

OPINION

VOICE of the CHIEFTAIN

Greater Idaho movement not going away

If nothing else, the organizers behind the Greater Idaho movement are persistent.

The group, which is seeking the ultimate goal of moving part or all of more than 20 Oregon counties into Idaho (which they say is a better cultural match than Western Oregon) has taken the next step to try and gain approval in Wallowa County. Last week, it was announced they had received the OK to gather signatures for a petition to get on the November ballot.

The measure, as has been reported previously, fell by a slim margin — just 41 votes — in November 2020. That could have derailed supporters of the movement, but instead, it appears it's only emboldened them. The new ballot measure being proposed is slightly different than the previous one, requiring county commissioners to meet just twice annually as opposed to three times. That, combined with there being more information organizers can share about the movement, has them hopeful that the second time will be the charm.

The movement, as unlikely as its ultimate goal seems, is gaining traction. Eight counties have already approved measures similar to the one signature gatherers will be hoping to put on the November ballot. Three more are slated to vote next month on it. At least two other counties are in a similar position to Wallowa County and are either at or nearing the petition phase. Conceivably, more than 63% of the counties organizers are seeking to be part of the movement could be discussing the move to Idaho by the end of November. That's a pretty decent chunk in less than three years.

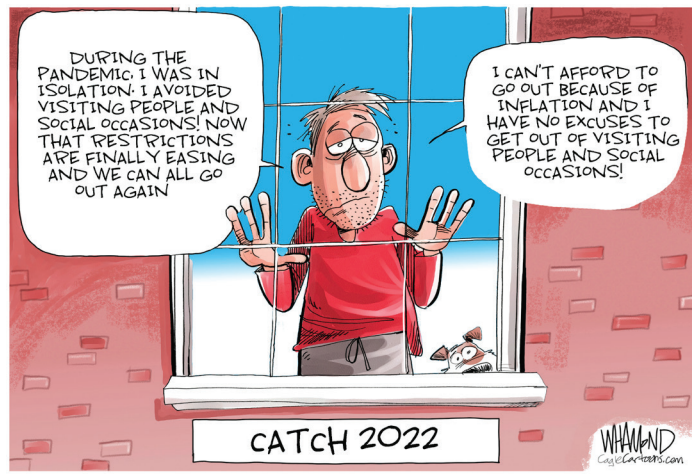
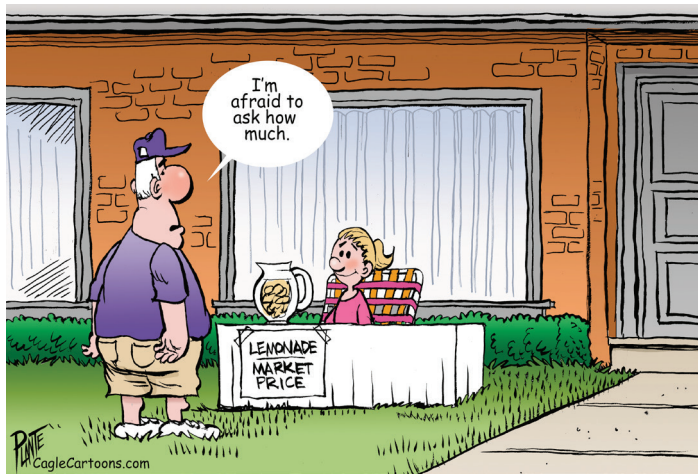
Should this get to the Wallowa County voters — and we see no reason why it won't — it will be very interesting to see how they respond this time. Will there be more disgruntled among those who said "no" last time who switch their vote? Will the group that staunchly wants to keep Oregon as it is keep its edge and win out? Will the minor adjustment to the measure text and more information make a difference?

Regardless of what happens in November, there is a long way for proponents to go, even if they eventually manage to get all 22 counties on board. The states would ultimately have to agree to it, as would Congress.

Is it a long shot? Absolutely.

But the fact that we are still talking about it is evidence that the movement isn't going to die off any time soon.

The organizers clearly believe that their persistence will, in the end, pay off.



LETTERS to the EDITOR

Wake up, America

It was not so long ago that much-loved Democrat President John F. Kennedy told the nation in his 1961 inaugural address, "Ask not what our country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," implying a sense of self-sacrifice was needed by all Americans to keep the torch of freedom burning bright in a world filled with tyranny.

This was an idea most could relate to regardless of political affiliation.

But times have changed, and modern liberal philosophy has become almost unrecognizable to previous generations. It can be more accurately described as "Forget personal sacrifice, keep sitting on your behind and let the government rob your neighbor for you."

I would ask you to read Kennedy's speech, which he referred to God and the people in his speech. He said, "the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God."

When was the last time you heard a political speech from a Democrat politician mention God in their speeches? It has been 61 years since President Kennedy made that speech, and I was a Democrat at the time, now each and every

Democrat political priority can be broken down to a simple concept: They are all designed to take money and power away from individuals, families, communities, businesses, charities and states and transfer it directly to the federal government. I changed my political party affiliation in 2016, and I would encourage the decent Democrats of America to think long and hard for which party you choose to live under. You have until April 26 to change your voting registration in the state of Oregon.

Kathy Wilson
Pendleton

Be nice to the person behind the counter

I know we've all had enough of COVID, lack of supplies and rising prices. But I am concerned about what I hear from our checkout people at every store I go to, saying they can't believe how rude and angry people are getting.

Some have even retired early because they have had enough — and you wonder why there aren't more aisles open for checking out?

Granted, there are a lot of people sitting at home and letting us pay for their

living, but it is not the people who serve us who have raised prices, slowed the supply chain or made us wait a little longer to get our errands done.

Let's start being much nicer to the person behind the counter who is just trying to make a living and doing their job — let's make their day by being nice. Because if it was you behind that counter instead, how would you feel?

Judi Richter
Elgin

Could a law like the Second Amendment help Ukraine?

The Second Amendment is part of the Bill of Rights added to the U.S. Constitution on Dec. 15, 1791.

As I witness the ravaging destruction of communities in Ukraine by Russian forces, I am reminded of our nation's Second Amendment: "The right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

I wonder, what if the Ukraine citizens owned and competently operated their guns, if they would be so helplessly vulnerable to the aggressive assaults inflicted by Putin's dishonorable warriors.

Susan Mangnall-Harris
Wallowa

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