

OUR VIEW

Pump your own provision is out of gas

California may have its Silicon Valley and Hollywood. Ohio gets all those new high-paying computer chip manufacturing jobs for Intel. Washington state may have no income tax. But here in Oregon we don't have to pump our own gas.

Those aren't fair comparisons. We are not of a mind to be fair, hearing that once again a bill to let Oregonians pump their own gas is dead.

We get it if you don't want to pump your own. If you appreciate the bond Oregon has with the only other no self-service state, New Jersey, so be it. If you worry about people who would find pumping their own difficult, if you worry about safety, if you want another opportunity for jobs in Oregon, those are all real concerns.

But remember the bill as it was written, House Bill 4151, would not have removed the requirement to have attendants ready to pump gas. It would have made it optional for people who want to pump their own gas.

Is that so bad? We don't think so.

The undoing of HB 4151 was the need for some \$543,000 for the Oregon Fire Marshal to regulate consumer pumping. Time became too short to come up with that in this session.

We think the fire marshal may need even more money, if we understand the concerns. The worries about people pumping their own transfer to people plugging in their own electric cars, right? Especially those higher voltage charging ports.

In the 2023 Legislature shouldn't there be a bill to require Oregonians to be assisted with a paid professional when plugging in their electric vehicles?

We can't claim it as our idea. It would, though, create jobs. It would be very helpful to those for whom such effort can be difficult. It would be safer. And just because Oregon would be the only state to make this requirement, shouldn't be a reason to stop us. Maybe New Jersey would join in.



Music is in the ear of the beholder

In my youth, I realized I had become a violin virtuoso. My bowing skills showed strength and control. My nimble fingers danced over the E A D G strings, my vibrato, tender or triumphant, depending on the composer.

My violin musicality possessed one teeny, tiny challenge — some detractors might even label it a flaw. Namely, I rarely played in tune.

“Don't you want to quit the violin and the orchestra?” a friend asked.

“Oh, no. I plan on earning my way through college with my violin playing.”

In time, I realized I couldn't earn enough with my music skills to purchase a pencil eraser. Still, playing with an orchestra in grade school developed a camaraderie that for me went beyond the closeness I felt with a sports team or with other actors in a school play.

“How come violins aren't included in the marching band?” I asked myself.

I thought my younger brothers and I could remedy that. We'd form a marching violin band. I played a full-size violin, one brother played a 3/4-size violin, and the other brother played a half-size violin. None of us



Jean Ann Moultrie

whipped out concertos at age 4.

First challenge — where to hang the music? Problem solved. We'd march single file and I'd pin the music for each brother on the

back of the person ahead. Being the leader in line, I constructed a music holder out of twigs and tape and hooked it to my violin.

Next challenge — where to find an audience for our premier marching violins extravaganza. The answer — we'd form a parade and invite the neighbors. Colored paper invitations we stuck to the neighbors' screen doors. Our parade start time — that very afternoon.

Our dog joined us, which lent a festive air. As a bonus to extend the parade, I scrounged up a piece of rope I used to tie our little red wagon to the back belt loops of the younger brother, the wagon handle banging on the local asphalt road (no traffic) not quite in time to the marching notes, but this did add a percussion-like flavor to the music.

Unforeseen problems. Should a marching violin musician suddenly stop, they were rammed

between the shoulder blades by the violin behind, and should someone lag behind, they couldn't see the music and had to jog to catch up. My taped twig music holder fell to pieces.

Even so, we witnessed a successful inauguration for us pioneers of the violin marching band.

Too bad no one else showed up. Music can comfort and sustain in times of sorrow, and entertain in times of celebration. There's music to study by. Music to motivate. (When I clean house and want to get into high gear, I play the Hungarian Gypsy music I discovered in Budapest.)

Whether country-western, rock, jazz, pop, classical, musicals, folk songs, etc., music can be enjoyed while driving a vehicle, seated at a fairgrounds pavilion performance, or while doing chores.

I wrestle with the notion that I find music heart-touching, yet I don't have musical skills. The thought pops up in my mind. Somewhere I do belong in the music world, no audition necessary — that's in the audience!

Jean Moultrie is a Grant County writer. She suggests that in times of conflict, that Beethoven's 9th Symphony (Ode to Joy), “Let all men be brothers,” be performed as it was at the coming down of the Berlin Wall.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A sad day when Dems won't fight

To the Editor:
Sadly, a recent Quinnipiac University poll showed that if the United States were to be attacked, as is happening in Ukraine, 52% of Democrats would flee to another country rather than stay and fight for this country. It is a sad day for America.

Ralph Goodwin
John Day

Nuclear fears of an 8-year-old

To the Editor:
It was a Sunday morning in 1953 at the big stone and brick house we owned on Washington Street in

Prairie City. My brother and I were upstairs in the bathroom getting ready for Sunday school. My parents were downstairs, with Mom preparing a pork roast for Chinese noodles in a pressure cooker. Out of nowhere there was a blast that to two young boys seemed like a tremendous explosion.

I immediately grabbed my brother and exclaimed, “Mike! It's the Russians!” A plugged safety valve caused the cooker to explode, and I interpreted it to be a nuclear bomb. I was only 8, but during this period older kids and grownups also lived in fear of a nuclear attack.

The monster of Europe (Stalin) had just died and been replaced by Khrushchev. The Cold War continued between the free world and the communist world for nearly 40 more years. I am not overlooking the fact that it was the United States that

developed the atomic bomb, and it is the only nation to ever use it in war to bomb an enemy country. However, through the Cold War years I never believed that there would ever be peace between Russia and the Western nations. What a wonderful moment it was when the Berlin Wall came down, followed later by the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Now, after nearly 30 years of managing to get along with Russia, Putin is proving to be every bit the monster that was Stalin. The fact that he has just put his nuclear forces on high alert is frightening. As I watch the carnage that the Russian War has brought on the peaceful nation of Ukraine, I'm heartbroken. Here I am, nearly 70 years later, filled with the same dread as I had when I was an 8-year-old.

Terry Steele
Ritter

LETTERS POLICY: Letters to the Editor is a forum for Blue Mountain Eagle readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters will be asked to be contained to 350 words. No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. No thank-you letters. Submissions to this page become property of the Eagle. The Eagle reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content. Letters must be original and signed by the writer. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. We must limit all contributors to one letter per person per month. Deadline is 5 p.m. Friday. Send letters to editor@bmeagle.com, or Blue Mountain Eagle, 195 N. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845; or fax to 541-575-1244.

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