

## OPINION

### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Ronald Bond



# One chapter comes to an end

I've thought for a month now — since I submitted the paperwork on March 28 — about what to say in this space.

The words still elude me. I guess I should begin with the fact that May 3 was my final day — and this edition my final one — as the editor of the Wallowa County Chieftain, though my byline may still appear from time to time as a freelance contributor.

How to recount this time is something I will ponder for a while. Though I had editorial experience on an interim basis and experience as a sports editor, this was my first time as an editor.

As I look back, there are articles and editions we put out that I will be proud of for quite some time. There are stretches of good work we did that made it in the pages of the Chieftain, and made it to our website.

There are moments, too, that I would absolutely do over again given an opportunity. Moments of frustration (mostly at myself). Moments of disappointment. Of anger. Of confusion. Even of sadness.

In all of it, my hope is that we put out a product each week that reflected the community well and something that the community — meaning each one of you — could be proud of. There are times we did, but also times we didn't.

It was definitely a time that taught me a lot, that grew me, that challenged me, that has helped further shape who I am.

In fact, the last year of my life has been seen through that sphere of growth, lessons and challenges — getting married, gaining two daughters in the process, trying to learn how to be a dad and how to balance work life and home life (which we all have to do) were just a few for me. Both — being an editor and a father — require full-time attention, and I certainly have had moments where I felt I could have done better in both arenas.

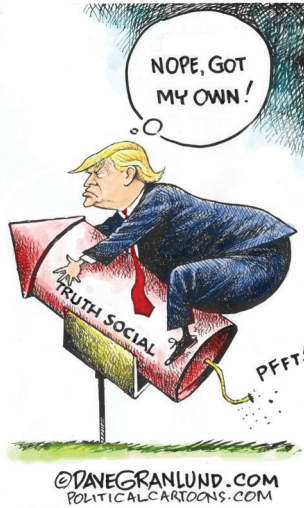
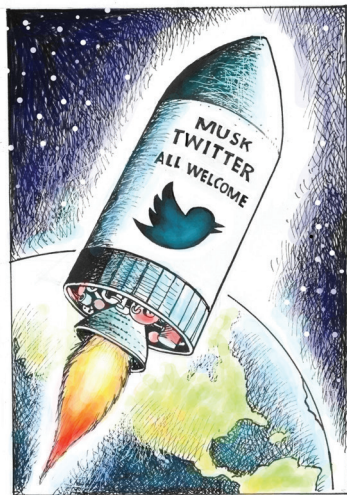
If I have learned anything in the last year, it is that I want to be a good representative of Jesus, a good husband, a good father and a good worker. Specifically to my role here, was I a good representative of my Lord? That is a question I have pondered often in recent weeks. Even as I write this, the question that comes to mind is "What does that look like as an editor?" I think, in part, it means working hard, telling the truth, standing on one's convictions, showing kindness and gentleness to those I work with. As I reflect on hundreds of conversations, emails, phone calls, etc. over the last 18 months, I am certain there are some who I did not show this to. To them, I apologize and hope to gain your forgiveness.

To the readers, you have been gracious to take in this paper each week, to allow us into your home. You didn't have to. For that, I am grateful. Thank you for working with me on stories, for patience as I tried to find my way in this role (often stumbling) and, as painful as it was at times, for holding my feet to the fire to cause me to reflect.

I also want to extend my gratitude to the staff, in office and across the company, that I have worked with. Specifically, thanks to Andrew Cutler, Karrine Brogotti and Jennifer Cooney for considering me for this role and giving me an opportunity. I know there were many ups and downs in the 18 months, but I hope we can all reflect on it well.

There are still details for myself to work out in the weeks ahead, and I don't know exactly how things may fall, but I know who does, and I am trusting him as I take this next step. I'm excited to see where it leads me.

God bless you all.



### LETTERS to the EDITOR

#### East Moraine comments clarified

In the story published on April 26 about the East Moraine community forest, you quoted Commissioner Nash as saying that there was discussion of not allowing people to walk on the East Moraine. To be clear, none of the members of the moraine partnership have proposed that people should not be allowed to walk on the moraine.

Also, when you report on the negotiations involving the East Moraine, remember there are eight partners involved in the negotiations. Good journalism requires that you spend time talking to more than one of them.

**Benjamin Curry**  
chairman, Wallowa Land Trust Board  
Joseph

#### Response to 'How to change from Oregon to Idaho'

The reason there are people that want to change from Oregon to Idaho is not really about taxes. It's about representation.

Idaho does not have the same voting conundrum that Oregon does. Meaning the east side of Oregon could vote en masse one way to support our rural lifestyle and needs of our employment goals and lifestyle. Those votes often don't matter. The Portland, Multnomah area cancels our votes/needs. We can all see what a good job the Portland area is doing. #tongueincheek. Much like San Francisco, the rest of the state will follow before too long.

There are no "Portland-like areas" in the state of Idaho. That is why some think it would be good to make the change. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy Portland on many levels. I see its efforts politically making things worse, in concept and result. Much of what goes on there is the result of that voting base. I don't want that for them, but I really don't want that for us. I don't think that they care about our existence when they vote.

Plus, the numbers in the letter to the editor on taxes are a bit misleading. The

overall tax burden in Oregon is 8,650, 25th highest in the country. This includes sales/excise, property tax and income tax. Washington is 8,370, 30th highest in the country. Idaho is 7,590 making it the 40th highest in the country. Oregon does not have a sales tax, Washington does not have an income tax. Idaho has both yet they are still lower in tax burden than both of their neighbors. Nevada is also higher than Idaho, but Montana is a tiny bit lower. That would just make our commute too far. So no matter how you slice it, taxes are less in Idaho.

I want to stay Oregon, but the west side of these beautiful mountains makes me worry about the future of Eastern Oregon.

**Lawrence McBurney**  
Joseph

#### 'Let us be free to think and do as we choose'

I just love it when some political writer insinuates that they can read my mind and tell us how to think. The people that want to share our politics with Idaho are a disgruntled few, so that leaves nearly half the county voters as...?

Why must we be put in a labeled bucket just because we do not support your particular values or party? At least some of us are not so interested in having the Oregon leadership telling us to spend our taxes on illegal immigrants and people who simply will not take a job even when many are available.

We want justice that is fair to all and equally enforced. Many of us would be willing to pay more in taxes to have more rights and freedom than we presently have. We do not believe in government that extends a declared emergency to indefinitely extend their control over our lives. Many of their rules are proving they did not follow the science and were of questionable value. I do not believe that the mass of people living and polluting the westside should tell me how to live and think.

Guess I am too independent for others to tell me how to live in my locale. Let us be free to think and do as we choose instead

of telling us we are not intelligent enough to take care of ourselves. Let us be free Western Americans wanting to choose our own way instead of being the sheep that just follows. If you don't like the way we think, then give us native Oregonians your approval to join a different government without leaving our homes. Let us decide if we will be the loser.

Evidently, our freedoms are worth more to us than you. Are you willing to sell your freedom for a little less taxes and be chained to the Oregon political machine?

**John Isley**  
Enterprise

#### Kerry McQuisten for governor

Are you awake yet? Our freedoms are extremely fragile. Oregon is in a state of disaster! Are you fed up with your gun rights being threatened? Are you tired of living in fear? Do you worry that your timber will needlessly burn? Does it concern you that our kids are being indoctrinated with evil in public schools? Are you disturbed by the possibility of more lockdowns and mandates? Do you believe in medical freedom? Are you irritated by the rise in crime in our state? Do you go to bed anxious that your property will be the next one burglarized? Are you outraged that you live in a state that does not "back the blue," but instead enables lawlessness? Are you as disgusted as I am, that we live in a state that promotes the death of unborn children? Are you happy with the state's gross mismanagement and the effects on your business? Did you ever believe that you would live in a state that would shut down places of worship, but would still allow for liquor stores and big box stores to remain open?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, then a vote for Kerry McQuisten is the only solution and the only hope. I undoubtedly believe that she has what it takes to save Oregon! As for me and my family, locally and across the state, it is a big YES for Kerry McQuisten!!!

**Thomas Hughes**  
Baker City