

Divide Camp, Wallowa could benefit each other

Finally, something good may now be developing for both the City of Wallowa and U.S. war veterans.

EDITORIAL
The voice of the Chieftain

In case you haven't already heard, Wallowa's alternately much-wanted and little-wanted, one-acre-plus compound that was originally a home to U.S. Forest Service operations could be seeing a new long-term tenancy. Rural Joseph non-profit Divide Camp – which provides a beautiful setting where individuals enjoy peace after their military service that included war – proposes to establish an ongoing presence also within Wallowa. If this new relationship takes hold, it's one that compassionate and patriotic townsfolk are apt to feel somewhat proud of.

Credit for that community victory, if it comes, probably should in large measure go to one city councilor who politely declined for a brief spell to run with her herd.

Back in November, Lisa Mahon expressed her reservations with a Wallowa City Council consensus directive charting the city's next step at that point in its lease negotiations with Divide Camp. Weeks earlier, the non-profit had seemingly arrived out of nowhere with a proposal to lease the former USFS compound, about half a year after the site's presumptive occupant, the Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center, had suddenly abandoned a long and carefully nurtured plan to establish headquarters there.

For MHIC and the city, laying the foundation for MHIC's eventual tenancy had entailed nothing less than gaining an act of the U.S. Congress, complete with a presidential signature. The accomplishment was unavoidably punctuated by fanfare that involved members of Oregon's congressional delegation and other federal types.

Sometime after all the hoopla died down, the city and Maxville Heritage discovered that they held divergent views as to what, specifically, should be included in an actual lease, however. Over time, MHIC apparently determined those differences to be unbridgeable, so MHIC walked away.

What should Wallowa now do with its ex-federal property? Nobody seemed to have a clue. The city asked about returning it to the Forest Service, but the feds quickly rebuffed that inquiry.

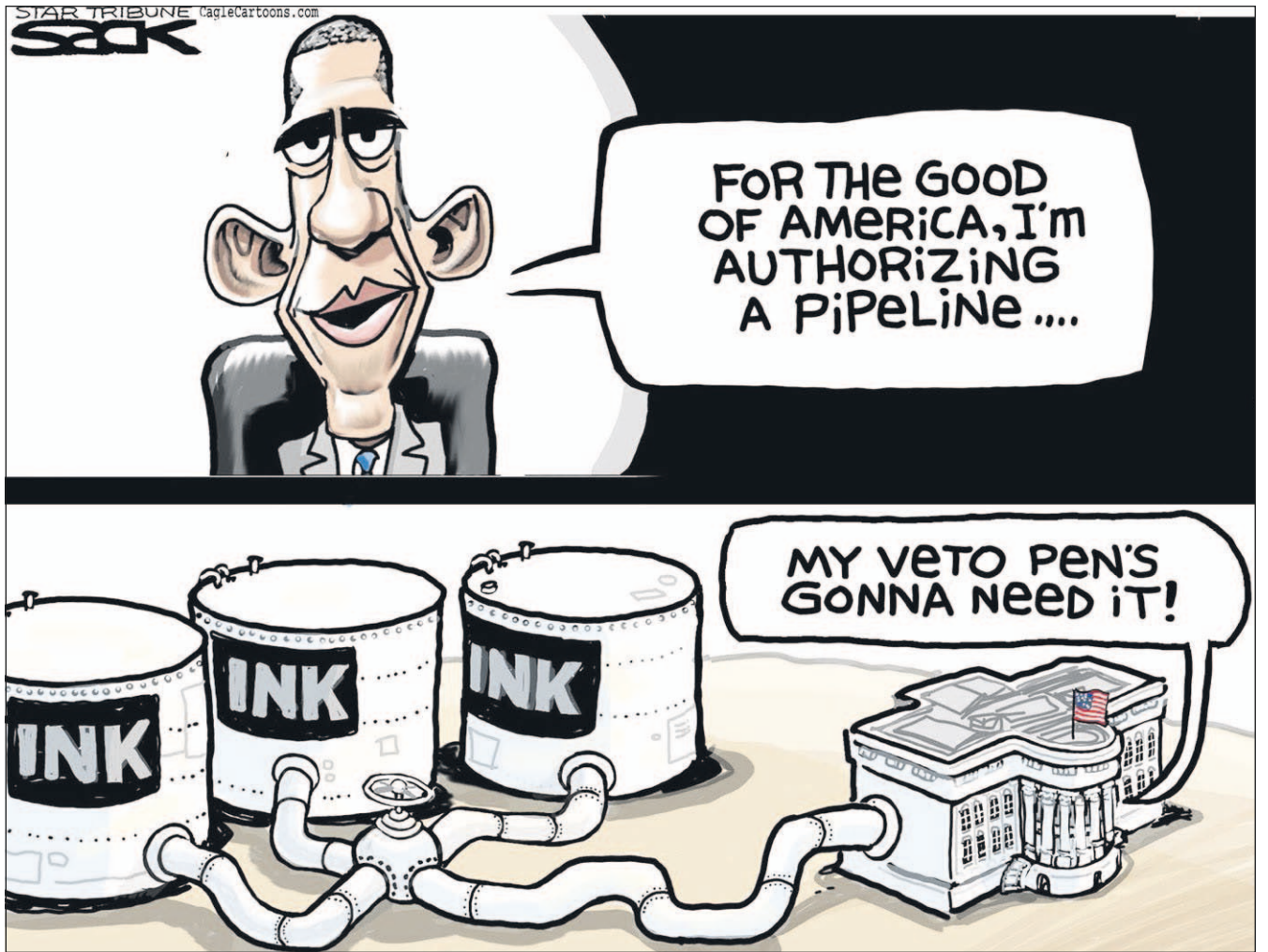
Divide Camp's unexpected interest, then, could be regarded as something of a godsend. It's not clear that city officials have always seen it that way, though. For example, an observer might wonder why the city was insistent that the new prospective tenant work with the same lease offer that had been rejected by the previous prospect, MHIC.

As the dance proceeded, Divide Camp introduced significant amounts of its own language, eschewing the city's template. At that moment, in a special meeting a few days shy of the new year, city officials faced a critical choice: either consider the counteroffer's substance to move negotiations along, or reject it outright. It sounded like they were heading the latter direction, which amounts to "my way or the highway," but then Mahon spoke up to remind everyone that she had never been in favor of an inflexible stance with regard to the agreement's form.

She didn't have to argue very long or hard to win the day, but it's hard to imagine that negotiations would still be alive if she hadn't. We soon should know whether they'll be bearing fruit.

For our part, we hope that they do. Adding a Divide Camp office could further reinforce one of the positive elements in Wallowa's image – as the town that relishes the role of hosting the area's 4th of July Parade, and whose residents last year responded so warmly to a couple of young kids who raised funds for new American flags along its main drag.

—RCR



Local year better than nation's

Well, it's that time of year. Time to say *adios* to 2014 and maybe reflect a little on the past year. One thing about January, all that depressing Christmas music is over till next Halloween. Ebenezer had it right, bah humbug. Have you ever considered that letters to Santa might just be collecting intel as to what will sell? The best thing about Xmas is that the days have been getting longer for four days.

It's been a pretty good year here in Wallowa County. Record cattle prices and good hay and grain prices have sure helped the mood and economy of this county. The Dow Jones average is over 18K and the Nasdaq is ready to set a record. The fact that this has all happened during a Democratic administration has yet to cause a stampede to the county clerk's office for local voters to change registration. The cattle market has been propelled by the perfect storm, low numbers and cheap corn. Maybe some of these ranches for sale will come closer to penciling out.

Watching the news I have come to the conclusion that racial diversity is over-rated. The only graffiti I see here is on box cars passing through and our county hasn't seen the demonstrating and looting other parts of the country are dealing with. It's time for the inflammatory rhetoric about police racism to



OPEN RANGE

Barrie Qualle

calm down. Two NYPD officers have been ambushed and died because some zealot became inflamed by all the hateful rhetoric. New York City hate demonstrators chanting, "What do we want – dead cops; when do we want it – now!" on network TV is counter-productive.

Let's face it, that thug in Ferguson and the guy in New York would be alive if they hadn't been breaking the law and resisting arrest. We can't have two sets of laws, one for minorities and one for the rest. This is a nation of laws and when the grand jury arrives at a conclusion we shouldn't have anarchy because some of the populace disagree. For several decades minorities have been moved to the front of the line by laws like affirmative action and several other programs. These advantages were totally needed when enacted but there comes a time when you have to do something for yourself. Ferguson demonstrators and looters, put your hands down and get a job.

I realize that anyone who dares to criticize this problem is immediately la-

beled a racist. That may not be the case. Maybe they just want everyone treated fairly and equally.

We were talking about New Year's resolutions and Don Kiser has resolved to let himself go and try to take it easier in 2015. Lowell Lewis and I have resolved to quit borrowing Steve Zollman's equipment until he gets better machinery and the list I spent considerable time developing for my wife continues to be ignored. Brian Bjornson, a former Marlboro Man living in Wallowa, and myself are looking into filing a disability claim now that age has damaged our good looks and modeling careers.

A local dignitary told me he went out New Year's Eve and had a few cocktails followed by several glass of wine. Despite his jolliness, he still had the sense to know he was over the limit. That's when he decided to do what he had never done before. He took a cab home. Sure enough there was a DUI check-point but, since it was a cab, they waved it past. He arrived home without incident.

This was both a great relief and surprise because he had never driven a cab before. Now he has a cab in his garage and doesn't even know where he got it.

Hope 2015 is a good one for all.
Open Range columnist Barrie Qualle is a working cowboy in Wallowa County.

Little guy doesn't always lose

By Rocky Wilson

When I was younger, which, if I remember, was prior to yesterday, I performed in a high school production of the 1950s stage play "The Mouse That Roared."

You might gain an idea of how important my role was to the overall success of that endeavor by learning my stage name then: Third Soldier.

It's a humorous British comedy about the little guy who fights back and not only wins, but wins far more than he bargained for.

In brief, the tiny European Duchy of Grand Fenwick loses all income thanks to an American corporation that develops and markets a cheaper, inferior wine that effectively axes the Duchy's sole industry, its quality wine.

Not deterred, Grand Fenwick's prime minister designs a foolproof scheme to avail his country of America's propensity to shower major gifts on countries the U.S. has defeated in war. Hence, with 20 soldiers and bows and arrows, an invasion force is sent across the Atlantic to lose a short war.

Heading the force is Tully Bascombe, a less-than mental giant given the primary objective to, like a quarterback kneeling down to solidify a big victory, surrender a yard and win the game. Unfortunately, Tully and men arrive in

JABBERWOCK II

New York during an air raid drill, find no one to surrender to and, after stumbling across the presence of Dr. Alfred Kokintz and men carrying a Q bomb capable of destroying an entire continent, Tully takes Dr. Kokintz, his entourage, and the bomb captive, and wins the war.

This, of course, creates unexpected problems for a tiny nation used to fighting with bows and arrows, and before long super powers around the globe begin wooing Grand Fenwick to place ultimate power back in the hands of those who should have it, whomever that should be at the time.

Communication is important and the significance of that 60-year-old political satire should not be overlooked.

It's not a slam dunk that the little guy has to lose every time.

Whether using parables – which someone past and present maxed out in applicable effectiveness – satire, or analogy, there is a great advantage to those who both know what they want to say and how best to communicate themselves. A lady from my past, a graduate of Presbyterian Seminary who went on to study numerous Eastern religions before becoming a sought

counselor, clarified for me the defining lines between being aggressive, assertive, and passive. And I totally agree with her teaching that being assertive is the way to go. For it's only in that middle-ground where you will be respected for your words. Aggressive shuts down the ears of others and passive intimates that you have little, if anything of true merit to say.

By definition, assertive persons know what they believe and when and how to say it.

In the form of an analogy, the leadership of Wallowa County is not all that different from the prime minister of the Duchy of Grand Fenwick. Insert timber for wine and the Forest Service for the United States in Leonard Wibberley's 1955 novel that became a movie starring Peter Sellers in 1959, and the pieces begin to tumble into place.

How to mount the attack on the Forest Service is where the analogy falters. The Forest Service not only is big, but owns 51 percent of our large county in a country where, supposedly, the majority rules. Still, laws must be adhered to and, hidden somewhere, the writers of our Constitution must have inserted some forgotten stopgap where the rights of the little guys are not negated by changing political philosophies.

Jabberwock II columnist Rocky Wilson is a reporter for the Chieftain.

USFS recipe ignores local desires

To the Editor:

A recipe for locking up public lands to motorized use.

Ingredients – 1 Regional Forester, 3 Forest Supervisors, Environmental Groups and State Agencies (ODFW preferred), Seasonings - flouting rules and ignoring the public.

1) You take one forest supervisor that is within retirement age and willing to sellout entire communities to get his high 3 for retirement, add in 2 others that will blend smoothly with a Regional Forester picked ripe from the vine to force motorized use restrictions on the public. Blend in a yearly bonus of somewhere around \$5,000 a year to turn a deaf ear to local residents' calls for keeping their mountains open.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

2) In a separate bowl collect a ratio of "interested groups" 4 to 1, Anti-motorized use to Pro-motorized use to cover the supervisors and regional forester.

3) Spread the "interest group" topping over the blended Forest Supervisor/Regional Forester mix and cover heavily as to disguise any sense of pre-conceived agenda.

4) Apply a generous seasoning of flouting rules on how public engagement should occur, smothered with a heavy application of ignoring the pub-

lic on their concerns.

Place in a "consensus" oven set at, till hell freezes over, and wait to see when the Forest Supervisors and Regional Foresters actually act upon locals' concerns.

Meal will be done when the supervisors and regional forester are soft to the touch, poking with an email or phone call to test tenderness, and are ready act upon local residents' concerns.

Until they reach that point you should place the meal back into the oven and increase the heat till such time as the Forest Supervisors and Regional Forester act accordingly or are done, whichever comes first.

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