

OUR VIEW

The great experiment endures

With the Fourth of July holiday looming, it is often easy to forget just how close the whole American independence effort came to failure.

We often sort of take it for granted that, as Americans, pretty much everything we've accomplished in our storied history as a nation was foreordained.

That is a nice thought, but not exactly accurate.

For example, it took the 13 colonies seven years to finally emerge victorious from Great Britain and secure the chance to execute the great experiment we call democracy. On the way to that victory there occurred many missteps and defeats.

Sunday's holiday — the official observance of the actions of the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776 — marks in many ways a brief period of respite for the nation. There remains little doubt the nation as it stands in 2021 is saddled with an array of difficult and contentious issues. Yet, the Fourth of July bestows upon all of us a moment to reflect on the fact that the great test of democracy, fashioned by the Founding Fathers, endures.

We still conduct free elections; America still transfers political power in a peaceful manner. We have challenges — many of them very serious with long-term implications — yet our experiment sustains, and often reinvents itself, constantly.

With the specter of COVID-19 restrictions seemingly in the rearview mirror, this weekend's holiday should be about many things — family and fun to name just two — but it should also be a moment, a time, to remember that despite all of the nation's perceived flaws, we are a democracy still going strong more than 200 years after a group of brave future Americans decided to risk it all for liberty.

Have a safe and enjoyable Fourth of July.

Bill Day FloridaPolitics.com



Revamped and expanded product aims to get you to 'Go'



ANDREW CUTLER
FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Starting in July, EO Media Group is launching Go! Magazine, a regional weekly arts and entertainment publication designed to do exactly what it says — get readers to “go” out and experience all of what Eastern Oregon has to offer. For readers in Union, Baker, Umatilla and Morrow counties, Go! will be in your Thursday newspaper. For readers in Willowa and Grant counties, you will receive the magazine every Wednesday.

Go! is designed to be a solid platform to connect our readers to more diverse — and, we hope, interesting — ways to enjoy their neighboring counties as well as their own. The magazine features a variety of things to do and places to go, when and in what town, with a calendar of event dates and times for a host of entertainment venues throughout the region. The accompanying website, goeasternoregon.com, will offer a mobile-friendly digital version of the magazine and calendar to take with you as you explore Eastern Oregon again. After more than a year of staying home, we are all ready to hit the sidewalks and roads and start

taking art classes, viewing exhibits, experiencing live theater and music, and celebrating at regional festivals, rodeos and other events.

Ultimately, what we do — all we do — is centered on our readers. As part of our mission to more efficiently provide quality products by working on joint projects such as Northeast Oregon Artisans and AgriBusiness, the six papers that make up EO Media Group's eastside publications are launching Go! Magazine as another shared venture for those who read and use our papers.

Observer and Baker City Herald readers are familiar with Go! since it has been a staple of those papers for more than a decade. Now, our six eastside papers — The Observer, Baker City Herald, East Oregonian, Willowa County Chieftain, Blue Mountain Eagle, and Hermiston Herald — are combining resources to expand the reach of the magazine.

That kind of reach is something we take some pride in. Eastern Oregon is a big chunk of real estate. But we have managed to provide a comprehensive news package at our newspapers on a consistent basis for a long time. We are proud of the fact that we furnish our readers with complete coverage in a remote but lively part of our great state.

Joint publications among our newspapers is a way to “work

smarter,” and the payoff is that our readers gain a wealth of new information.

I am especially pleased that we will be giving you, the reader, more resources and inspiration to go, to get out and experience places and events that are part of our common heritage.

Expanding the reach of Go! Magazine wouldn't be possible if we didn't have someone to be a “champion” for the product, someone to see it through from beginning to end week after week. For us, that someone is Lisa Britton, who is based at the Baker City Herald and can be reached by phone (541-406-5274) or by email (lbritton@bakercityherald.com). If you have an event that you'd like to let readers know about, she is the person to contact. We need information at least a week in advance of publication, so the sooner you can submit an event, the better. We welcome news about concerts, art shows, festivals, community events, museum exhibits and more.

Andrew Cutler is the interim editor of The Observer and the regional editorial director for the EO Media Group, overseeing the La Grande Observer, East Oregonian and four more newspapers in Eastern Oregon.

EDITORIALS

Unsigned editorials are the opinion of The Observer editorial board. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of The Observer.

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The Observer welcomes letters to the editor. We edit letters for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons. We will not publish consumer complaints against businesses, personal attacks against private individuals or comments that can incite violence. We also discourage thank-you letters. Letters should be no longer than 350 words and must be signed and carry the author's name, address and phone number (for verification only). We will not publish

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- Letter writers are limited to one letter every two weeks.
- Longer community comment columns, such as My Voice, must be no more than 700 words. Writers must provide a recent headshot and a one-sentence biography. Like letters to the editor, columns must refrain from complaints against businesses or personal attacks against private individuals. Submissions must carry the author's name, address and phone number.
- Submission does not guarantee publication, which is at the discretion of the editor.

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letters@lagrandeobserver.com or via mail to Editor, 911 Jefferson Ave., La Grande, OR 97850

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