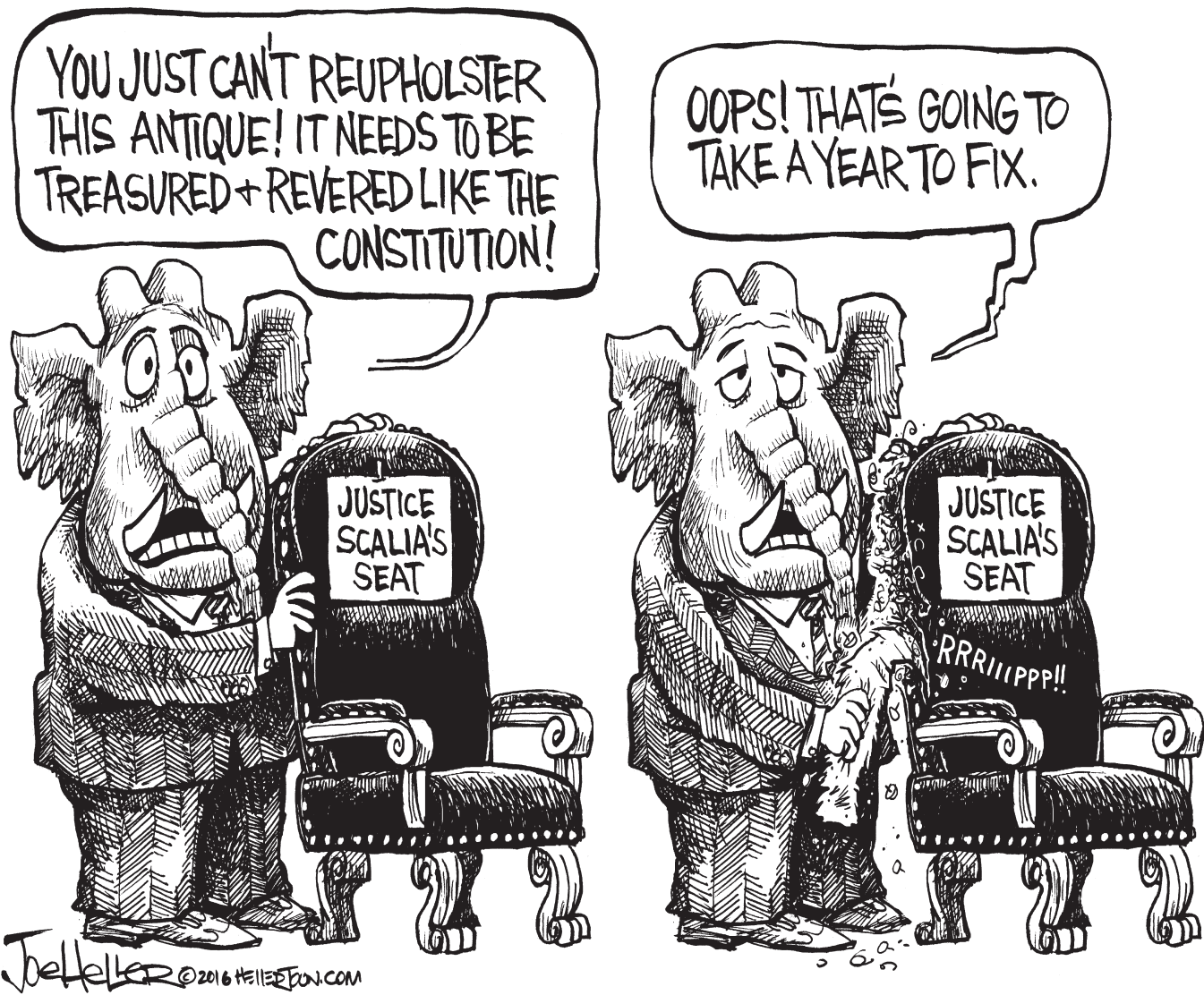
and a wonderfully typical small community, Cottage Grove showcases all the promises and pitfalls described above, and in the 10-plus years since relocating here myself and immersing myself in the area's happenings, I've witnessed many of its lows, which seem at times to more than rival its highs.

I've watched friends struggle to find a place to live that they can afford and reluctantly move elsewhere. I've seen many in this community succumb to the destructive powers of addiction and others choose to end their lives in response to circumstances that those who love them are left to struggle to comprehend. As editor of this small town's newspaper, I've worked to document many of its ups and downs, all the while experiencing my own personal trials and triumphs.

But I've also crested the top of a mountain trail and found myself moved immediately to tears by the scenery unfolding before me. I've pulled and tugged at a rope until a pot full of Dungeness crabs the size of dinner plates emerges from the murky depths. I've played in tide pools with a fascinated toddler, walked from one park to another and back home again in a span of a few city blocks and pulled produce from a backyard garden teeming with tastiness. It has also been my privilege to enjoy a sense of community and closeness that many will never experience, and I have often walked down city streets where just about everybody knows my name (and warmly greets me with it). And I've watched a community surround and care for its own, time and time again.

Perhaps it's this contrast that continues to offer its intrigue to a life in Oregon. Maybe it mirrors the duality of the great-big outdoors itself — that the natural world can be at once awe-inspiring and terrifying, can give as quickly and as effortlessly as it takes away. The simple lesson could be that living a healthy and inspired human life can be both wondrous and perplexingly difficult anywhere, and often within the span of a few mere minutes. And it seems clear that the human institutions that help make life in Oregon possible can do more to nurture the positive forces in all its people, be they the fifth-generation sons and daughters of its early pioneers or its newest arrivals.

Whatever the lesson, if there is one, it's clear that in the coming months, more movers will undoubtedly choose Oregon as their new home, and some will even find themselves here, in Cottage Grove, for reasons they may just be beginning to understand. Over time, they will confront their own challenges as they shape their very own Oregon adventure. Here's hoping that the opportunities and the community they encounter here will far outweigh any hardship that life may bring.



## Offbeat Oregon History

Doomed schooner's crew locked in race against fiery death

BY FINN J.D. JOHN  
For the Sentinel

The three-masted 279-ton schooner Challenger was in horrible shape when Captain Harriman of the Columbia River Lightship spotted her, pounding through the seas toward the madly turbulent bar on the stormy afternoon of Nov. 5, 1904. Her main sails hung in rags from the yardarms, torn to strips by the violent winds, and yet the crew made no attempt to furl the remaining canvas. Everything about the ship bespoke a desperate haste, and she was flying distress flags.

The following morning, there was no sign of the schooner; everyone assumed the powerful storms had driven her northward. Still, the captain of the bar tug Tatoosh managed to cross the bar during a fortuitously timed lull in the storm to meet up with Harriman. (The Tatoosh, by the way, was the same tug that would, seven years later, win renown for its daring rescue of 49 people aboard a steam schooner stranded on Peacock Spit.)

They soon figured out what the trouble was. They couldn't know for sure, but it all added up. The ship had obviously been fighting her way through some terribly heavy weather, the kind of weather that can cause timbers to work loose and leaks to spring in hulls. And the Challenger was carrying a load of unslaked lime.

Unslaked lime was a very dangerous cargo to have on board in a bad storm. Everything was fine until the stuff got

wet; then it would react with the water in a powerful exothermic chemical reaction, releasing so much heat that it would set the nearby woodwork ablaze. And because it was water that was causing the problem in the first place, the usual techniques of shipboard firefighting would only make things worse.

In a ship full of unslaked lime whose cargo had gotten really wet, there was only one thing to do: Make for shore with all possible speed, get the crew safely off the ship, and flood the hold — that is, scuttle the ship in shallow water so that all the lime can slake at once, and hope to refloat it later and make repairs.

Of course, that can only be done if it's actually possible to bring the burning ship into a river or estuary — something that's notoriously hard to do off the Oregon and Washington coast during a heavy gale.

As the Oregon mariners soon learned, their fears were absolutely correct. The Challenger had put to sea on Oct. 24, carrying 3,800 barrels of Roche Harbor lime and 150,000 board feet of lumber — essentially, tinder and kindling for the slow-burning oceangoing fire that was to come.

At first, though, there was no sign of trouble. After a four-day spell of dead calm in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the wind kicked up — a steady, pleasant breeze out of the northeast — perfect for making rapid headway toward the vessel's destination of San Francisco. And for 12 hours after rounding Cape Flat-

tery, the ship made great time, getting almost all the way to the Columbia River.

But then the wind shifted to the southwest and blew up into a powerful gale, almost a hurricane. The little ship labored valiantly, tacking into the teeth of the hurricane wind, making precious little headway and being worked over hard by the weather — until Nov. 4, when Captain H. Nelson made a chilling discovery:

"I discovered smoke issuing from the cabin," he told the Portland Morning Oregonian. "Then I knew the ship was on fire. I crowded on all sail to make port, and lost much canvas."

This discovery happened just off the northeast corner of Oregon, shortly after the ship had passed the mouth of the Columbia. Captain Nelson brought the ship about immediately and prepared to race northward, looking for a port he could bring his burning ship into.

"At noon on the Fourth, I was at Tillamook Rock, but could not get in because of the mountainous seas," Nelson recounted. "Then I steered for the Columbia River. By this time, no man could stand at the wheel because of smoke and fumes from the lime. I signaled for a Columbia River tug, but the bar was too rough for one to come out."

Every minute counted in the Challenger's race against time. The fire, starved for oxygen deep in the ship's sealed hold, was burning slow and hot, like the fire in a good woodstove. At any moment, though, it could break through the ship's deck, letting oxygen pour in with the aid of the roaring wind to fan the smoldering flames beneath. When that happened, the crew would have a very short period of time

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## Should you try going gluten-free to lose weight?

BY JOEL FUHRMAN, MD  
For the Sentinel

Popular diet books are blaming wheat (or gluten,

which is the major protein in wheat) for the epidemic of obesity. First it was low-fat, then low-carb, and most recently gluten-free diets have been pro-

moted as the "magic bullet" for weight loss.

Wheat has been blamed for obesity because there has been an increase in wheat flour products concomitant with the rise in obesity over the past 40 years. However, it is clear that one food alone cannot explain or be responsible for the rise in obesity.

There has been a huge upsurge in processed foods and sugary drinks, progressively increasing portion sizes, and increasing inactivity. All of the blame can't be placed on a single type of grain. Refined wheat flour is the base of many low-nutrient processed foods. However, a gluten-free diet can be just as high in calories and low in vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals as the standard American diet, and, therefore, just as weight gain-

promoting. There is no evidence that specifically implicates gluten in weight gain, or that removing gluten from the diet would accelerate weight loss. Despite the popularity of the gluten-free diet trend, no studies have ever been published showing that removing gluten helps to reduce body weight.

In order to lose weight, you need to eat more micronutrient-rich foods and remove highly processed foods from the equation; and that does mean white flour and sugar. An enhanced nutrient-to-calorie ratio is the key: eat more high-nutrient food and less low-nutrient food, and you will take in fewer calories but feel more satiated. If you were to follow a gluten-free diet based on replacing gluten-containing processed foods like pasta, bread and baked goods

with vegetables, beans, intact whole grains and fruit, which are high in nutrients and low in calories (and happen to be gluten-free), you would most likely lose weight, but not because you cut out wheat or gluten. Gluten-free pasta, bread and cookies will not help you lose weight; these foods are calorie-dense, have added sugars and oils, and are low in nutrients. Currently, gluten-free processed foods are perceived to be healthier, but in most cases they are still junk foods, just like their low-fat and low-carb predecessors.

Weight gain is not the only health problem that wheat (or gluten) has been blamed for. There are claims that wheat raises blood glucose more than sugar, that gluten is addictive and causes uncontrollable overeating, and even that wheat and

other grains cause Alzheimer's disease. Again, there is no evidence that implicates gluten in particular, but there is substantial evidence implicating a low-nutrient diet.

Dr. Fuhrman is a #1 New York Times best-selling author and a family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine. Visit his informative website at [DrFuhrman.com](http://DrFuhrman.com). Submit your questions and comments about this column directly to [newsquestions@drfuhrman.com](mailto:newsquestions@drfuhrman.com).



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