

# Opinion

BAKER CITY  
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## EDITORIAL

# Should Oregon expand betting?

The Oregon Lottery's mission is contradictory: make money off gambling and don't encourage people to gamble too much.

Launching sports betting was one way the lottery tried to expand its revenue. It has the potential to grow. But that could represent some challenging policy choices.

Lottery officials moved into sports betting because, well, there is money to be made. And arguably it helps the Oregon Lottery balance its competing missions. It would like to have more people gambling a little than a few gambling a lot. And it doesn't want people to be gambling away money they should be spending on more important things. Sports bettors tend to be younger, male and have money to spend.

When you look at the numbers, sports betting is still just a fraction of Oregon Lottery revenues. It's new. For instance, the lottery's monthly net profit for June was \$59 million. Video lottery brought in most of the net revenue at \$98 million. Traditional lottery tickets like Powerball and Scratch-Its brought in \$10.4 million. Sports betting trailed with \$2.8 million.

(It's not particularly relevant for a discussion about sports betting policy, but we were curious about how much of the money spent was returned in prizes to lottery customers. Video lottery has the highest percentage at 92%. About 65% of money spent on traditional lottery tickets was returned in prizes. And sports betting is at 89%. Those are numbers we crunched based on June 2021.)

You can drill down a bit in the data from sports betting. For instance, you can see in August that there was one bet for \$30 on a chess match. That was the only bet on chess. The profit margin for the state on chess was 10%. There was one bet for \$8 on surfing. The margin for the state -773%. Most of the bets placed in August were on baseball with 198,276 bets. The margin for the state was 4.5%.

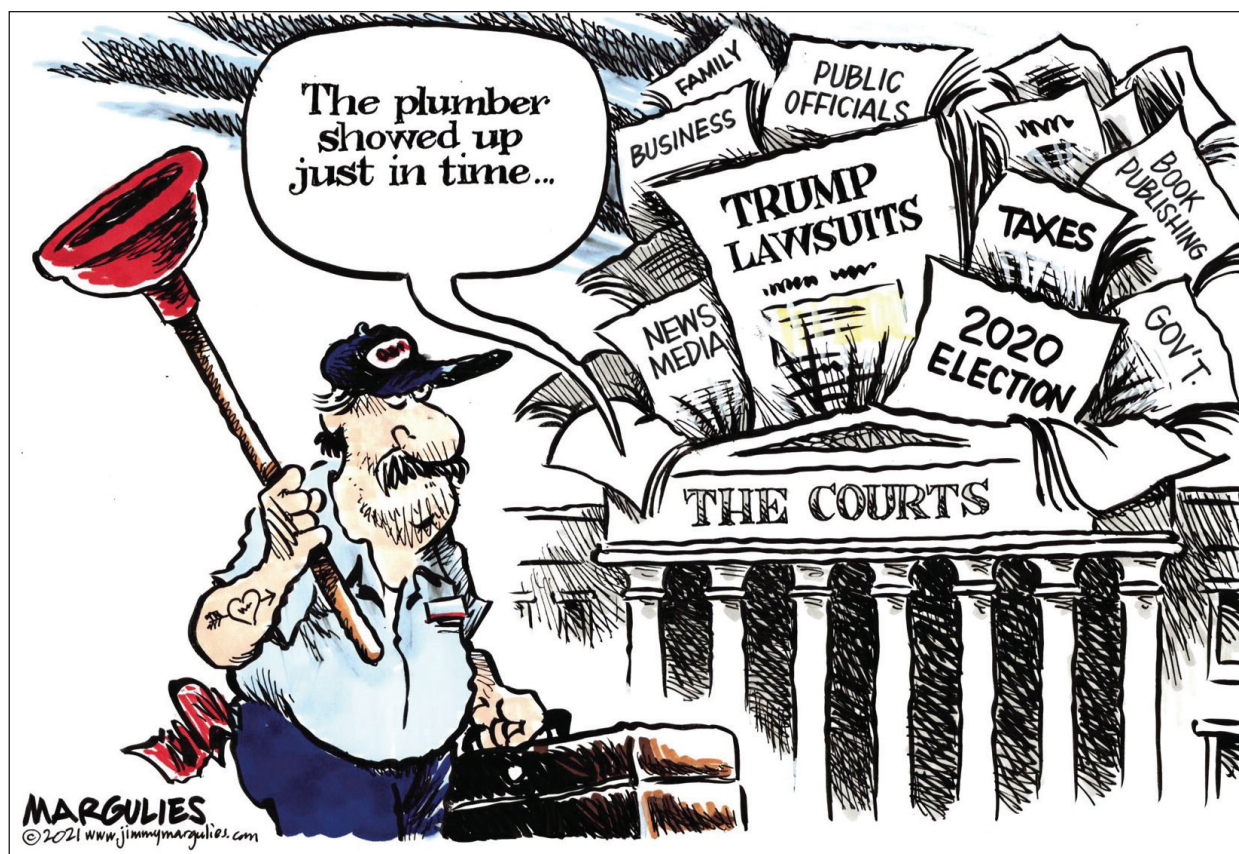
The Oregon Lottery tries to walk a tightrope with sports betting. Take betting on the Olympics. You could not bet on individual events that included minors. But you could bet on things like the overall medal counts, which would include minors.

Still, moving the state into sports betting made some Oregonians and Oregon lawmakers uncomfortable. The Oregon Lottery proposed going into collegiate sports. No dice. Too controversial. No betting is allowed on high school sports.

Other states, such as Pennsylvania, allow more forms of gambling online than in Oregon. It's not a casino on your phone. It's close.

Should Oregon allow betting on college sports? Should it offer more games on people's phones? It would mean more revenue for the state. Would that be too much? Or is Oregon already allowing too much?

*Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Baker City Herald. Columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Baker City Herald.*



## How COVID-19 affects people

COVID sucks! Seriously. We are currently seeing the surge of COVID respiratory illness those of us in healthcare anticipated seeing in April or May of 2020. Watching younger people with few or no chronic illnesses struggle to breathe is not fun, particularly when you are doing everything you can to keep them alive and worry that it still won't be enough.

I want to explain how COVID-19 affects the lungs and why people end up requiring oxygen. Like most respiratory viruses, the most common way this virus enters a person's body is through their lungs. Many people will have typical viral symptoms such as fever, cough, runny nose, muscle aches, and fatigue. About 80% of infections are mild and people will recover at home with no intervention. The other 20% of infections will be moderate or severe. Most moderate or severe cases develop viral pneumonia, inflammation or swelling of the lung tissue that allows oxygen to pass into our blood.

In moderate COVID-19 infections, the level of oxygen in a person's blood drops low enough that they need supplemental oxygen and medications to reduce the inflammation in their lungs. Current best evidence suggests that a person with symptoms severe enough to



NEIL J. CARROLL

warrant hospitalization benefit from steroids such as dexamethasone or methylprednisolone. Steroids do not help in mild cases of COVID-19, and in fact, may actually worsen outcomes due to side effects and suppression of the immune system attempting to fight off the virus.

About 5% of people who contract COVID-19 develop a severe infection that requires admission to an intensive care unit (ICU). The air sacs in the lungs fill with so much fluid and swelling that oxygen can no longer easily transfer into the blood. At this point, the only options are to use a very high flow of oxygen (40-60 liters per minute up your nose), a bipap device (that keeps a minimum amount of air pressure pushing into your lungs even when you are exhaling), or a tube in your trachea (windpipe) called intubation.

So why is COVID-pneumonia worse than bacterial pneumonia? Most bacterial pneumonia will only affect one lung or even one portion of one lung. Bacterial pneumonia can be treated with antibiotics, but resistance to these medications has been developing with over-prescrib-

ing of antibiotics for nonbacterial viral illnesses such as COVID-19. Some people do feel better after treatment with antibiotics for their viral illness, likely due to the anti-inflammatory properties that some antibiotics exhibit. Like other viral pneumonias, COVID-pneumonia does not respond to antibiotics, making it much harder to treat.

Recovery from COVID-19 can be quite prolonged, in part due to the inflammation causing thickening and scarring of the lungs. Some people will likely be on oxygen for the rest of their lives, while others may recover over time.

I respect individual choice and personally feel mandates are not the right approach to combatting the pandemic. The evidence is clear, vaccines are saving lives and reducing severe infections, and I hope many of you who are unvaccinated will consider getting immunized. I thank you for your time and I would encourage you to ask your physician, PA, or NP any questions you have about COVID, vaccines, mask-wearing, or really any other health-related question.

*Dr. Neil J. Carroll is a family physician for St Luke's EOMA and also regularly works as an inpatient physician at Saint Alphonsus-Baker City.*

## Your views

### Baker County was fortunate to have Timothy Bishop

Every once in a while you meet a person who immediately clicks with you and becomes a good friend, enriching your life and the lives of those around you. As it is with people, so it is with communities.

We recently learned that our community will soon lose one of our greatest collective assets. Timothy Bishop will leave Baker and become the economic director in La Grande in October. This was Timothy's second stint in Baker. The first was in the 90s during the development of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center. His efforts in joining with a community and statewide marketing and promotional effort put us on the map ... both nationally and internationally.

When Timothy moved on to other projects we recognized his contribu-

tions and mourned his loss. Then he returned. For over a decade — without fanfare — Timothy has enriched our quality of life here in Baker County. He has tirelessly promoted our civic, cultural, and "of interest" sites and events, all the while forging strong, long-term partnerships to benefit us economically in the highly competitive arena of tourism. His service on behalf of Baker County reminds me of an old saying — "Service is the rent we pay for living in our great country."

Timothy: you deserve more thanks than most in this town are aware. Timothy and Dawn: best to you both. We know you will continue to be a positive force in whatever endeavors you choose.

**Dave and Joyce Hunsaker**  
Baker City

*Editor's note: Dave Hunsaker was the first manager of the Interpre-*

*tive Center. Joyce was the executive director of the Oregon Trail Preservation Trust — BLM's private non-profit partner in the development of the Center.*

### Citizen frustrated with attempts to reach mayor

I am a citizen of Baker City and after leaving a few voice messages for the Mayor, I received the following: "This is a private cell phone number that was not given to you. Please don't call it again."

I obtained her phone number from www.truepeoplesearch.com.

The Mayor is a precinct committee person, and I want to find out more about her party. She and her mother — the chair of the county party — have ignored my calls for months.

**Jason Bland**  
Baker City

## CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

**President Joe Biden:** The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20500; 202-456-1111; to send comments, go to [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov).

**U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley:** D.C. office: 313 Hart Senate Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-3753; fax 202-228-3997. Portland office: One World Trade Center, 121 S.W. Salmon St. Suite 1250, Portland, OR 97204; 503-326-3386; fax 503-326-2900. Baker City office, 1705 Main St., Suite 504, 541-278-1129; merkley.senate.gov.

**U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden:** D.C. office: 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-5244; fax 202-228-2717. La Grande office: 105 Fir St., No. 210, La Grande, OR 97850; 541-962-7691; fax, 541-963-0885; wyden.senate.gov.

**U.S. Rep. Cliff Bentz (2nd District):** D.C. office: 2182 Rayburn Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20515, 202-225-6730; fax 202-225-5774. La Grande office: 1211 Washington Ave., La Grande, OR 97850; 541-624-2400, fax, 541-624-2402; walden.house.gov.

**Oregon Gov. Kate Brown:** 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310; 503-378-3111; [www.governor.oregon.gov](http://www.governor.oregon.gov).

**Oregon State Treasurer Tobias Read:** [oregon.treasurer@ost.state.or.us](mailto:oregon.treasurer@ost.state.or.us); 350 Winter St. NE, Suite 100, Salem OR 97301-3896; 503-378-4000.

**Oregon Attorney General Ellen F. Rosenblum:** Justice Building, Salem, OR 97301-4096; 503-378-4400.

**Oregon Legislature:** Legislative documents and information are available online at [www.leg.state.or.us](http://www.leg.state.or.us).

**State Sen. Lynn Findley (R-Ontario):** Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., S-403, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1730. Email: [Sen.LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov)

**State Rep. Mark Owens (R-Crane):** Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., H-475, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1460. Email: [Rep.MarkOwens@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Rep.MarkOwens@oregonlegislature.gov)

**Baker City Hall:** 1655 First Street, P.O. Box 650, Baker City, OR 97814; 541-523-6541; fax 541-524-2049. City Council meets the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers. Mayor

Kerry McQuisten, Councilors Jason Spriet, Shane Alderson, Joanna Dixon, Heather Sells and Johnny Waggoner Sr.

**Baker City administration:** 541-523-6541. Jonathan Cannon, city manager; Ty Duby, police chief; Sean Lee, fire chief; Michelle Owen, public works director.

**Baker County Commission:** Baker County Courthouse 1995 3rd St., Baker City, OR 97814; 541-523-8200. Meets the first and third Wednesdays at 9 a.m.; Bill Harvey (chair), Mark Bennett, Bruce Nichols.

**Baker County departments:** 541-523-8200. Travis Ash, sheriff; Noodle Perkins, roadmaster; Greg Baxter, district attorney; Alice Durflinger, county treasurer; Stefany Kirby, county clerk; Kerry Savage, county assessor.

**Baker School District:** 2090 4th Street, Baker City, OR 97814; 541-524-2260; fax 541-524-2564. Superintendent: Mark Witty. Board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m. Council Chambers, Baker City Hall, 1655 First St.; Andrew Bryan, Jessica Dougherty, Chris Hawkins, Travis Cook and Julie Huntington.