

COMMENTARY

Trade and railroads key to Nevada's economic growth

Trade is very much on the minds of business leaders and executives across most industry sectors, especially for companies seeking to expand into global markets or broaden their international market share. President Trump has stated his position regarding our current trade agreements, which has sparked ongoing debate about their merits by groups across the political spectrum. With representatives of Canada, Mexico and the U.S. set to begin another round of negotiations on the North American Free Trade Agreement at the end of this month, the debate will continue.

While this has created uncertainty, there are important facts to take into consideration. According to Business Roundtable, international trade, including exports and imports, supports approximately 367,800 Nevada jobs. The Silver State exported \$7.6 billion in goods and \$9.4 billion in services in 2014 to customers in 186 countries and territories. With more than 95 percent of the world's population and 80 percent of the world's purchasing power outside of the U.S., future economic growth and jobs for Nevada and the nation increasingly depend on expanding trade and investment opportunities in the global marketplace.

Nevada's two freight railroads operate more than 1,193 miles of track in the state. Fortunately for both the Silver State and the nation, U.S. freight railroads continue to spend and invest to maintain and expand their network, connecting Nevada manufacturers and mines to markets across the country and the globe.

Freight railroads are privately owned and operated. They don't depend on funding based on government decisions or from taxpayers. On average, railroads reinvest 40 percent of every dollar they earn back into their infrastructure — more than any other industry and significantly more than the average manufacturer. Since 1980, railroads have invested more than \$635 billion of private capital in their network.



Rob Hooper
Fresh Ideas

This massive spending saves taxpayers money by making it possible to move freight that would otherwise be on government-funded roads and bridges. Already in need of major repairs, they couldn't accommodate anywhere near all of the shipping traffic moved by rail. Because railroads are four times as fuel efficient as highway transport, moving freight by rail also saves fuel and results in 75 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions for each freight movement. One ton of cargo can be moved approximately about 473 miles on a single gallon of fuel.

These investments include maintenance of the physical infrastructure of the rail network making it safer and more efficient. The railroads also invest in new technologies and innovations that make an "old school" mode of transportation rival tech companies. Deployment of big data and sophisticated monitoring technologies improve routing, proactively identify issues and reduce supply chain impact, and make a safe industry even safer.

In terms of trade, America's railroads — like the rest of the country — have deep international ties. A recent report by the Association of American Railroads found 50,000 rail jobs and 42 percent of rail carloads and intermodal units directly depend on trade.

The strength of our rail network is a huge asset in an increasingly global economy. Freight rail connections are helping the Silver State attract new warehousing, distribution and manufacturing operations seeking a West Coast hub. For those gambling on the future of commerce in the Western U.S., freight rail helps make Nevada a safe bet for economic growth.

Rob Hooper is President & CEO of Northern Nevada Development Authority.

THE POPCORN STAND

Now that the Winter Olympics are winding down, I'm starting to get into the Olympic spirit. The one Olympic sport I used to think was the craziest was ski jumping. I remember as a kid watching after Jim McKay would say "the thrill of victory" that poor ski jumper crash every Saturday on Wide World of Sports while McKay said "and the agony of defeat."

As a kid I remember watching Wide World of Sports one time and on the program was actually ski flying, which made ski jumping look like child's play. I don't know if ski flying even exists anymore.

But the crown of craziest sport in the Olympics no longer belongs to ski jumping. Since skeleton has been added to the Olympics that's now the craziest Olympic sport.

It's crazy enough to want to go down a frozen water slide at like 80 mph riding a sled on your back, which is the luge. But there are actually people who say that's not crazy enough and choose to ride down a frozen water slide at like 80 mph on a sled head first, which is skeleton.

I've written this before but these Olympic athletes remind me of one of Jerry Seinfeld's routines in which

he talks about how human beings insist on partaking in these skull cracking activities. But instead of stopping to partake in these skull cracking activities, we invented a helmet so we could continue to partake in these skull cracking activities which has to make you wonder how smart is the brain the human being is trying to protect.

I actually have a lot of respect for these Olympic athletes who continue to extend the barriers they're trying to leap and speed over.

While I'm sitting on my couch.
— Charles Whisnand

PAST PAGES

By Trent Dolan

150 YEARS AGO

Mud Bound: We are living through a sort of dismal, meteorological parody on Whittier's picture poem, "Snow Bound." We are not; but mud bound we are. This is the dampest spell of weather that has overtaken these parts in many a day. By lowlands and highlands we are cemented to the sacred soil of our sovereign sagebrush; drawn sucker-like to the sod by the cohesive power of a boundless contiguity of slosh, blockaded and embargoed, we do business and through the great puddles must wade and flounder by day and grope and stumble by night. Ancient mariners, we, stranded on sediments with mush, mush, everywhere, with not a drop to eat.

130 YEARS AGO

Claim Jumpers. They were Out in Full Force Sunday: All the old abandoned locations on North Carson and Sugar Loaf hills were raided last Sunday by the claim jumpers. On Sunday an Appeal representative climbed to the upper tunnel to get an idea of the situation and ran up against the muzzle of a shotgun protruding from the door of the cabin.

100 YEARS AGO

(Advertisement) "Buy at Last One Ticket. BANG!!! February 22nd, the greatest and most enjoyable dance ever held. YAMA!! YAMA!! An unique costume dance. Only costume wearers allowed to dance before 11



p.m. After unmasking all may join in the merriment. JAZZ!! The latest thing in mass music will be played as only the Carson City Band can play it. The only guarantee for stiff joints."

70 YEARS AGO

Of every three children who die during school age, one of them is an accident victim, recent statistics received by Chief of Police Howard Hoffman revealed today. "And one out of three of these school-child accidents is killed by an automobile," he continued.

50 YEARS AGO

One of the problems facing the American male today is what to do about the mini skirt.

30 YEARS AGO

Douglas County commissioners this morning set May 24 as the date for an election on the proposed incorporation of the new city of Lake Tahoe, Nev.

Trent Dolan is the son of Bill Dolan, who wrote this column for the Nevada Appeal from 1947 until his death in 2006.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In defense of old white men

Margaret Konieczny's letter of Feb. 10 speaks of a need for compassion and empathy but then talks about the "past world of old, white men" and states, "Happily, old, white men are dying out."

Old white men have come from a society where the priorities were basically God, country, family, others, self and in that order. It was a society where integrity, being honest and having strong morals was more important than color, creed, or gender.

It was a society where most elected officials believed our country came

before their political party.

It was a society where people fought to stay off the dole, there were no entitlements. Hard labor was not below one's dignity when it came to caring for your family. If there was a want or need there was a willingness to work for it.

It was a society where children were taught to have respect for others, where teachers were more interested in teaching their students rather than winning a popularity award.

It was a society where someone might disagree with what you say but defend your right to say it.

It was a society where many young men stood in long lines to volunteer to give their lives for their country, its beliefs and the welfare of the world. Many did not become old white men.

Lastly, these are the "old white men" that worked to give us the world, even with all its faults, that we enjoy today.

Margaret, how about a little compassion and empathy for old white men?

Some of us still believe a man should hold a door open for a woman.

From, an old, old white man,

Sanford E. Deyo
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