

EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

The Bulletin
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Legislature should not let patient safety program expire

Jessica Barnett died when she was 17. She had started fainting when she was 12. It looked like a seizure. Her lips would go blue. She was put on epilepsy medication. The fainting didn't stop.

Her grandmother read an article about Long QT syndrome. The Mayo Clinic defines it as "a heart rhythm condition that can potentially cause fast, chaotic heartbeats. These rapid heartbeats might trigger you to suddenly faint. Some people with the condition have seizures. In some severe cases, LQTS can cause sudden death." The family thought that's what Jessica could have. It is treatable.

They had her tested. One test was positive. Some at a different clinic were ruled negative. Her doctors didn't believe that was what she had.

Jessica fainted again one day. It was a bad episode. Paramedics couldn't revive her and she died.

Genetic testing after Jessica was dead confirmed she had Long QT syndrome. Her parents wanted answers. They called the CEO of the hospital to try to arrange a meeting with her doctors. They were denied, so they decided to sue.

Her parents gathered up her medical records. Jessica's mother discovered the cardiologist never even looked at one of the tests. It was only sent to her general practitioner because that was the hospital's practice. Other test were apparently misread. The family was tested. Her father had it as well, though showed no symptoms.

A lawsuit was settled out of court. Another 18 months after the lawsuit was settled and five years after Jessica's death, the parents finally got to meet with her doctors. They didn't know the family had requested to meet with them. They had not been told.

"The physicians jaws dropped open. They were thinking: 'If we'd actually spoken to this family we may not have had to go through litigation,'" Jessica's mother said. "They

were right. All we ever wanted was to have our questions answered and know they were making changes so this wouldn't happen again."

The Oregon Patient Safety Commission discussed this case and cases like it. This case was from Canada. All those details we provided are courtesy of the efforts of the Canadian Patient Safety Institute and Jessica's family. Where it happened, though, does not matter so much as what can be learned from it.

Medical errors and mistakes where patients are harmed are going to happen. Oregon actually has a model that allows families to get answers when medical errors occur — outside of a courtroom.

Passed in 2013 by the Oregon Legislature, the early discussion and resolution system allows for an open conversation between patients, families and medical providers when serious harm occurs. It creates confidentiality protections. Participants can speak candidly and reconciliation can be found without an adversarial lawsuit. That can encourage that improvements are made in patient safety. It can lower costs in the medical system. And families can get answers. Analysis of the program's performance is convincing. You can find more about it at the Oregon Patient Safety Commission's website.

But the program will go away without action by the Legislature. It is scheduled to sunset on Dec. 23, 2023. Senate Bill 110 introduced at the request of Gov. Kate Brown and the Oregon Patient Safety Commission would get rid of the sunset provision. It was state Sen. Tim Knopp, R-Bend, who moved the bill be sent to the Senate floor for a vote with a recommendation that it pass. It should.

Will you weigh in on taxes, fees proposed for Bend?

When the city of Bend starts talking new fees and taxes, our ears perk up. On Wednesday night, the Bend City Council had a preliminary discussion about new fees and taxes.

The easy thing to do would be to reflexively tell them: "No." But even with the \$190 million transportation bond graciously approved by Bend voters, Bend has future needs for roads and alternative transportation. One other issue discussed Wednesday was finding a way to increase public safety with more people for Bend Fire & Rescue.

Some of the options discussed in-

cluded an increase on the existing fire levy when it comes up for renewal. Another idea that has been on the table is a transportation utility fee.

It could be charged to all households and businesses in the city. The Bend City Council could assess that without approval from voters.

The discussion Wednesday night didn't get into a lot of detail. That will likely come later this year. The city will have meetings that are open to the public about these proposed taxes and fees. Whether or not you participate or follow along is up to you.

Editorials reflect the views of The Bulletin's editorial board, Publisher Heidi Wright, Editor Gerry O'Brien and Editorial Page Editor Richard Coe. They are written by Richard Coe.

A beloved cartoonist of kiddie-lit press
Doodled not-so-cool doodles
With race-blind excess.
Should it cause us all oodles
Of angst and distress?
Is he now not an icon, or something much less?

If YOU chose to write, to profess and express,
Your every emotion to freely confess,
There may well be times when you'd fail to impress,
When your lack of noblesse or largesse was a mess!

The doc will remain as a cultural treasure,
Teaching with creatures and spreading great pleasure,
We should take a deep breath,
Pause our zippin' and zoomin',
And remember this Seuss-beast we love was a...



The whole web pays for Google and Facebook to free services

BY ALEX WEBB
Bloomberg

Google and Facebook make a lot of noise about how their main services are free to use. And it's true, they are. But what they don't highlight is their role in making almost everything else we consume online more expensive.

Consider all the paywalls and paid services that are rolling out across the internet. News, films, music and even theatrical streaming are now available for a subscription fee. The latest example is Twitter, which announced last week that it plans a paid product, dubbed "Super Follows," where users can charge followers for "premium" tweets and other content. The move is a way for the company to decrease its dependence on advertising revenue — a pot of money that's increasingly being swallowed up by just Google and Facebook.

If online power, and the ad revenue that comes with it, continues to concentrate within those two platforms, expect what you watch, read or listen to elsewhere on the web to start costing you money.

Before the internet, advertising subsidized all the media we consumed, from TV and radio to magazines and newspapers. This ad-supported model made its way to the web and conditioned us to expect online content to be free. News organizations, for example, didn't charge readers, in the misguided hope that more eyeballs on their stories would bring in more revenue from the banner ads they displayed.

In the past decade, however, that

ad money has gone overwhelmingly to the search and social media giants. Last year, Google and Facebook hoovered up 74% of the \$300 billion spent globally to advertise on the web, according to the World Advertising Research Council. That's left everyone else who had been reliant on ads scrambling to make ends meet.

Advertising was always more lucrative than simply selling to consumers. Back in 2006, the New York Times charged readers an average of \$534 for a subscription, while it brought in a further \$1,064 per subscriber from ads. Papers rarely had to increase their newsstand prices because they were able to eke out more money from advertisers instead, often well ahead of the pace of inflation.

Now that privilege is reserved for the tech giants. Since 2017, Facebook has almost doubled its average revenue per user in the U.S. and Canada to \$159 a year, by serving up more ads and increasing prices when it needs to. Analysts expect Facebook's total revenue to more than double again to \$176 billion by 2024.

From a consumer perspective, you could argue that search and social networking should be free — after all, they are utilities that practically everyone uses — while more specific services should have a price tag. Twitter's Super Follows and Substack, which offers subscriptions to individual writers' newsletters, lets you pay for what you want: Where one person might be willing to spend on someone's tweets about currency trading, another could choose to pay for a newsletter dedicated to gluten-free cooking.

This system might be more efficient, since you are theoretically only paying for the media you want, but that doesn't mean it will be cheaper for consumers. The rise of video-on-demand services like Netflix and Disney+ has demonstrated as much. As my colleague Tara Lachapelle has pointed out, people who cut the cord on traditional cable packages have learned that the new normal of multiple subscriptions isn't necessarily any cheaper than the old world.

Yes, you get better, more convenient and largely ad-free viewing — but there's a good chance you're paying more for it. The same applies to Twitter and Substack, where signing up to just four writers' output at \$5 a month each is already more than the cost of a \$17 New York Times subscription, which gives you a greater breadth of coverage.

Super Follows are only likely to be a small part of Twitter's business, at least at first. But taken in concert with the rise of paywalls, subscription streaming and video-on-demand, the fact that even a new-ish media company like Twitter needs to add a paid layer points to a world where everything aside from Google and Facebook has a cost of entry.

That might not be a bad thing, but we should recognize the trade we've made from ad-subsidized media to ad-subsidized search and social networking.

Perhaps now, we can forge a better understanding of the value of content. It costs money to produce, so it should also cost money to consume.

■ Alex Webb is a columnist for Bloomberg.

Letters policy

We welcome your letters. Letters should be limited to one issue, contain no more than 250 words and include the writer's signature, phone number and address for verification. We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject poetry, personal attacks, form letters, letters submitted elsewhere and those appropriate for other sections of The Bulletin. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

Guest columns

Your submissions should be between 550 and 650 words; they must be signed; and they must include the writer's phone number and address for verification. We edit submissions for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We reject those submitted elsewhere. Locally submitted columns alternate with national columnists and commentaries. Writers are limited to one letter or guest column every 30 days.

How to submit

Please address your submission to either My Nickel's Worth or Guest Column and mail, fax or email it to The Bulletin. Email submissions are preferred.

Email: letters@bendbulletin.com

Write: My Nickel's Worth/Guest Column
P.O. Box 6020
Bend, OR 97708

Fax: 541-385-5804

Give Oregonians a future they can look forward to

BY KEVIN FRAZIER

Urban Oregonians are nearly twice as likely than rural residents to say Oregon is headed in the right direction (41% vs. 22%), according to a recent survey by the Oregon Values and Belief Center. That's a difference that should grab headlines, seize our attention and steer our policy.

We need a statewide vision that inspires urban and rural Oregonians alike to see a better future for themselves, their community and the state as a whole.

How you see your future is how you act in the present. When you're optimistic, you make long-term investments, you make long-term plans and you try to improve on the efforts and initiatives that are in place. These are all the sorts of activities that make

a strong community even stronger. They result in folks going back to school, launching small businesses and getting involved in their community.

When you're pessimistic, you're not looking forward to tomorrow. In fact, you're likely to be more anxious and stressed, tired and sick. Pessimism is unhealthy. I think we can all agree that we would rather avoid the sort of gloom associated with thinking that the best days have come and gone.

It's not surprising that rural Oregonians feel less than cheery about the future of Oregon. On the economy, 51% of rural Oregonians think economic conditions in the state are getting worse, compared to just 43% of their urban counterparts. What's more, 25% of rural Oregonians are very worried about their personal fi-

GUEST COLUMN



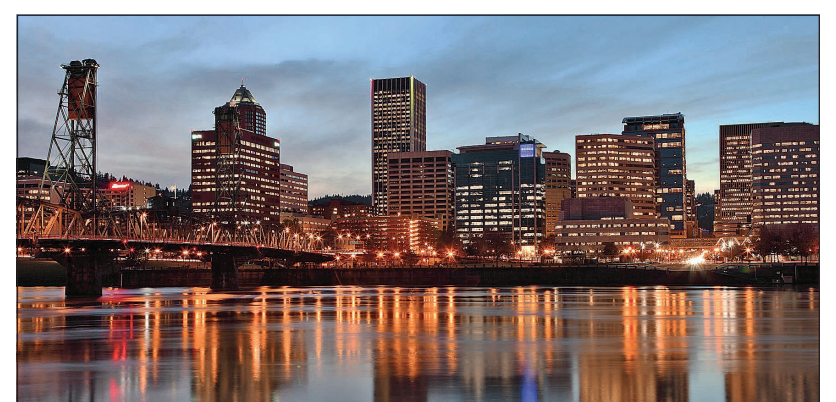
Frazier

nances, whereas just 20% of urban residents feel the same.

A simple goal for all statewide leaders, then, should be to give Oregonians a future to look forward to.

What investments from Salem are going to lead to better tomorrows in Adel and Astoria? What new programs are going to lift up families in Baker City and Bandon? What regulations will be removed or restored to uplift small businesses in Condon and Coos Bay?

A detailed vision that specificity calls out how Oregonians across the



Buildings dot Portland's skyline.

state will realize a better tomorrow is what our state deserves and needs. It's no secret that "moonshots" can compel people into action and spark innovation. If Oregonians see a tomorrow

worth fighting for, then they'll sacrifice today.

■ Kevin Frazier was raised in Washington County, Oregon. He is pursuing a law degree at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.