

Governor, legislators are meeting in secret

Gov. Kate Brown and Oregon legislators are meeting behind your back. They are more interested in expediency than the public's right to know.

Brown has held more than 50 daily meetings by phone for all the legislators. They have been holding the meetings without allowing the public to listen. We only know about the meetings thanks to the reporting of The Oregonian newspaper.

The meetings have featured updates on the latest news about the pandemic. Shouldn't the public be able to hear that discussion among its elected leaders?

There have been weekly updates from the head of Oregon's Department of Human Services. He apparently spoke about what a cut of 17% in funding would mean for the department. Oregonians have heard far too many heart-wrenching stories of how the state has failed some of its most vulnerable children — those in the foster care system.

Fariborz Pakseresht, the department's director, said he had to freeze hiring for the child welfare program. Why not let the public listen in?

The struggling state Employment Department has also given presentations. It has some 38,000 unpro-

cessed claims. And there's another staggering figure: 200,000 claims have not been paid during the pandemic. Shouldn't Oregonians be able to hear what the department is saying to legislators and what legislators are asking? Apparently Gov. Brown and legislators don't think so. And this is where things get really interesting. The intent of Oregon's open meetings law is that the public is allowed to know what the government is doing. And it's not only that the decisions are made in public.

Deliberations are important, too. That enables the public to know the choices that must be made and the information on which those choices are based.

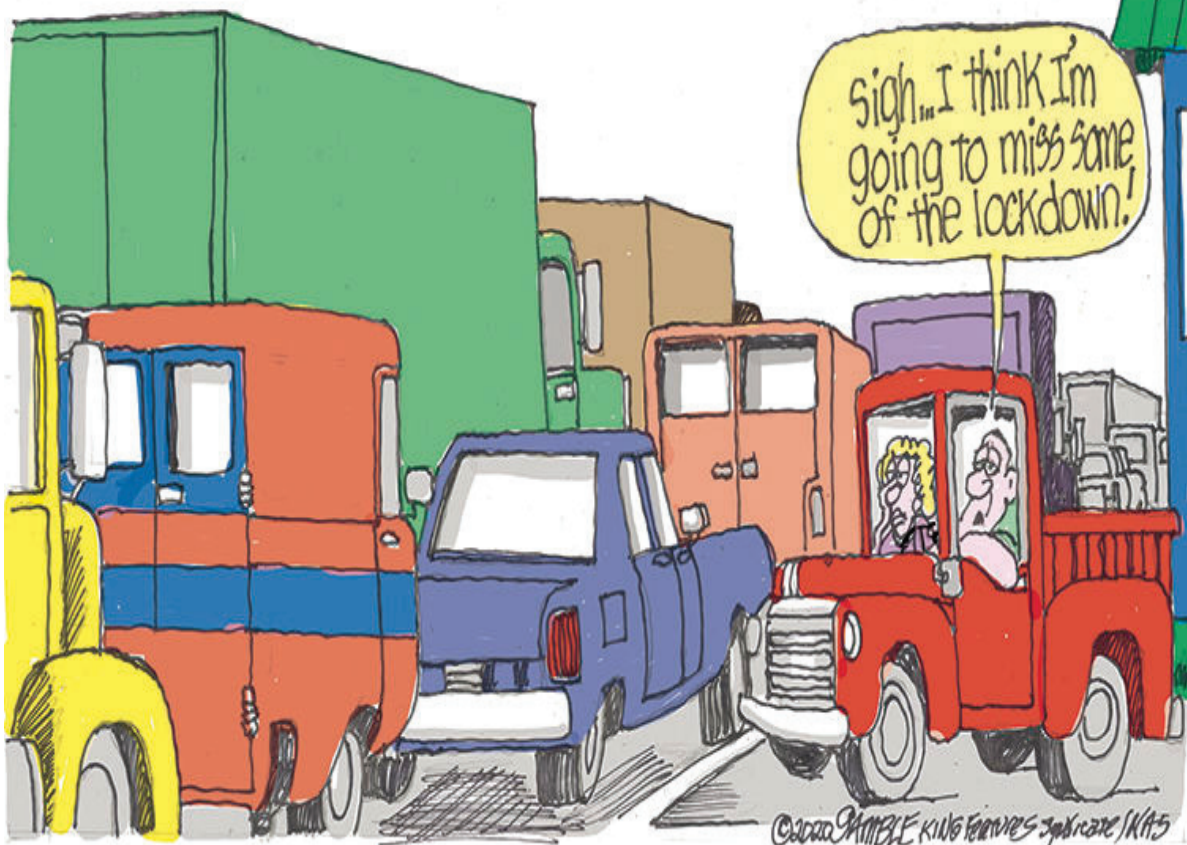
"Officials in the governor's office and the Legislature's top lawyer argue" that these meetings that the governor is having with legislators don't trigger the state's open meetings law, The Oregonian wrote.

They are getting information, the argument goes, not making decisions.

Baloney. The information legislators get in these meetings helps them make decisions. Legislators will meet in a special session to make choices about how state budgets will be cut.

Gov. Brown and legislators say they believe in transparent and accountable government. But that's not what they do.

The Economy begins to rebound!



BUILDING BLOCKS

Spring into action

Looking at nature show signs of spring arriving with trees budding, crocuses spouting, birds chirping, calves arriving, new births and temperature fluctuating. What do we do to prepare? Trees and shrubs get pruned, ranchers watch and assist their cattle and livestock, farmers prepare their fields, car owners wash the inside of their muddy wet car, windows get washed and opened, decks get a fresh coat of stain and contractors transition from inside projects to outside projects. We pack away the winter clothing, tools and toys, but not too soon.

The stock market is similar to the transition of seasons. Watching for signs, preparing for your future, making unforeseen predictions and deciding whether to invest, hold steady or pull out is how we prepare for retirement, college funds, wedding funds or the unexpected events. Many decisions are based on common sense, professional advice, knowledge of stock market swings and emotions. If you plant too soon the frost kills your crops, but if you wait too long to plant, the hot summer sun burns some crops or your growing season is too short. This



Dorothy Nestlerode

supports the strategy of variety, versatility and timing.

Wisdom says, "The more you make, the more you spend." Wise people pay themselves first and budget the rest. This is called savings and managing your money, not letting your money manage you. If you don't have it, don't spend it; instead save for it and then make the decision to purchase or not. Build your savings by paying off debt. Don't put all of your beans in the same pot. Stocks and real estate have levels of unpredictable risk, but you can be sure the market will swing up and down and stabilize for periods of time. When emotions drive your spending and investments, they are driving you. Be wise, learn, seek wise council, watch market trends and manage your money, don't let it manage you.

When the American people panicked and "ran on the banks" withdrawing all their money because of fear, this contributed to the Great Depression. Panic also contributed

widely to recessions in our country as stockholders hastily and emotionally sold their stocks. Banks almost went under again, when the media and emotions drove people to not keep money in the bank, but to store it under their mattress or personal safe (not making any interest and chancing theft). It is all a risk. Let's not forget the international market finance options to purchase foreign coins because "one day they will be worth more than the America dollar." In 2008, the Bitcoin was invented and started in 2009. A Bitcoin is a decentralized digital currency, cryptocurrency that can be sent from user to user on the peer-to-peer bitcoin network without the need for intermediaries. It too is affected by variable markets, another risk. If you want a "bottom line," listen to wisdom not social media, don't panic or let your emotions drive your decisions and spread your seeds so they don't choke each other out — have a diversified portfolio. When the broccoli doesn't produce, at least you have the kale and cabbage to eat.

Dorothy Nestlerode is a Grant County resident, mother and local author.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'Walk a mile or two in their shoes'

To the Editor:

With all due respect I must take issue with Mr. Colbeth's criticism of the various store clerks in John Day and surrounding communities in a previous letter to the editor. Perhaps if I were to buy a gallon of milk should I expect the clerk to suggest I purchase a glass to pour it in?

I would like to point out what many of the folks who wait on us at cash registers, gas pumps and restaurant tables are really dealing with. I, for one, don't want to have to wear a mask and stand behind a plexiglass screen all day waiting on an oftentimes impatient public.

More times than not I have had a polite exchange with clerks, administrative personnel and waiters or waitresses asking me "Is there anything else I can get for you or help you with?" I find this especially true in our small community.

Perhaps in these days of social stress and impersonal mass media venues, we should take a moment to pause and

reflect on what the person who is tirelessly waiting on the rest of us in a public business environment deals with on a daily basis. Walk a mile or two in their shoes. Give them the respect a fellow citizen is due.

Dan Maynard
John Day

send a thank you letter/receipt, but anonymous donations are OK. Just let us know you are dropping food off. We ask people to call 541-575-0299 before they drop food off. Food costs so much. We do not want any of it to go to waste.

Tom Sutton, chairman
Grant County Food Bank

Call ahead before dropping off food

To the Editor:

Some people are leaving food at the Grant County Food Bank office without calling 541-575-0299 to tell us that food is being left at the Food Bank office.

We do not man the Food Bank office on any regular schedule.

Any food that is dropped off without calling may go to waste. The food may be in the sun for a long period of time and exceed the temperature for storing food. If that happens, we have to dispose of the food.

The phone number for the Food Bank is on the door of the office. We are happy to accept food from people who want to donate food.

We like to have the name, address and phone number of the people so the Food Bank can

Budget bungling

To the Editor:

EOC coordinating officer overspends and then runs — leaving the county on the hook.

What a surprise! Since this was non-communicative, non-transparent Sheriff Palmer's great idea (and his deputy), let's let his department take care of the overrun.

What did county citizens get out of this boondoggle?

Where is purchased equipment going now?

How did the sheriff's "master plan" differ from the plan already in place by the previous emergency coordinator?

Did the sheriff's plan accomplish so much more? If it did, let's hear what it was.

Sandy and Mark Murray
Prairie City



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- Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: (503) 986-1180. Website: leg.state.or.us (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).
- Oregon Legislative Information** — (For updates on bills, services, capitol or messages for legislators) — 800-332-2313.
- Sen. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario** — 900 Court St. NE, S-301, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1730. Website: oregonlegislature.gov/Bentz. Email: Sen.CliffBentz@oregonlegislature.gov.
- Rep. Lynn Findley, R-Vale** — 900 Court St. NE, H-475, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1460. Website: oregonlegislature.gov/findley. Email: Rep.LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov.
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