

## Hermiston Herald

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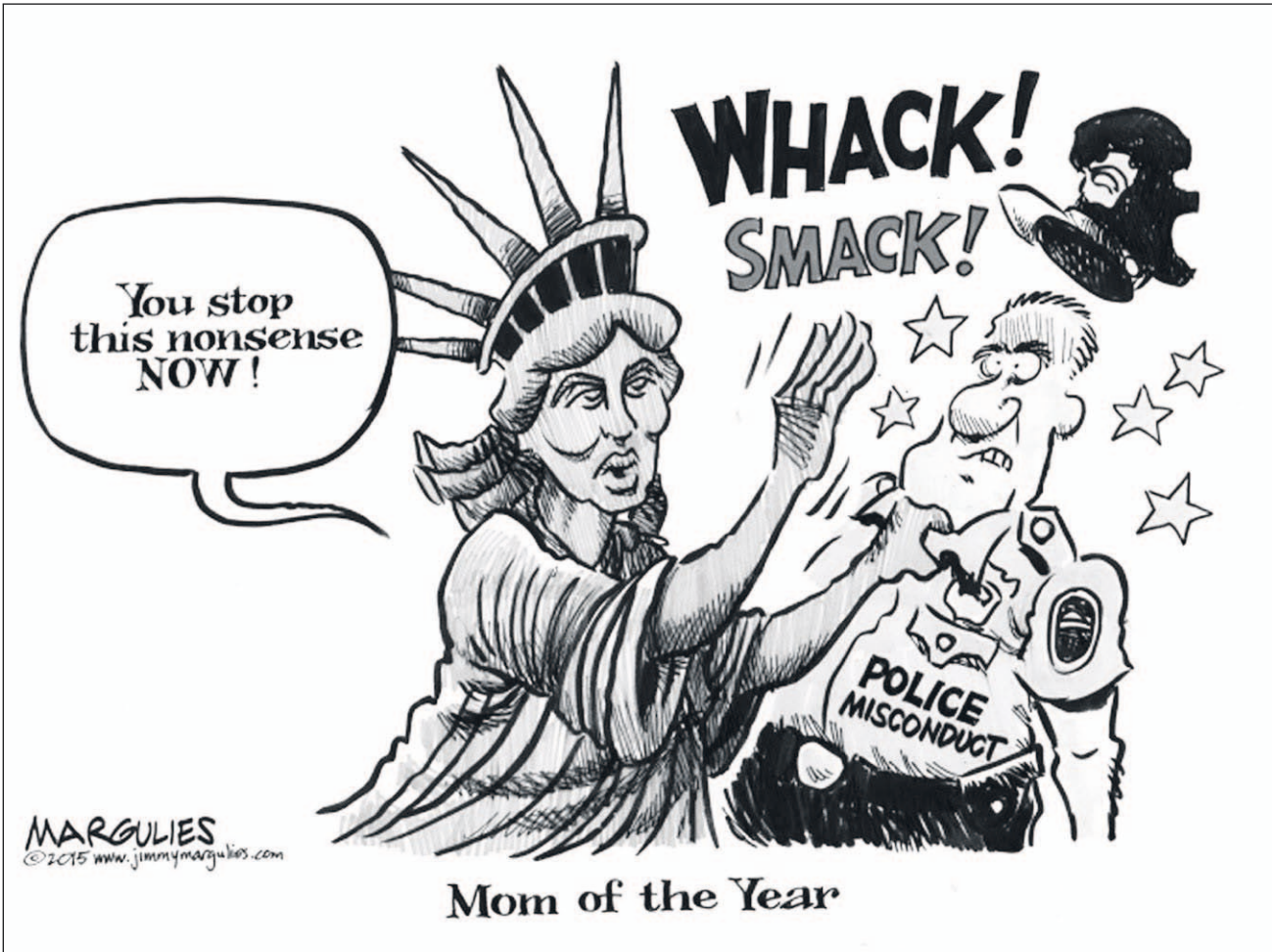
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Mom of the Year

# Community support vital in senior center project

Editor,  
The members of the Hermiston Senior Center Board and Site Selection Committee wish to thank all supporters of the new site for the Hermiston Senior Center soon to be located on property near Fourth Street and Aspen (east of Wal-

Mart). A huge thank you goes especially to Mr. Larry Fetter, of Hermiston Parks and Recreation, for organizing and leading the selection committee for three months of work touring other centers, sorting various needs, fielding sites and working around schedules. Mr.

Fetter's work to obtain the Community Block Development Grant of \$2 million for this wonderful new building for Hermiston seniors and future generations made this dream happen.

Before the city of Hermiston stepped up to partner with the Hermiston Senior

Center, many thanks need to go to former County Commissioner Dennis Doherty. He and his long-term planning committee stepped up to help the Hermiston Senior Center find a new home in 2011 when the Umatilla County Fairground property

was sold to the Hermiston School District.

Even though there were long discussions pro and con, the City Council voted 6-2 in favor of the Aspen site. Let's come together now as senior center and city to support our new building. The Frank Harkenrider Cen-

ter can be a future gathering site for seniors and all generations of Hermiston.

Thank you for your support!

IRENE MILLER,  
CHAIRWOMAN,  
AND SENIOR CENTER BOARD  
AND SITE SELECTION COMMITTEE

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### View panhandlers in a different light

Editor,  
Hermiston and Umatilla citizens and city councils have been concerned with the people populating their street corners and parking lots asking for handouts. Both have responded to address this situation. I would like to comment on this situation by paraphrasing David R. Hawkins' response toward to this situation in his book, "Power VS Force." I call my paraphrasing, "Stages of ways to look at these folk."

The first stage might see these people as dirty, disgusting and disgraceful. They are to blame for their condition. They probably are lazy or drug and alcohol addicts. They don't want food, clothing or a chance to work. They just want money to spend on drugs and alcohol.

In the second stage they might be seen as threatening; a menace; they might be violent. They could be seen as a danger to themselves and others. They are embarrassing to us and our community.

In the third stage these folk could be seen as OK, maybe even interesting. They could be seen as intriguing: He might have an interesting story to share with us. We may never understand why he is there.

In the fourth and final stage they begin to look not only interesting, but friendly — and lovable. Maybe they have just become free of our expectations. We might see them as joyful, with wisdom we have not yet seen or a serenity that comes from an indifference to our societal norms.

I am not saying the response our communities have taken is wrong, I am just asking that we are open to viewing these folk in a different light. And in that light temper our response to include a humane option for the people who stand in our parking lots and on our street corners.

BOYD D. SHARP  
UMATILLA

### Council appointment of judge is undemocratic

Editor,  
In this great country, our founding fathers estab-

lished two ways of judge selection. The federal system provides for appointment for life with selection by the president and approval of the Senate. The founding fathers who drafted the various state constitutions provided for selection of judges by popular vote. By these two means of selection, checks and balances between the legislative, executive and judicial branches was maintained. The independence of the judiciary was preserved by keeping it free from influence or dependence on the other two branches of government. The federal and state constitutions set the terms and qualifications of judges. These two systems of judicial selection have served our country well since its inception.

Appointment of judges by the governmental legislative body with that same body setting terms and qualifications at its whim is an aberration in our democracy. It is not a mainstream method of judicial selection and occurs only with city governments. This type of appointment leaves judges subject to the influence and pressure of the body or administrator that selects them. The independence needed to make objective decisions furthering the interest of justice can be compounded by the huge role the city manager plays in most municipal governments. Most often, the city council consists of part-time, elected volunteers who rely very heavily on the city manager for advice and direction.

Changing the Hermiston city charter to allow for the selection of the municipal judge by the council runs a risk of allowing political ambitions and motivations to interfere with the effective and independent operation of municipal court. To date, the city of Hermiston has not established any qualifications for the municipal judge. The proposed charter change does not contain any qualifications for the municipal judge. That means that the council can set and change, at any time, both the qualifications and term of the municipal judge. How the court operates, who serves as judge and the length of time the judge serves will be determined by the council, heavily influenced by the city manager, and subject

to change at any time. If this is what Hermiston citizens see as best for them, then they should vote for the charter change on their vote-by-mail ballot. If Hermiston's citizens want to keep the democratic, time-honored way of judicial selection, as established by Oregon's founding fathers, vote no on the municipal judge charter change.

WILLIAM J. KUHN  
KUHN LAW OFFICES  
HERMISTON

### BMCC bond passage will allow region to progress

Editor,  
I write this letter to the public personally. I am a tremendous advocate for local community colleges and their benefits they provide our community. I grew up in Yakima, Washington, and was unable to afford moving away and paying the higher fees often associated with state institutions or private schools. I attended two years at Yakima Valley Community College and received my associates' degree. I was able to live at home and work part time allowing me very little debt. I could then afford to further my education at a secondary education system allowing me to graduate with my bachelor's degree with very little debt.

My children have been able to take advantage of the Eastern Promise program allowing them to take college level classes while attending Hermiston High School. Hermiston is fortunate to have a fantastic community college in its back yard, in Blue Mountain Community College; 1,300 students from the Hermiston area take advantage of 114 classes offered by BMCC at the Eastern Oregon Higher Education Center and Columbia Hall in Hermiston. In addition, like my children, another 262 Hermiston High School students earned 1,573 college credits at BMCC through the Eastern Promise program. This has saved me and many local families thousands of dollars.

We all understand the value agriculture is to our economic engine locally. With BMCC's bond pro-

posal they will be able to further expand the program offerings available to enhance the education for our current local work force and create new and expanded career opportunities in this fast growing field. Just like most work force areas, technology is rapidly expanding and we need to provide opportunities here locally to learn these new technologies to help retain our kids and jobs locally. There is a reason Hermiston is the largest community in the eastern Oregon, because of its progressive approach to the future through expanded opportunities in business and education. We have another opportunity to demonstrate our desire to progress and stay at the forefront of economic development and education. Please join me in supporting BMCC's bond initiative. Let's provide additional, local, educational opportunities for our kids and the kids of the future.

Vote YES for the BMCC bond!

DR. DAVE DROTZMANN  
HERMISTON

### People should elect municipal judge

Editor,  
One of the Hermiston councilors commented city councilors should pick the municipal court judge because they were better informed, or something of that ilk. It is truly a slippery slope when an elected government official is deluded into believing his/her constituents are low-information voters.

I urge Hermiston voters to vote no on 30-56 and maintain the right to vote on our municipal court judge.

FRED HULING  
HERMISTON

### Buildings don't mean quality education

Editor,  
How a voter chooses to vote on the "2015 BMCC Bond Levy" will be made from the point of view of the Voter. Those views may include: A) No matter what the facts are, some voters have decided to vote for the levy. They do not want any more information. B) Some voters, who are also property

tax payers, believe that they cannot afford any more taxes. In this group should be renters and shoppers. C) However, most people don't think of the tax pass through. They think, "Let the homeowner pay the tax." They are unaware that the landowner and the merchant will raise rents and prices accordingly. D) Also in this group are knowledgeable people who are willing to pay the increases. E) Another group of voters are those who adamantly, respectfully disagree with some of the apparent operational principles of BMCC. They do not agree with the prolevy group that a "No Vote" has to mean a reduction in the quality of education or value to the community of BMCC. F) Of course, there is a very large group of well meaning (many of them we personally know and like) people who believe in a quality education for all at any cost. They trust the educators and board members to know what is best for the educational needs of the community. This trust includes how best these needs are to be met. We trust them. G) There are additional points of view.

One of those points of view is talked about by a significant number of northeast Oregon citizens but is not openly discussed in the press or the media. Another point of view is somewhat openly talked about, but not much, nor is it encouraged by the establishment or the press.

Let's start with the second one first: What the needs are and how best these needs are met. "New comfortable buildings are one of the most important assets of attraction for new students to BMCC." I actually heard this almost word for word in one of the BMCC levy presentations. Wow! How did we ever get Einstein, how did we ever get Harvard, MIT and Stanford? My grandfather taught at all three in the early 1900s. He never mentioned the buildings. It was the quality of education that attracted their national attention. So why are we taking out a loan for deferred maintenance? Why are we not using existing abandoned store fronts? Why are we building a permanent classroom that will deteriorate for classes that will benefit a specific industry,

when that industry could provide trailers or modular classrooms with completely up-to-date training equipment and replace them as needed? Why is this \$4 million early education, birth to kindergarten teacher-training center not added in to the new Pendleton early education behemoth?

The last point: Another group of voters are those who adamantly, respectfully disagree with some of the apparent operational principles of BMCC. Has any one over 45 noticed that a sign of our times is the breakdown of the family and its subsequent consequences? Many of us have noticed. We ancients are old enough to feel our guilt for this societal condition. Believe me, hippy-ism and free love are not good for society. Many in our generation want the consequences of our sins corrected or healed. We do not want BMCC in the maternity ward at the birth of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We do not want to pay teachers substituting for the mothers in the first 15 months of a child's life. The April 29, 2015, edition of the East Oregonian had a front page article that brings this all together. It is entitled "Relief nursery grapples with funding shortfall, Children overcome lives of uncertainty, stress and poverty." The United Way contributions have significantly shrunk in recent years. We "heartless" folks, as some would call us, believe that the Pioneer Relief Nursery in Pendleton is a worthy, good representative of an agency for a needed solution to a real societal problem. It deserves to be supported by the community. It is not government's job to solve that problem. It is not government's job to continue to manage family life and child rearing. It is not government's job to raise children from birth in a cookie cutter environment. Just because we let governments do these things doesn't mean that we should not stand up and say "STOP" going down this path. We also need to get our social collective, responsible heads out of the sand and come up with healthy solutions. Not pass the buck to government.

LARRY AND JEAN NYE  
ATHENA