

Quick takes

Umatilla County celebrates Veterans Day

This is what rural communities are about, while others are protesting! So proud.
— **Rechelle Aylett Day**

Proud of *East Oregonian* coverage of such events as these and less about the silly protesters looking for attention!
— **Kevin Bailey**

Hunting guide poached trophy mule deer

He should have lost his hunting rights forever. Poaching for food is one thing. Trophy poaching is crap.
— **Shirley Westfall**

Port of Morrow project nixed

Hallelujah!
— **Nora Zimmerman**

Here is another example of an opportunity lost. Let's cripple the U.S. in regards to exports until we are dependent on other countries to survive. Here is an idea, let's come to a compromise and offer Native Americans a quota of the jobs at the new terminal. Just an idea. Canada has already taken advantage of this in Bellingham.
— **Kyle Thomas**

Uncertain marijuana industry under Trump presidency

He believes in state rights, and individual freedom. The industry will be OK. He also said he supports medical pot 100 percent. Relax, and give him a chance.
— **Logan Wood**

He supports states' rights and he is a businessman, I don't think he will squash those kinds of funds for state budgets.
— **Katie Sargent**

One of the great lessons of the Twitter age is that much can be summed up in just a few words. Here are some of this week's takes. Tweet yours @Tim_Trainor or email editor@eastoregonian.com, and keep them to 140 characters.

What you don't know about Standing Rock

By **PAUL VANDEVELDER**
Writers on the Range

What writers like me don't know about the world outweighs what we do know by a ratio of 100-1, at best. We get away with reporting the news as if we know something because, as Mark Twain noted, we do the legwork, we interview the colorful suspects, and we buy ink by the barrel.

Then comes a sudden, confounding event like the Dakota Access Pipeline controversy at the Hunkpapa Sioux's Standing Rock Reservation in south-central North Dakota. Encampments made up of members of hundreds of Indian nations and environmental organizations are protesting a proposed pipeline that will transport dinosaur juice from the Bakken oil fields near the Canadian border to refineries and ports in Illinois. In North Dakota alone, the pipeline will cross the Missouri River and nine of its major tributaries, as well as treaty-protected land belonging to the Hunkpapa Sioux.

The "water protectors" have increased by the day since August, at the confluence of the Missouri and Cannonball rivers. As the weeks turned into months, the "prayer camp" residents have become more resolutely entrenched, reminding journalists, local law enforcement officials and regional politicians from governors on down that when it comes to all things Indian, our best efforts to understand are not good enough.

It is no secret that the oil pipeline was routed across former Indian land in order to avoid contaminating the water supply of white-dominated communities. But most Americans lack a clear understanding of tribal sovereignty, the federal trust doctrine, or reserved rights treaties with Native nations. In fact, most of us are astonishingly ignorant about our own government.

The Intercollegiate Studies Institute, a conservative group founded five decades ago to measure civic literacy in American society, has demonstrated this by giving regular citizens the same exam immigrants take when they apply for American citizenship. Last year, when 2,500 college

graduates and elected politicians took that exam, 1,700 of them flunked! The average grade among those who failed was 49 percent. The ones that fared the worst, with a grade average of 44 percent, were elected politicians.

It's high time for a crash course in federalism and representative democracy. Before we allow Standing Rock to erupt into Wounded Knee III, all of us would do well to pause and ponder 10 important lessons that we should have learned in basic civics classes. The first fact is especially pertinent to the current situation:

1. Usufructory rights, the right of tribes to hunt, gather and fish in their "usual and accustomed places," is coupled in treaties with reserved rights, which are guaranteed in perpetuity to Indian nations by the United States government. These rights protect a tribe's ability to sustain the lives of its citizens with food, clean water, air, and natural resources, and to practice traditional religious customs, cultural practices and ceremonies without interference from non-Natives.

2. The Louisiana Purchase recognized Indian Nations as the owners of all the French territory west of the Mississippi. In that "purchase," the federal government acquired the right to use the rivers for commerce and to extend the nation's boundary to the Rocky Mountains — nothing more than that.

3. Treaties were made with Indian Nations in order to acquire public domain for white citizens as they pushed the American frontier west across the continent. These compacts and covenants are protected by Article VI, Clause 2 of the U.S. Constitution as "the supreme law of the land."

4. As "domestically dependent nations," in the words of Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall, Indian Nations enjoy the full rights and benefits of any sovereign government.

5. Federalism incorporates a trustee-guarantor relationship between the federal government and the Indian Nations in the U.S. Constitution (the trust doctrine) that obligates the federal government to safeguard treaties, reserved rights and

usufructory rights.

6. Treaties with Indian Nations constitute the granting of rights from the tribes to the federal government, not the other way around.

7. Every one of the 500-plus treaty councils in the 18th and 19th centuries was convened at the request of the federal government, not the tribes.

8. Because the federal government requested treaty councils with the Indians, the U.S. Supreme Court has also ruled that the resulting treaties must be interpreted in the manner in which the Indians would have understood their terms and conditions at the time they were negotiated.

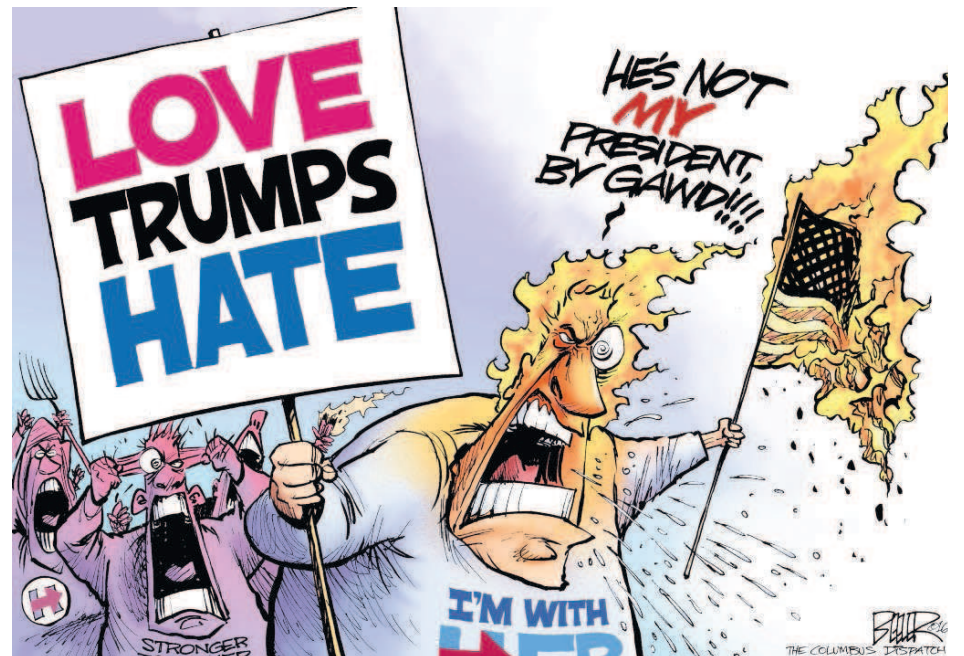
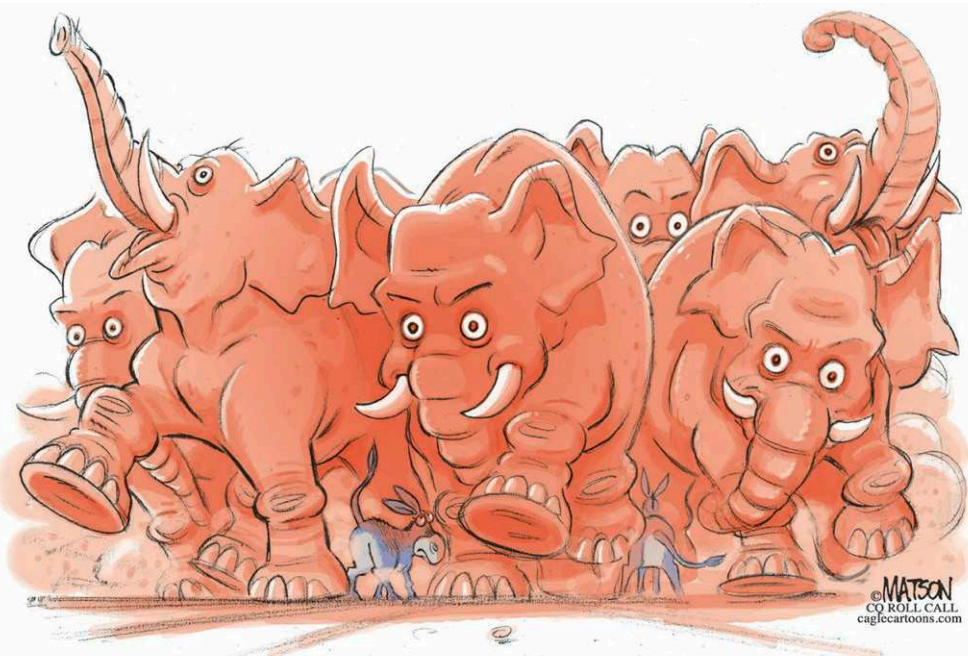
9. In most jurisdictional challenges, tribal sovereignty trumps state sovereignty.

10. David Archambault II, the tribal chairman of the Hunkpapa Sioux Nation, has as much legal standing at the United Nations and in international courts of law as any American president.

Legally, Indian tribes are powerful entities. In the matter of the Standing Rock Sioux vs. the Dakota Access Pipeline, I have little doubt that the tribe will prevail. The law of the land is on their side. Pipeline permits issued to oil companies by the Army Corps of Engineers do not trump the federal government's fiduciary responsibility to the tribes. Claims to the contrary by politicians are so much nonsense. For far too long, this, our "nation of laws, not of men" (in the words of John Adams) has acted with lawlessness and reckless abandon with its solemn responsibilities to the Indian Nations.

As the culture-war rhetoric simmers with caustic venom on the Northern Plains, the results of the civics survey mentioned earlier are sobering. Is it not disquieting to learn that 70 percent of us lack a rudimentary understanding of the basic principles of federalism? At what point do we cease to be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, and become a nation of the blind leading the blind?

Paul VanDevelder is a contributor to *High Country News*. He is a writer in Portland.



Trump tapped into rising anger

Donald Trump arrived on the political scene as citizen frustration over government reached a boiling point. It's as though once taxpayer anger hit a certain point, Trump stepped in to offer his services. I haven't been able to tell if the disappearance of the middle class really worries him or if he just recognizes an opportunity for fame and fortune when he sees one.

For years, the economic screws have been tightening on the lower and middle income groups in this country.

Pay has stagnated. Families work two, three, four jobs and still can't stay afloat.

Businesses have moved jobs to other countries.

Corporate tax lawyers have figured out how to excuse U.S. companies from paying income taxes.

Despite efforts to increase availability of medical insurance, affordable health care remains a goal for many families.

A college education is a doorway to the middle class for many, but sharply rising tuition fees intervene.

Democrats took Trump lightly until this election. He has no interest in policymaking and admits it. He tosses off random comments about letting Asian countries equip themselves with nuclear weapons and about the easiness of improving border security. The press and electronic news media have done some reporting on the U.S. income gap among groups but not in an urgent way. Filing for bankruptcy and refusing to pay contractors are part of Trump's wily life.

No wonder the Clinton group suffered from overconfidence — such as not campaigning in Wisconsin with its history of liberal politics. And some analysts feel that many Latino and black voters refused to tell pollsters whom they favored because of Trump's flaky reputation.

Big surprise on Nov. 8 and Clinton failed to help herself on key points. When the Clintons offered themselves on the stump, they did so as a couple who had taken advantage of their fame to become wealthy.



MIKE FORRESTER
Comment

For years, the economic screws have been tightening on the lower and middle income Americans.

A Hillary Clinton air of entitlement did not help her cause.

What are chances that Trump and members of Congress will try to address the economic vise that middle class Americans find themselves in? Will President Trump try to help his struggling countrymen who helped elect him? I hope so because members of the House and Senate — especially Republicans — have failed to support efforts to help jobs and the economy. Members of Congress benefit from lavish campaign contributions, and corporate lobbyists spend lots of time sidling up to the legislators.

Seems to me the \$64 question in all this is who bears the main responsibility for governing when the President-elect shuns policymaking and working with other political groups.

Members of Congress will need to be super-alert on both domestic issues and foreign affairs.

Especially foreign affairs, because our presidents have wide authority on their own to negotiate and sign international agreements and commit troops around the globe.

Maybe Trump will be able to attract smart, experienced people to his staff, or maybe not. Someone in the Trump organization got the candidate to sound and look more presidential in the last several weeks. I would vote for those figures to stay with Trump and help him.

Americans have been asked a lot why they picked Trump as a nominee. They did not; Trump picked the Republican party to join, maybe figuring Mrs. Clinton was vulnerable.

So what will Trump do in office, and to what extent will he keep the middle class in mind as he makes decisions? He has fooled lots of people so far. Here's one voter who suspects the Trump administration will be chaotic and would like Trump to take the job seriously and surprise us.

Mike Forrester is a former editor of the *East Oregonian*. He lives in Pendleton.

Democratic Oregon has become a political backwater

In the weeks following the final presidential debate, Democrats and the media made quite a stir over the fact Donald Trump refused to specify whether or not he would accept the outcome of the election. As they pointed out, it would be a blow to the Democratic process if he did otherwise.

First of all, the clamor is moot because it is quite clear he is accepting the outcome. What is also clear is the expectation represented a double standard that applied to Trump but apparently not to the liberals who were convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt they were going to lay claim to the White House.

As the *East Oregonian* noted in its editorial on Thursday morning, Barack Obama's election made many Americans feel scared, forgotten, confused, and angry.

Probably more so after he reminded his detractors of the spoils that come with election. But that being said, a search of the internet failed to produce widespread reports of marches, protests, flag burning, university unrest, threats of secession, reports of celebrities fleeing the country, or all the other outbursts that are mostly making it clear to the Trump supporters why they wanted change. No, while the election of Barack Obama was not universally popular, it was accepted as the country has always accepted the Democratic process. A large base of the Trump support came from people who want to go to work. One can assume a large number of the protesters are people who are afraid they might have to.

Like many Americans, I voted for Donald Trump primarily because there was absolutely no way I could vote for Hillary Clinton. After the underside of the Clinton support group is beginning to show itself for what it really is through its reaction to the election and repudiation of the Democratic process, I am more convinced than ever this country did not need more of the same.

I'm only saddened that Oregon has fundamentally become a political backwater. We aren't relevant nationally.



GEORGE MURDOCK
Comment

As expected, the state supported Hillary Clinton. Our two senators are both in the minority and in the House of Representatives, all but Rep. Walden are also on the sidelines. At the national level, those in charge certainly aren't going to be on speed dial with our governor. Our legislature, which has also successfully managed to buck the national trend, is the majority in Oregon, but won't get much traction outside our borders and will have plenty of challenges at home after the voters refused to send them on a spending spree.

Senator Wyden campaigned on the idea Oregon is different. He couldn't be more accurate. Sometimes, however, different has its limitations as well as its unique character.

OregonLive reported on Wednesday there is growing movement in Portland to secede from the union in the wake of Trump's election. That's not necessarily a bad idea if Eastern Oregon has the option of staying behind. We have a home on the Oregon coast and it would be more glamorous if visiting there represented international travel.

The reasoning behind the secession effort is a statement that Oregonian values are no longer those held by the rest of the United States. I would encourage those petitioners to study polling results from rural Oregon and see the difference. I would also encourage them to study a map of this state and see the tiny portion that did not agree with the rest of the United States. More than 75 percent of Oregon's counties did not follow Portland's lead.

It is time for the Clinton supporters to accept the outcome of the election and time for the media to be reminded their task is to report the news, not create it.

Like many others, I wonder where the country is headed. And, like many others, any hope we might have did not include continuing in the same direction.

George Murdock is a Umatilla County Commissioner and former publisher of the *East Oregonian*.