

# Travel ban should stay on the shelf

The idea of a travel ban, because of COVID-19, briefly floated across the state radar screen not long ago before it seemingly vanished, and that is probably a good thing.

Readers may recall the idea of restrictions on travel were on the debate table earlier this month, but eventually the governor's office told lawmakers such mandates were not impending.

Charles Boyle, a spokesman for Gov. Kate Brown, said the governor's office was discussing "issuing safe travel guidelines with other Western states so travelers across our region are receiving the same information."

Travel restrictions or temporary quarantines are not exceptional in the COVID-19 pandemic. Some states, such as Hawaii, already require people who travel there to quarantine for 14 days. Massachusetts and Alaska have similar guidelines.

Quarantines are — to some extent — a justifiable measure if they are backed by the best available medical science, but instituting travel restrictions on interstate travel would be difficult to enforce and costly at a time when Oregon is already suffering serious financial blows because of the virus.

Travel restrictions are also tricky, legally. For one, individual rights must be protected. That means any kind of travel ban must adhere to very specific guidelines or the state will end up in court.

Any kind of travel restrictions — or bans — will impact rural Oregon the hardest. The region already suffers from tough economic woes and a ban or restriction that could impact commerce would be a huge hit for the area.

Finally, it isn't clear the state is to the point in the COVID-19 crisis where travel restrictions or bans would be necessary.

Should the governor have a travel restriction or ban plan ready in case the COVID-19 crisis suddenly becomes much, much worse? Yes. That is just common sense. No one knows which way the COVID-19 epidemic is going right now, so being prepared is prudent. The governor's office and state officials should have a plethora of different plans to meet many possible scenarios. Planning pays off.

However, unless the current COVID-19 situation in Oregon grows acute, plans for a travel ban or for travel restrictions should remain just that — plans. Plans that are readily available to pull off the shelf, but otherwise left untouched.



"AND WHAT GRADE ARE YOU IN?"

## FARMER'S FATE

# Matcha do about nothing

Mark Twain once said, "I can always tell which is the front end of a horse, but beyond that, my art is not above the ordinary." I feel the same way. I enjoy horses, grew up around horses, had my own horses — and I am pretty confident that, like Twain, I can always tell the front side from the back. My son, however, feels differently, which led to him getting his own horse last year. They quickly made friends, and often in between work or school, my son would be seen either riding, brushing or just talking to his new buddy, Almond. Almond enjoyed the attention, but after having been a pasture ornament for the last six or more years, he wasn't sure he enjoyed someone telling him where to go and when. More often than not, after a few circles around the pasture, Almond would stop, and my son would get off and then continue to lead him around. When it was clear that this was not just a passing interest with my son, we decided that Almond could use a little refresher course at the trainers.

My son was extremely saddened by the idea that he wouldn't be able to see Almond every day, but the trainer kindly offered to let him come visit anytime, and when Almond started shaping up, he was welcome to come ride him in the arena as well.

After a couple of weeks, we drove out to see how Almond was doing. It was amazing. Almond looked like a new horse. I hadn't even realized he had gotten so plump until a strict grass-only diet, as well as working every day had really made him slim down and tone up. He was quick to turn his head when he heard us walk up, but then, just as quickly, ignored us. Of course I couldn't really blame him, if someone had made me go on a grass-only diet, I would probably ignore them too.

It wasn't long before he was all



Brianna Walker

saddled up, and my son looked so happy to be riding his friend again — and I just couldn't help but admiring how much better he looked — even his coat was beautifully shiny. I was remarking to a

friend later that evening about how good Almond had looked. "Makes me almost want to go spend a month at the trainer's myself."

"Are you allowed a plus one?" she asked, and we both laughed.

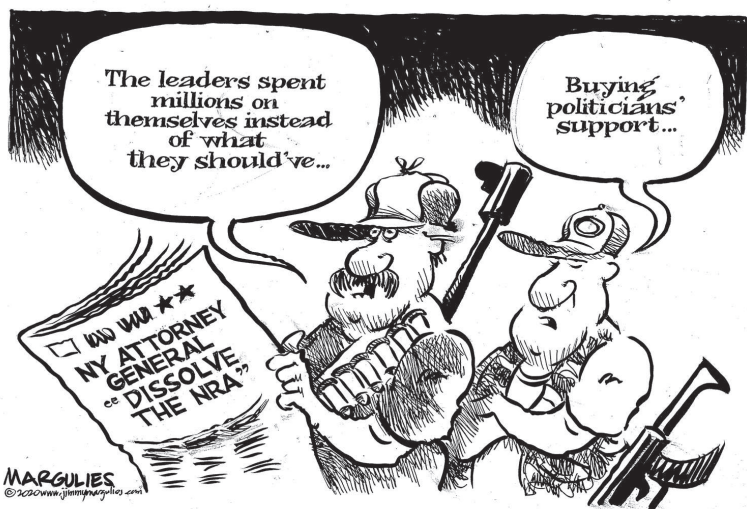
Later — thoughts of diets and working out long forgotten — I found myself in the ice cream department of the grocery store. There, amid all the brands I was familiar with, was a new one in bright, flamboyant packaging. Yellow and black splashes all over bright orange and blue containers were quite eye-catching. I'm usually pretty predictable in my ice-cream selection — bunny tracks or rainbow sherbet — but something about those containers made me stop to take a closer look. The flavors were quite unusual: turmeric chai and cinnamon; milk and honey; matcha and fudge; and lemon graham. I was intrigued, and they were on sale, so I bought one of each variety. That night, after supper, I pulled out the four small containers and four spoons, and we began tasting each flavor.

We opened the turmeric chai and cinnamon first. It was a deep curry-yellow color. I loved it, my oldest said it was okay, my youngest liked it, my husband said it was tolerable. The second one was milk and honey. It was light in color, and pretty light in taste, especially after the turmeric. The third one we opened was the matcha and fudge. I didn't know what matcha was, but I figured it had fudge in it — how bad could it be? (That was

my first mistake.) The lid came off to reveal a gorgeous deep green ice cream. My husband pulled them tub closer to him — he loves anything mint, and this looked promising. He took a big bite and started gagging. He pushed the tub toward me, making horrible faces — and for a second I wasn't sure he was going to be able to swallow. After a reaction like that, I wasn't sure I wanted any — but I reminded myself that he hates tomatoes, onions, peppers, black licorice — many things I enjoy, so his reaction didn't completely ensure my dislike. (My second mistake.) I took a scoop and put it in my mouth. That was a moment that I wished that I learned better from others' mistakes without having to make my own. I squinted my eyes and swallowed hard against my tongue and esophagus. It tasted like regurgitated sheep's breath. Only instead of hot and steamy, it was cold and sliding down my throat. It wasn't until later that I learned how trendy matcha is becoming. For anyone like me who didn't know what it is, it is basically crushed leaves that are dried and ground into a bright green powder to be added to food and drinks. I read all about the health benefits or it — but I stand by my assessment that it tastes like the breath from a ruminating ovine.

After that ice cream moment, I thought back to the trainers and a month of just eating grass. I've no doubt it's healthy — I've seen how great Almond looks. But I don't think any amount of beautiful tresses and sleek muscles are worth that "matcha-buse" to my taste buds. As long as people can still tell my front side from my back, then I'll take my less sleek tresses and leave the grass to the dieting horses!

Brianna Walker occasionally writes about the Farmer's Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### 'We are the most inclusive place'

To the Editor:

I'm afraid too many have bought into the lie of it's all about "race" — we are the most inclusive place! How many different races live and work in America? How many still come here, despite all our corruption and anti-God rhetoric? I want to believe there are still good, God-fearing, hard work-

ing and loving parents out there. Maybe getting out of the "forward" thinking cities and back to the rural counties, where it's not all about the mighty dollar, would change a whole lot of ideas about what's really important.

A side note — quit marking down "suspected" COVID-19 where people have other complaints! You are cheating our already strained system. A sore knee or foot is not a virus!

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## GUEST COMMENT

### Tips for navigating the PPP forgiveness process

Those businesses that received Paycheck Protection Program funds are no doubt aware that all or a portion of the loan is forgivable if funds are utilized according to program requirements.

The following information comes from a webinar I participated in hosted by a Small Business Administration lending specialist, and I want to emphasize borrowers should always check with their lender or CPA for specific answers pertaining to their individual situation.

To begin with, borrowers will submit an application for forgiveness to their lender. The Paycheck Protection Flexibility Act extended the amount of time for submission from eight weeks after the date you received the proceeds to 24. There are two different applications: form 3508 and form 3508 EZ. The EZ form is considerably shorter, but not all businesses qualify to use this.

You are eligible for the EZ form if you:

- are a self-employed borrower with no employees and did not include any salaries in the calculation of your monthly payroll when determining your eligible loan amount.
- didn't reduce wages by more than 25% and didn't reduce the number of employees or average paid hours of employees.
- weren't able to rehire/hire similarly qualified employees.
- didn't reduce wages by more than 25% and were unable to operate



Greg Smith

at the same level of activity due to government restrictions. (i.e. from OSHA or another similar agency)

The lender will review the application and confirm:

- appropriate documentation has been submitted to validate the information.
- the borrower's certifications are true and correct.
- your mathematical calculations are accurate.

The lender has 60 days for the process to be completed and then will issue a decision to SBA along with the required documents. The portal for submission by lenders to the SBA is targeted to be available on Aug. 10, but this could change. The lender's decision will fall into one of these categories:

- Approval (in whole or in part)
- Denial
- Denial with prejudice due to pending SBA review

Examples of supporting documents to be included with the forgiveness application for payroll costs include bank statements, tax forms, receipts and cancelled checks.

For allowable non-payroll costs you must prove the service or obligation was in place prior to Feb. 15 (with bills and invoices) and provide proof of payment. For example, if you started new internet service on Feb.

15 or after, it would not be an allowable utility expense. For such things as mortgage interest payments, rent or leases, you will likely need to produce an amortization schedule, lease agreements, copies of cancelled checks, etc.

If using the 3508 form, you will need to include the loan forgiveness calculation form, the PPP schedule A and documentation showing the average number of FTE (full time employees) on your payroll during the referenced time periods.

Should you be required to pay back any portion of PPP funds, no payment will be due for 10 months. Ask your lender about additional terms and conditions or refer to your loan documents.

While there is justifiable angst surrounding the forgiveness process, SBA emphasizes simply approaching it with honesty and integrity. With careful record keeping and aligning the use of funds with allowable expenses, you should have little difficulty being able to produce necessary documentation for forgiveness. Rely on the expertise of your CPA and always reach out to your lender first as they are the ones who will be recommending to SBA whether the loan is forgivable, either in whole or in part.

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