

## EDITORIAL

## River Democracy Act will get needed maps

The maps are coming. That's what Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, told The Bend Bulletin's community editorial board Monday, Aug. 15 about the River Democracy Act.

And we think it is great.

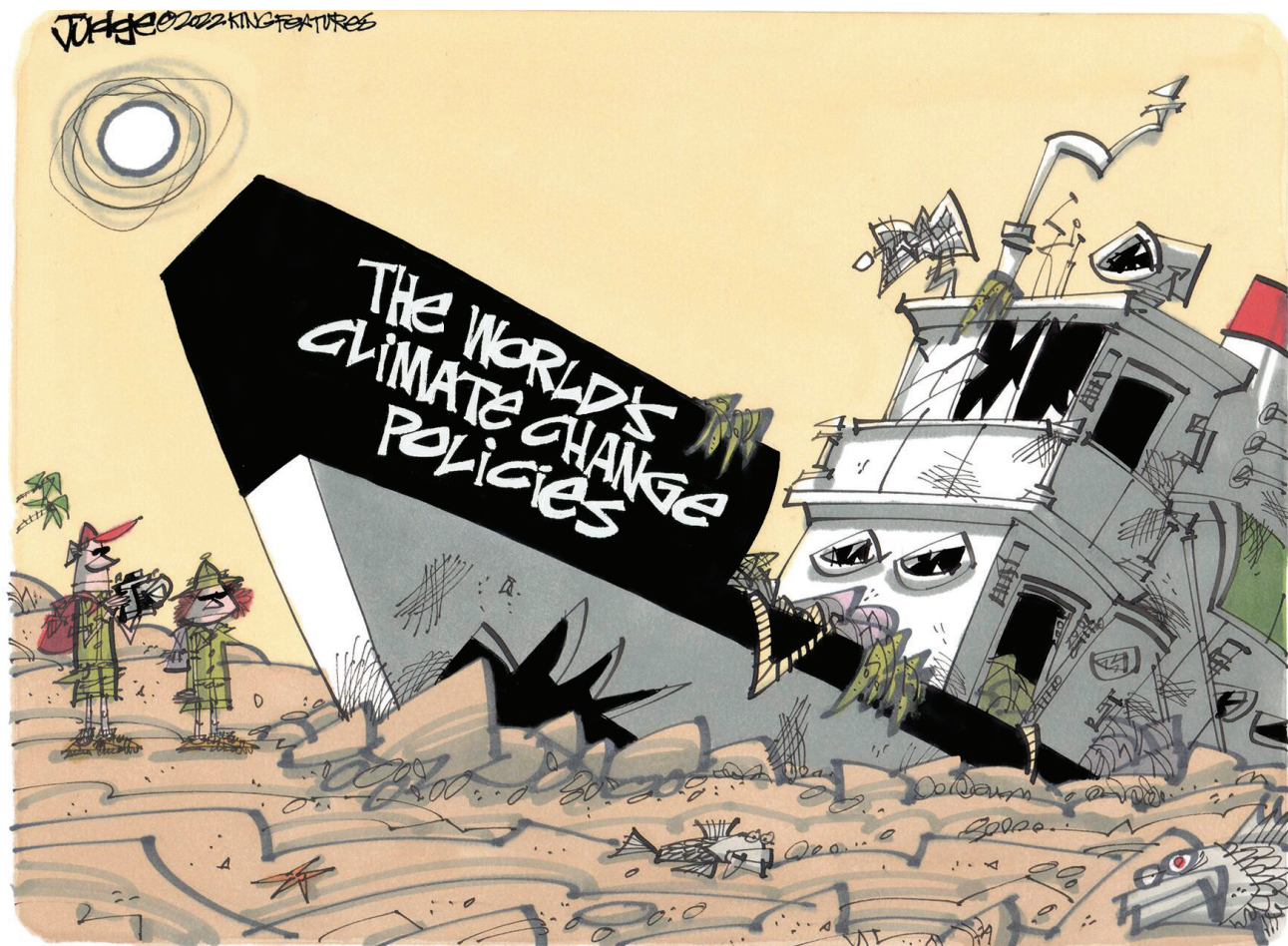
Wyden and his fellow Oregon Democrat, Sen. Jeff Merkley, introduced the River Democracy Act in February 2021. It would designate 4,700 miles of waterways in Oregon as wild and scenic. That's the highest level of environmental protection a waterway can get. Free-flowing and unpolluted water are goals. Good for floating. Good for drinking water. Good for recreation and recreation jobs. Good for wildlife. Good for river health. Many conservationists and groups adore the idea.

Not everyone does. Oregon Rep. Cliff Bentz, a Republican, said earlier this year the added layer of environmental regulation would make the areas around designated waterways more difficult to treat for wildfire and more dangerous. "... (T)his designation will prevent what needs to be done to protect these watersheds — placing them in a bureaucratic wasteland where it will take years, if not decades, to initiate and then complete plans that may or may not allow the treatment activities needed right now," Bentz said in a statement.

And of course, private property owners adjacent to a designated area may face new levels of regulation and scrutiny. The act does say: Nothing in this Act or an amendment made by this Act affects private property rights with respect to a covered segment.

Whatever you may think about the River Democracy Act, the thing that struck us most about its 283 pages was how hard it was to figure out where the designations would apply. There are word descriptions of where the designations begin and end. What it needed was a map or maps that people could zoom into and see it for themselves. And Wyden told us very good maps are coming soon. That's important before any legislation like this would be seriously considered by Congress. Oregonians need to easily understand what would change, first.

*Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the Baker City Herald. Columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the Baker City Herald.*



NEWS ITEM: EXTREME DROUGHTS ARE REVEALING SHIPWRECKS.

## YOUR VIEWS

## Shriner upset about offensive parade entry

I was asked to write a letter in reference to the car admitted to the Shrine Parade. I didn't see the offensive ad displayed but was told about it — needless to say. I was informed that this entry will not be allowed in future parades. I am very upset with what I was told and apologize for our error in allowing this entry.

Shriners try to keep all clean and have fun. ... the parade has always been a source of pride for us and would never knowingly allow this entry if we were aware of its offensive nature. Again — my apologies for our error.

Jim Pringle  
Potentate, Hillah Temple  
Medford

## Republicans simply trying to hold leadership accountable

Kerry McQuisten. I am most positive, the far left does not love me (but what's not to love). Constitutional conservative I am, ANTIFA I am not. When will you stop fabricating canards in a smokescreen attempt to cover your ineptness as a city councilor and mayor, as well as your mother, Suzan Ellis Jones, inappropriate, illegal, and immoral actions as the chair of the Baker County Republican PCPs? At no time have I helped organize a meeting against the conservative members of the Baker City Council. Do I believe that you and Joanna Dixon should be recalled for your role in having 6 Baker City firefighter

employee positions permanently removed from Baker City? Emphatically yes!

The "attempted" overthrow of the Baker County Republicans (BCRCC), that you speak of is nothing more than holding your mother accountable as chair of the Baker County Republican Central Committee for her blatant refusal to follow Oregon Revised Statute, as well as BCRCC bylaws, immoral actions as chair, and violation of one's civil rights. You scribe wonderfully as a fictional author!

The only partial truth in your Aug. 13 LTE is, "My mother, BCU's primary target. ..." BCU has not targeted your mother. Yes, I believe Suzan Ellis Jones should be recalled as chair from the Baker County Republican PCPs (as well as chair for CD2). My ac-

tions are the sole representation of myself, and as such, I have adamantly expressed MY opinion. If your mother has nothing to hide and is 100% innocent of the legitimate reasons she has been suspended from the chair position within the BCRCC. Please answer this question, why did she not call for a meeting in which she could have been 100% transparent and answered questions and provide evidence concerning the questions from elected Baker County Republican PCPs? I will end here knowing I could continue to dissect your rambling canards, but for the good of the order I will save the rest for future responses.

Ken Hackett  
Baker City

## OTHER VIEWS

## Pence illustrates how abnormal GOP has become

## EDITORIAL FROM ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

There was a time, not that long ago, when it wouldn't have been major news for a top Republican to say the party should respect law enforcement and cooperate with a congressional investigation. In that sense, the buzz over former Vice President Mike Pence's defense this week of the FBI, and his suggestion he might be willing to testify before the House committee investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, assault on the Capitol, illustrates just how radical and lawless too many other Republicans have become in the Trump era.

It is only in this party, in

these frenzied times, that such a bare-minimum acknowledgment of political norms would merit comment, let alone kudos. But, under the circumstances, it does.

In a speech in New Hampshire, Pence broke with the feverish rhetoric of those in his party who are trashing FBI agents involved in the search of former President Donald Trump's Florida residence. Armed with a court order, the agents were seeking classified documents that Trump took from the White House and was refusing to give back, even after months of negotiations and a subpoena.

On the very night of the

search, before any facts were known, Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt, the state's GOP Senate nominee, recklessly vowed to "take a wrecking ball" to the Justice Department. Congressional firebrands like Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., in their zeal to side with Trump no matter what laws he may have broken, called for "defunding" the FBI — having apparently forgotten how that word came back to bite hard-left Democrats who used it in reference to local police forces. Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., said the party should "destroy" the agency.

In the face of all this, Pence's milquetoast comments in New

Hampshire sounded almost radically responsible. He criticized Attorney General Merrick Garland and demanded "transparency" from the Justice Department (not an unreasonable demand in any context involving government), but added: "Our party stands with the men and women who stand on the thin blue line at the federal and state and local level, and these attacks on the F.B.I. must stop. Calls to defund the F.B.I. are just as wrong as calls to defund the police." He asserted that the GOP is still "the party of law and order" — which may be wishful thinking in the Trump era, but was refreshing to hear anyway.

## COLUMN

## Clutch driving amid honks in the city by the bay

The horns began to blare, and the blood rushed to my face.

A veritable sonnet of profanity came together in my mind, a litany of piquant phrases that would have delighted George Carlin or Richard Pryor in their comedic primes, or so I'd like to believe.

I drove 2,030 miles during our vacation in late July without drawing any great attention from my trio of passengers. Although I could feel the heavy weight of my wife's eyes when the speedometer needle briefly pointed past the "80" hashmark while I was passing a semi on one of the vast straight stretches of Highway 395 between Lakeview, near the California border, and Susanville, California. (The needle was in fact nearer the "100" line, if I am to be honest.)

Yet after hundreds of miles and many hours that passed without comment on my piloting skill, as soon as those horns began their annoying squawking, my wife, Lisa, and our kids, Olivia and Max, were as entranced as the crowds in the Roman Colosseum when the lion got the upper hand.

(Or, rather, paw.)

I suspect it's that brief moment, when we weren't even moving, that they'll be talking about for decades rather than the eminently forgettable miles we accumulated before



Jayson Jacoby

and after.

I'll concede that I might have helped to elicit their reaction.

I had, earlier in our motorized tour of San Francisco, mentioned that, given the affinity drivers had for sounding their horns, I might feel neglected if I didn't even once during our visit invoke another motorist's wrath.

I was encumbered by several handicaps, any of which ought to have gotten me into at least a few awkward situations. I felt that I would earn an uncouth hand gesture at a minimum.

I am not accustomed either to the volume of traffic in the great city by the bay, or to the severe grade of the streets for which San Francisco is renowned. I suspect no American city has bent more shock absorbers during the making of movies.

Moreover, our Mazda has a manual transmission. And although the car is equipped with a clever function that briefly holds it in place when it's on a steep upslope and the brake is released while the clutch is engaged — a feature that I have no doubt saved many San Franciscans' front bumpers while we were in town — no electronic aid

can eliminate the need for deft footwork between clutch and accelerator if a driver is to survive that city's precipitous intersections unscathed.

I did not contribute to any collisions — not with pedestrians, not with any moving vehicles and not with immobile objects of which there was a veritable labyrinth.

The honking incident, it must be said, was not my fault, something even my family will attest to.

What happened is I was in heavy traffic on a one-way, two-lane street. The street, for some inexplicable reason but possibly involved a sadistic traffic engineer, made a 90-degree turn. I was in the outside lane. As I hit the apex of the corner, I was stymied by a white Tesla — a brand that is thick on the ground in the Bay Area, which happens to be, specifically in Fremont, where they're assembled — that had stopped for a purpose obvious only to the driver. The Tesla was basically straddling the two lanes.

Being averse to interrupting our otherwise enjoyable vacation with an exchange of insurance information, I veered left. This put me in the bus-only lane, which seemed to be a minor matter considering there was no bus visible. But my little detour seemed to rouse a few other drivers to a state of high anxiety. Anyway they honked.

I thought this was both rude and, worse, unjustified, seeing as I had avoided a collision rather than made one more likely. Regardless, I reacted to the volley of honks by muttering a few lines of that profane sonnet I mentioned earlier. I also sped off when a space opened ahead, attaining a speed in first gear that I had not believed possible. Olivia, who got her learner's permit a couple month ago, seemed particularly impressed. More so than her mother, at least.

Despite that harrowing incident, driving in San Francisco was more physically demanding for me than it was mentally taxing.

One day we covered about 12 miles on foot. We parked at the Presidio and then walked to the bayfront, taking in the typical tourist spots such as Pier 39, for which Max showed a fondness that struck me as peculiar considering he'd never seen the place except in the glossy photos of a brochure.

Then we strolled into a few other neighborhoods, marveling at a population density so much greater than Baker City's that the comparison seems inane.

I had been to San Francisco only once before, a few decades ago, but I didn't walk much of it then. Its reputation as one of the world's great cities seems to me deserved. The sense of history, and its integral role in the

story of the American West, is palpable. I had neither a detailed knowledge of the place nor an itinerary, so I was pleased by the happy coincidence of walking by Saints Peter and Paul church, the grandest house of worship I've been in since I spent part of the summer of 1986, between my sophomore and junior years in high school, living in Germany.

After our excursion I was anticipating a good dinner and a frosty beer. But instead we decided — we are nothing if not shameless in our status as predictable tourists — to drive through famous neighborhoods such as Haight-Ashbury, Chinatown and Pacific Heights.

My left leg — the clutch leg — objected to this plan. By the time we merged back onto one of the innumerable freeways — I think it was the 101, but possibly it was the 280 — my thigh felt about as solid as al dente spaghetti.

From San Francisco we drove north, swapping a metropolis for redwoods and remote coast range valleys and towns where it actually seemed possible to pass on the sidewalk the deck hand who had caught the fish from last night's dinner.

There was no honking.

■ Jayson Jacoby is editor of the Baker City Herald.