

Should Oregonians have a right to repair?

Buy stuff. It breaks and you have to buy new stuff. It's a cycle that can be wasteful, expensive for consumers and not good for the environment.

There's a bill in the Oregon Legislature that tries to break the cycle.

Cellphones, game consoles, farm tractors, even hospital ventilators often come with strings attached. People who buy them can't fix some aspects themselves. It requires getting manufacturers to come in with their own repair personnel and equipment.

It can mean extra hassle, expense and a lack of control. Some argue it's an unfair trade practice.

It's also been an issue in the battle against COVID-19. The New York Times reported a medical equipment technician at Memorial Hospital in Colorado Springs was trying to get hospital ventilators up and running. She could not. The manufacturer required its own technicians to work on the equipment.

A right to repair movement led by consumer groups has been fighting this battle for some time. Bills have been introduced in Congress to rein it in. In the Oregon Legislature this session, there is House Bill 2698.

The bill would require the man-

ufacturer of the original equipment to make available to consumers the same parts, tools and documentation that are made available to authorized repair providers. Manufacturers would have to do so on "fair and reasonable terms." The bill is generally focused on consumer electronics.

Manufacturers have opposed changes like this. They argue most consumers don't just throw things away. They find ways to recycle their equipment. They also argue that consumers could get in over their heads, mess up the equipment and blame the manufacturer. Safety, privacy and security might be jeopardized. That might not be too big a deal if consumers just turns their own phones into paperweights. But if it puts a hospital ventilator into a nonrepairable state, that would be a bigger deal.

If there's anything that we want most out of this legislation, it would be more action from manufacturers to make repairs easier for consumers, build things to last and move us away from a throwaway society.

Oregon gets needed grant to help suicide prevention

Suicide is preventable. It might be easier to prevent in Oregon.

The state has received a grant to help it develop a sort of 911 for people who need help. When it is set up, people will dial 988 in Oregon and be connected with someone who can help. Oregon already has a suicide hotline, but 988 is just simpler. It might be up and running in Oregon by July 2022.

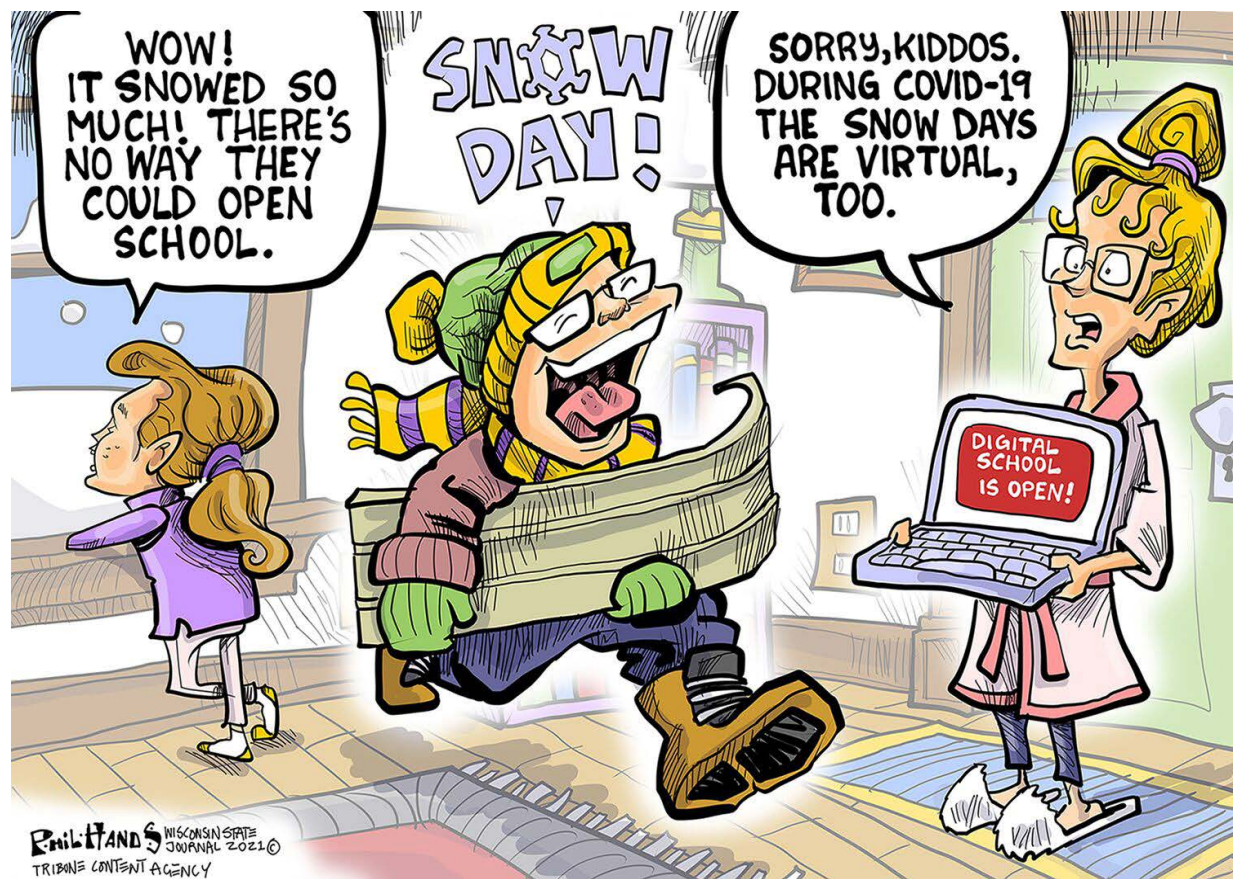
Vibrant Emotional Health, the nonprofit that runs the national suicide prevention hotline gave Oregon and most other states a grant to help set up the 3-digit hotline

Taking action in Oregon to help prevent suicide is all the more critical. The state has in recent years had

one of the highest rates of death by suicide in the country.

If there is any good news, preliminary data released recently by the Oregon Health Authority shows that the number of suicide deaths in Oregon in 2020 show no increase when compared to 2019. The number of suicide-related visits to emergency departments and urgent care centers in the fourth quarter of 2020 were also similar to 2019.

Treatment works with suicide. If you or someone you know needs help you can call Deschutes County 24-hour Crisis Line: 541-322-7500 ext. 9 or the National Suicide Prevention LifeLine: 1-800-273-TALK (8255).



My Nickel's Worth

Stop paying attention to Trump

Apparently more than half the people, voter age, in the United States seem to consider Ex-President Trump a pariah. As such, and because of his violent, vitriolic and bigoted speech and his incitement of a violent coup against the United States and other apparent criminal behavior, he has been banned not only from Twitter but other social media outlets.

Now it's time for all media sources, including television and newspapers to stop pandering to him. Not mentioning his name is probably the gravest thing he thinks can happen. But by stopping mentioning his name, he will stop being a news item and will slowly fade away.

As long as television and newspapers give him space, he will continue to be a threat to this country and especially to the 'real' GOP.

— Diana Hopson, Redmond

Peaceful retirement

In January of 2016, he said: "I could shoot somebody on 5th Avenue and not lose any votes." Later he said: "I am the law-and-order President" as his loyal followers protested violently in the streets of Charleston. He also said he had won the election and millions feared he would never leave the White House orderly. And almost in the end he said, I will march to the Capitol together with you. In between those statements there were hundreds of others, intended to demonstrate how connected he was "with my people." Ultimately, he did not shoot, he did not lead, he did not march and finally, he left the White House quietly.

This past week, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy visited the

golden palace of Mar-a-Lago to assure the former president that he was still loyal and he hoped for his approval as many current Republican politicians still needed his support so that the loyal followers would still vote to keep them in Washington.

Most likely, the former president never really intended to lead anything or work hard for anything or anybody. Basking in the sun of adoration of loyal throngs was the ultimate elixir for a man whose only certainty in life was satisfying his narcissism.

Without Twitter, Facebook or other artificial megaphones the "greatness" of the man shrunk to a mere photo op with soulless politicians. May the Great Spirit grant him a peaceful retirement in the company of adoring fans and Mayor Rudy.

— Carlos Wysling, Bend

No back to normal

Since 2011 Oregon has set goals for the reduction of CO2 emission which will mitigate future climate change. The first mile post on reducing these emissions was set at 2020. Oregon's Global Warming Commission (GWC) monitors progress and reported in Dec. 2020 to the Legislature that "We (Oregon) has not made the required progress in reducing its planned emissions.... erasing all the gains (emission reductions) that had been made since 2010. Now the state is developing a new plan over the next 2 years to meet even more significant emissions reductions by 2035.

In developing its 2020 Plan, Oregon's GWC identified seven efforts that would be required: (1) Embed carbon in the planning process; (2) Maximize the energy efficiency of

buildings; (3) Increase the efficiency of transportation fuels; (4) Ramp down coal emissions and ramp up efficiency and renewables; (5) Reduce and capture carbon across the board; and (6) Embed carbon in energy prices. Since adoption 10 years ago, significant progress has only been made on one of these items: (5) Ramp down coal emissions.

Since COVID, all of us are quick to ask the question, "When will things get back to normal?" The dirty little secret is that reducing CO2 emissions will require an immense change in how we pay for and pursue our daily lives and returning to our old normal is not going to happen.

— John Dunzer, Bend

Excellent column

I'd like to thank Cylvia Hayes for her excellent guest column of Jan. 31. It's a very eloquent statement of what many of us must feel, especially those of us who grew up in the Bend and Central Oregon of yesterday.

Her distinction between development and growth is a good one and worthy of thought and discussion. Much of our unhappiness with Central Oregon growth can be attributed to the reluctance of Central Oregonians to accept community-land use planning or to give much thought to the consequences of encouraging growth without considering needed development or the impacts of growth on our environment.

Ms. Hayes emphasizes on the finiteness of our planet's space and its resources is right on, as is her conclusion, "We must get to enough."

— Drannan Hamby, Bend

GUEST COLUMN

Endangered species: science, economics and values

BY YANCY LIND

The Bulletin has recently published two columns, one from an industry lobbyist and one from two local industry CEOs, arguing in favor of keeping the four lower Snake River dams. Statements in these columns are worthy of scrutiny and debate. One thing is certain, however, according to the best available science, many Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead are on the path to extinction in the not too distant future.

The dire situation for these iconic, cold water fish is due to many factors including habitat loss, pollution, warm water from a heating planet, poor ocean conditions, low water levels from municipal and agricultural withdrawals, commercial and recreational fishing, predation, hatcheries, and dams. There is debate about which of these is most detrimental, but the scientific consensus is that dams are at least near the top of the list, especially for salmon and steelhead in the Snake River watershed.

Over decades, sportsmen, tribes, conservation groups, and others have sued the U.S. government to improve operation of the lower Snake River dams and have repeatedly won in fed-



A sockeye salmon, left, swims past a chinook salmon, center front, and shad, above, at the fish counting window at the Bonneville Dam near Cascade Locks in 2012.

eral court. Politicians and economic interests have successfully blocked meaningful changes, however, and the cycle continues to this day. Recently, the government has yet again stated that dams are not the problem, and in the face over overwhelming evidence, and repeated legal rulings, claimed that minor changes are all that are required for recovery, leading to yet another round of lawsuits.

The economics of hydropower are complicated and are the subject of fierce debate. Industry representatives

claim it is cheap while other analyses suggest it is less so when total costs, including environmental, are factored in. It is a fact, however, that today solar is a very inexpensive form of power generation and those costs continue to fall. Clearly, we need utility-scale solutions for storing power generated by solar (and wind), but those are coming.

The issue really comes down to values and the future we plan to present to our children and grandchildren. Salmon are an important food

source for us and play a key role in the Pacific Northwest ecosystem. In the ocean, they are food for predators such as orca and sea lions. Returning adults are food for terrestrial species like bears, their carcasses and eggs feed many other fish, and it has been shown that they are an important source of nutrients for nearby forests.

We are living at a pivotal time for salmon and thousands of other species that are on the path to extinction. What sort of world do we want to live in? What sort of world do we want to

leave to our children and future generations? Do we think that we can continue to be separate from the environment without it impacting our own survival? The science says otherwise. We are, in fact, part of the environment and dependent on it.

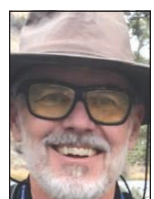
There is much to be done on many fronts, but without quick action scientists believe that many Columbia Basin salmon populations will soon go extinct. Removing the four lower Snake River dams is a necessary step to avert this catastrophe. More must be done, and we need to take those steps as well.

A large majority of Americans and Oregonians believe that we are on the wrong path and steps must be taken to improve our environment. This will entail disruption in some ways, a burden we must bear on the path to sustainability. There is growing awareness of the role of income inequality and environmental justice in this discussion. Lower income Americans suffer disproportionately from environmental degradation and are less able to pay higher costs if they occur. New, environmentally friendly jobs must be created in these communities. The solution is to acknowledge this and help our fellow citizens while taking action to create a better environment for us today as well as for future generations.

■ Yancy Lind lives in Tumalo and blogs at www.coinformadangler.org.

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