

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

The origin of giving thanks

Editorial from The (Bend) Bulletin:

Editor's note: In the midst of the trauma of the Civil War, Thanksgiving was made a formal, annual holiday. There was a lot for President Lincoln to be thankful for in the fall of 1863. The Union Army had triumphed over the Confederates months earlier at Vicksburg and Gettysburg. Ultimate victory and an end to the war appeared that much closer. Lincoln's proclamation, issued on Oct. 3, 1863, made the celebration a national holiday to be celebrated each year on the last Thursday of November. The proclamation was written by William Seward, the secretary of state. Here is the original text, without any corrected or modernized spelling or grammar:

The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God.

In the midst of a civil war of unequaled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign States to invite and to provoke their aggression, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere except in the theatre of military conflict; while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union.

Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence, have not arrested the plough, the shuttle or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore.

Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consiousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom.

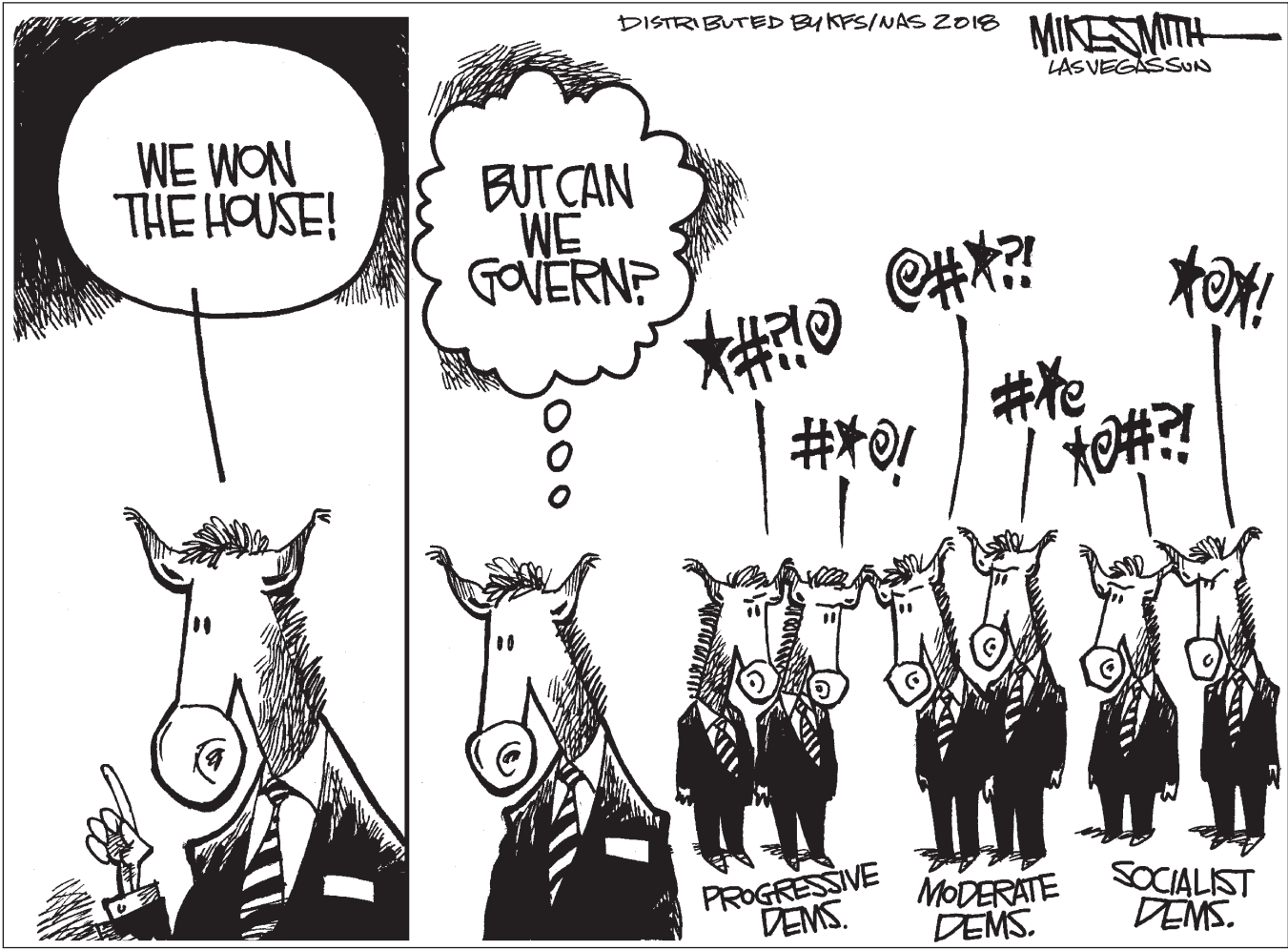
No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things.

They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American People.

I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.

And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States to be affixed.



Your views

Residents need to get involved with city business

With all the political turmoil we have seen of late and with Baker City facing serious financial difficulty I felt compelled to run for city council. The people have spoken and I did not make the cut. Oh well. That being said I want to thank all of you who favored me with your vote. I appreciate your support.

Though not gaining a seat in this election I came to realize how many of you share my concerns for the problems facing us as a community. January opens with a new council. Perhaps we can aid them in their responsible position. Rather than be frustrated by decisions made by the council, attend some of the meetings. If you have knowledge of an agenda item your voice is important. Unfortunately many councilors were known for not reading their packets. These contain information related to the topics facing a vote at the forthcoming meeting. It is hard to make an informed decision when one turns a blind eye to the details.

An initial question for our new councilors might be, "How many have read and understand the city charter?" This is the guiding document for the operation of the city. Should you want to read this document I encourage you to visit or call the city manager's office for a copy. If you go to the city web page and click on the button labeled "Municipal Code" you will see a new page. The top item on the left is ">Charter." There you can download and print the document.

Somewhere over time an important concept was lost and this is it — the city is run by you. The council is voted in to protect and advance your interests. They direct the city manager and city staff in all aspects of city operation based on information provided by our city employees. If the councilors feel they have not received adequate information regarding a proposed action they should defer making a decision. Disturbingly, over the years the staff directs and the council accepts. Any time there is a pattern of unanimous passage of items, beware!

Rick Rienks
Baker City

McLeod-Skinner thanks supporters, urges action

I've spent this past week immersed in family and reflection. I am so grateful to my family — for

Letters to the editor

We welcome letters on any issue of public interest. Letters are limited to 350 words. Writers are limited to one letter every 15 days. Writers must sign their letter and include an address and phone number (for verification only). Email letters to news@bakercityherald.com.

the sacrifices they made so I could pursue this vision of bringing people together around our shared values. We've spent much of the past week catching up and re-connecting — going to parks, watching movies, talking, and laughing.

I am grateful to my amazing team — who worked so hard to accomplish our goal of bringing people together for our common purpose. I often said I was just one member of a remarkable group. Thanks to those who are working on wrapping up this campaign and debriefing on the lessons learned.

My thanks to all of you who have supported us and participated in some way — believing that we can forge a path forward together and helping to make it possible. I am grateful to each and every one of you.

Our vision of bringing people together, across the political divide, endures. We can work together to build healthier and strong communities. We have built an infrastructure to bridge the divide. Please stay engaged.

I will continue our efforts with two areas of focus:

- 1) Continuing to connect people and communities — bringing people together around issues impacting our communities; and
- 2) Holding government accountable — raising key issues, monitoring voting patterns, and promoting campaign finance reform.

I ask for your help with this work. It sets the stage not just to win elections but, importantly, to rebuild trust. Government can be a force for good in our lives.

Jamie McLeod-Skinner
Terrebonne

Power lines and the potential for catastrophic wildfires

Besides being uninvited and running their high voltage powerlines through Baker Valley (and the rest of Eastern Oregon) scarring not only the

viewscape of the BLM's Oregon Trail Interpretive Center but desecrating our national heritage by destroying parts of the trail itself, Idaho Power still insists on railroading their project through our valley, giving us nada, not even a substation. There are plenty of other reasons to tell Idaho Power to go take a hike but two words concerning this project should be of worry: Wildfire and Paradise.

Although the cause of the Paradise apocalypse is still under investigation all signs indicate that this is yet another fire started by Pacific Gas and Electric and even if PG&E didn't start it, California officials finger 17 out of 21 major fires on PG&E in Northern California last year. Most of the fires started due to poor maintenance of power poles and failure to trim vegetation around power lines. PG&E is not Idaho Power and, thank God, Baker is not in Northern California but under the right conditions Baker also could also be rendered into smoking ash piles.

Any wildfire originating from Idaho Power's negligence — and there will be negligence — Idaho Power's proposed pass-the-buck plan is to not only lay the burden on local fire districts to fight IP's fires but landowners may be on the hook for fires caused by transmission lines crossing their land. Baker County requested that Idaho Power pay for a specialized unit and equipment to respond to fires caused along this transmission line; however, Idaho Power has refused this request. Idaho Power insists they are a responsible corporation but if we are supposed to trust their integrity that our community will not get burned down because of their promises, then why aren't they offering our community fire protection? Remember the fish ladders Idaho Power was supposed to put in on their dams on the Snake? Half a century later the ladders still have not been installed. What makes people think Idaho Power will protect us from wildfires they start when their track record is one of repeated deceit?

Idaho Power only answers to its stockholders, not to a community that they could care less about and annihilate simply because of their arrogance and a limitless hankering for profits. Idaho Power, take your powerlines, go back to Idaho and torch your own nest.

Whit Deschner
Baker City

CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

President Donald Trump: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20500; 202-456-1414; fax 202-456-2461; to send comments, go to www.whitehouse.gov/contact.
U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley: D.C. office: 313 Hart Senate Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-3753; fax 202-228-3997. Portland office: One World Trade Center, 121 S.W. Salmon St. Suite 1250, Portland, OR 97204; 503-326-3386; fax 503-326-2900. Pendleton office: 310 S.E. Second St. Suite 105, Pendleton 97801; 541-278-1129; merkley.senate.gov.
U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden: D.C. office: 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-5244; fax 202-228-2717. La Grande office: 105 Fir St., No. 210, La Grande, OR 97850;

541-962-7691; fax, 541-963-0885; wyden.senate.gov.
U.S. Rep. Greg Walden (2nd District): D.C. office: 2182 Rayburn Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20515, 202-225-6730; fax 202-225-5774. La Grande office: 1211 Washington Ave., La Grande, OR 97850; 541-624-2400, fax, 541-624-2402; walden.house.gov.
Oregon Gov. Kate Brown: 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310; 503-378-3111; www.governor.oregon.gov.
Oregon Attorney General Ellen F. Rosenblum: Justice Building, Salem, OR 97301-4096; 503-378-4400.
Oregon Legislature: Legislative documents and information are available online at www.leg.state.or.us.
State Sen. Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario): Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., S-301,

Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1730. District office: P.O. Box 1027, Ontario, OR 97914; 541-889-8866.
State Rep. Lynn Findley (R-Vale): Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., H-475, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1460. Email: Rep.LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov
Baker City Hall: 1655 First Street, P.O. Box 650, Baker City, OR 97814; 541-523-6541; fax 541-524-2049. City Council meets the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers. Mike Downing, Loran Joseph, Randy Schiewe, Rosemary Abell, Arvid Andersen and Adam Nilsson.
Baker City administration: 541-523-6541. Fred Warner Jr., city manager; Dustin Newman, police chief; John Clark, fire chief; Michelle Owen, public works director.

