

Immigration reform will require courage

There are 12 million stories about those who have illegally immigrated to the U.S. They range from heart-wrenching to opportunistic. Each is different in many ways, and the same in one: Each person broke federal law in getting here.

That's why the discussion of illegal immigration is so divisive. While many Americans see the people behind the statistics, many counter with, "What part of illegal don't you understand?"

Democratic and Republican presidential administrations for decades have tried to come up with effective and fair means of addressing illegal immigrants that ranged from deportation to amnesty.

President Barack Obama even tried an end-run around Congress after that esteemed body refused — again — to do anything substantive about the issue.

Though politicians tend to fall back on a combination of generality, placation and prejudice when they speak about illegal immigrants, many of the arguments circle around to what Congress needs to do to address the issue.

Most people agree that the border must be secured to prevent the free flow of people in and out of the U.S. Without that, we have no immigration policy.

Most people also agree illegal immigrants must pay a fine for breaking the law in order to be considered for any type of legal permanent residence. And they must not have broken other criminal laws.

They must also learn to speak English. It makes no sense to foster a nation in which the people do not share a common language. For the sake of the nation, and for the immigrants, they must learn English.

Much hangs in the balance, including the integrity of our

country and an acknowledgment that, from its very beginning, this is a nation of immigrants.

Of particular concern to farmers and others is the fact that about 75 percent of our food is harvested or tended by illegal immigrants, according to Jeremy Robbins, executive director of the Partnership for a New American Economy, a bipartisan organization made up of 500 CEOs and mayors.

Each year, farmers and food processors are put at risk. They need to hire enough people to pick and process the crops. Though they insist that workers possess proper documentation, it is too often falsified. This puts farmers in a quandary. They need workers, but they have little choice but to accept at face value the paperwork that's presented.

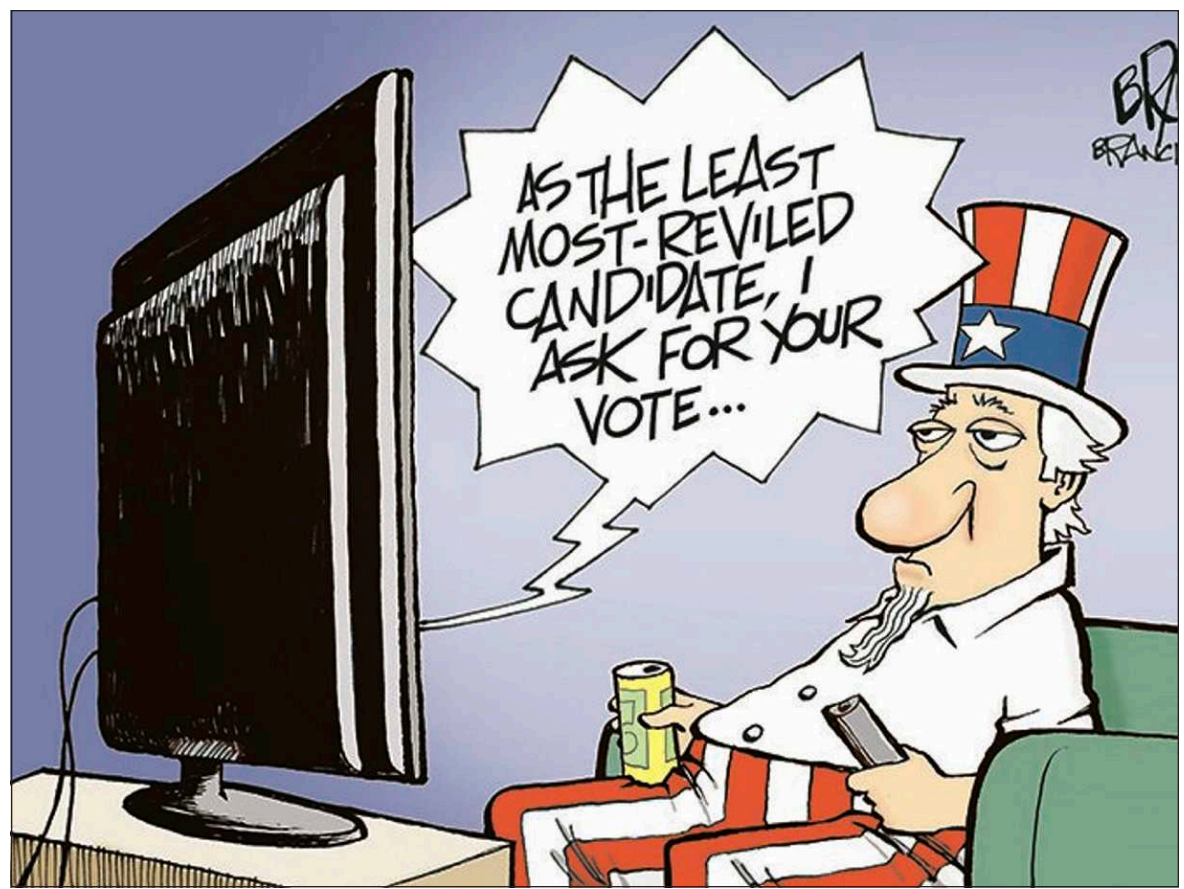
The other option is obtaining H-2A guestworkers. While this assures that the workforce will be legal, it is expensive and time consuming and relies on federal agencies whose priorities are set in Washington, D.C.

We are often told that congressional action on immigration will take place "after the next election."

As it turns out, there's always another election, allowing politicians to duck and cover one more time, leaving immigration reform — and a growing list of other pressing matters — unaddressed.

As the fall general election approaches, we urge our readers to listen closely to the congressional and presidential candidates. Brush aside the bombast and the generalities and look for positions on immigration reform that are practical, affordable, effective and offer a long-term solution.

They all know what that solution is, they just aren't willing to display the courage it takes to make it a reality.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Grant County parade exemplary

To the Editor:

This is not a thank you letter, nor is it political, but it is an honest review of the parade held Saturday, Aug. 12, in John Day.

It was great fun to be in the parade; people actually threw candy to some of those who were participants in the parade. There were political themes, views, candidates and others, but all was congenial. Before the parade, everyone at the starting point was polite, personable, helpful, open and interesting.

This parade was exemplary of what a parade in small town USA should be. Nearly every house and business along the route was ready, waiting, and excited to see the parade entries. Everyone waved and smiled, and I mean everyone from ages 1 to 100.

I had a deep feeling of pride simply to be a participant. Again I am reminded of just why I love this country, this state and particularly rural Central and Eastern Oregon, my home.

W. Mark Stringer
Nyssa

'The little guy' would pay for tax increase on large industry

To the Editor:

Gov. Brown wants to raise taxes on large industry. Doesn't she care that all of these costs are passed on to the end users? That means people on fixed incomes, unemployment and minimum wage wages. She says schools need the money. When Oregon passed the lottery that was supposed to take care of the schools. Now the lottery is used up by any group that comes up with some trumped up claim that they need funded and the schools keep clamoring for more money. They are extremely well taken care of but the education keeps falling behind. So much for the little guy who has to foot the bill.

Joe Clarke
Long Creek

Sheriff Palmer is under attack

To the Editor:

For over a decade, the majority of Grant County voters have chosen Sheriff Glenn Palmer to be the premier law enforcement office in our county based on years of experience, trust and loyalty. Now we are faced with the tabloid media's implication that the same Grant County citizens are ignorant peons because of our choice of sheriff.

Sheriff Palmer and the people who support him are under attack by individuals (those who only understand from their limited level of perception), news media and special interest groups playing sick political games with peoples' lives, targeting those whose opinions do not support their obdurate scheme.

To understand the path of this destructive mentality, you must follow the money, not the bawling distraction of the man who pictures himself as the biggest bull in the media pen (and we know what comes from bulls) who uses the tools of tyrants to pervert the plain meaning of words. Follow the

people who would benefit from a new "agency-friendly" sheriff or the disbandment of the elected county Public Forest Commission that stands in support of our public lands.

Who is plotting the takeover of our public lands and subverting our Constitutional rights? Why do Les Zaitz and the Oregonian want public records from the sheriff's office? What does he plan to do with them — use them to harass individuals identified in those records? Continue to twist the truth and lead those with intellectual disabilities by the nose with lies?

Association is nothing where there is no honor or truth. You might also ask who benefits from the illegal destruction of Sheriff Palmer's political signs. Signs from private property, paid for by private citizens who are also your neighbors. Destruction of signs and redundant attacks from skewed media reporting should not destroy our trust and loyalty. They only serve to instill disgust in Grant County citizens for the warped mindset of those attempting to destroy our way of life.

Judy Kerr
Canyon City

Election smoke and mirrors

To the Editor:

I am very confused by this election rhetoric. Since, as I understand it, the Clintons and the Trumps were supposed to be very good friends. So here is a scenario.

Hillary: Oh, Donald, I want to be president so bad, but the American people, they don't like me, they don't trust me, they think I'm a crook. I want the power so bad, but I'll never get elected.

Donald: Don't worry, babe, you get the nomination, and I know how to get you elected. I guarantee it.

Smoke and mirrors

Marc Mitchell
Tacoma, Washington

'Our professional foresters have failed us'

To the Editor:

I'm not here to complain about our (public land) fires. How they just keep happening, growing larger and larger each year, costing all citizens of this country more and more money (three billion). What comes to mind is the word "competency." Who's responsible for stopping these fires before they get out of control. There's lots of stories out there about that, but I'm not going there.

I want to talk about how we got here. Our professional foresters have failed us. They went to school and know what a pine region forest should look like. My finger is not pointing towards foresters only, but special interest groups, politicians and even some responsibility on the wood product industry.

The wood product industry has been out of the picture for a good 30 years. Politicians, well you can see how much they have done. Special interest groups for the past 30 to 40 years have stopped the proper management of our pine forests. Our professional foresters say their hands are tied and in a couple years transfer to another region.

So this is where we are. Our "re-

newable" natural resources are going up in smoke, costing each and every one of us, while small rural communities suffer economically. It's going to take voices, everyone's voice. Educational programs to show the ignorant backing the special interest groups why and what needs to be done. Let the foresters do their job and put life back into rural communities.

It doesn't take too much common sense how to start turning our national forests into healthy and productive resources again. It may be too late for hundreds of thousands of acres, but we need to start now.

Ken Koser
Prairie City

Old forest policies were better

To the Editor:

They, the Forest Service, want input. Here's mine. I have seen many good things for years. The Forest Service had good, wide roads, most of them graveled. No turnouts because the roads were wide. So here they come spending lots of money, borrowing and putting turnouts in roads that were so good they couldn't stand it. If I'm correct, they had two blades to go over the roads each spring and summer that were used by woodcutters, sportsmen and loggers. "No problem and not much expense!" Four men, two pickups, power saws and two road patrols. I remember most everyone was happy and pleased. We could use all roads anytime of the year for playing, hunting, woodcutting or logging.

Nowadays you can't do anything on the forest. Almost. For the public, things are a disaster. We own but can't use. We loggers and jypoos were always there for quick fire suppression. If a fire broke out, we were there and no one had to tell us to do so. It was automatic.

Here is what they need to do nowadays. Hire a few small loggers to log the scorched and lightning trees. Don't let them go waste. Bring them in, and then have an auction once a month and sell them to mills. Their methods of timber sales nowadays stink. Log the ones that have died or are dying. No size would be too large. Some would be too small, however.

It wouldn't take but a few over-seeing the work in the woods and the log yard. Maybe I am having a dream, but I have seen a lot in my 40 years of logging in and around Grant County. They could do things a lot better with less expense, and we could all use the forest. How about somebody doing something right for a change? This is a waste of our money. Cut the budgets.

Stan Powell
Mt. Vernon

Let's do something nice for each other

To the Editor:

The recall is over. The message is clear. We are keeping our commissioner in office.

In the process leading to this outcome I ask: What has happened to civility in this county? The back stabbing gossip, the cruel innuendos, the untruths, they make me sick.

See LETTERS, Page A5

WHERE TO WRITE

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• **Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: (503) 986-1180. Website: www.leg.state.or.us (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).

• **State Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario** (District: 60), Room H-475, State Capitol, 900 Court St. N.E., Salem OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1460. Email: rep.cliffbentz@state.or.us. Website: www.leg.state.or.us/bentz/home.htm.

• **State Sen. Ted Ferrioli, R** — (District 30) Room S-223, State Capitol, Salem 97310. Phone: 503-986-1950. Email: sen.tedferrioli@state.or.us. Email: TFER2@aol.com. Phone: 541-490-6528. Website: www.leg.state.or.us/ferrioli.

• **Oregon Legislative Information** — (For updates on bills, services, capitol or messages for legislators) — 800-332-2313.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

• **The White House**, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20500; Phone-comments: 202-456-1111; Switchboard: 202-456-1414.

• **U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D** — 516 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244. Email: wayne_kinney@wyden.senate.gov Website: http://wyden.senate.gov Fax: 202-228-2717.

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