

# Moving forward after the election

After a seemingly endless election campaign loaded with negative messages and vitriol, most people probably feel as though they have nothing in common with wide swaths of their neighborhood and the American public in general.

People supporting “the other” candidate or issue may seem as if they have completely lost their minds.

Yet, today, we embark upon new paths selected by all of us, collectively, in yesterday’s election. And we do so together, whether we like it or not.

Despite all of our differences, we all likely share at least a few things in common.

Most people — regardless of who won and who lost — share the joy that this election is finally over.

And with as many contested races and issues at play in this election, from city council seats up to the nation’s highest office, it is almost certain everyone is disappointed about at least one of the results.

But we have much more in common than being happy the elections are over and being upset about the results.

We share neighborhoods. We share businesses. We share the same government services. We share sports teams. We share a nationality.

Despite all of our differences, we actually share most things in common.

Yet, so many seem so eager to cast their neighbors as enemies for differences in opinion that are actually minor in the big picture.

For perspective, read the stories about our local veterans on the front page of this newspaper. These brave men — along with so many other brave men and women in our country — answered the call to face real enemies.

Enemies who caused genocide. Enemies who would have killed them if only given chance.

Without threats from real enemies, it may be easy to consider a political opponent an enemy. But are our neighbors really enemies?

People will always disagree. Our system of government is based on that. No single person or opinion is given preference.

We decide by majority, not unanimity, and some people will always fall in the minority.

Whether majority or minority in this election, however, everyone should remember we have more in common than it would appear after this campaign season.

We are all Americans. We are all members of this republic. We all owe our current freedom to the veterans who have previously secured it for us.

Despite all of our differences, we must move forward together.



## FARMER’S FATE Abstinence prevents minivans

By Brianna Walker  
To the Blue Mountain Eagle



Brianna Walker

Everyone learned basic math in high school, but I think somewhere between math and health, students should have been taught that 1+1=5 and a minivan!

One of my college friends is currently looking to trade in his man card for the dreaded, yet fuel efficient, minivan. He and his wife were making a list of all the pros and cons, and somehow hands-free sliding doors and a built-in vacuum cleaner seemed to outweigh a five-speed and a lift kit.

I have to admit that there was one time we also drove a minivan. It was a few years ago in Florida. We had just come back from the Caribbean, and there was a mistake at the car rental agency. The only thing they had available was “a lovely maroon mini” — and, unfortunately for us, he didn’t mean “Cooper.”

My husband grumbled, but what were we to do? It did easily accommodate our luggage, and it had enough cup holders to appease a thirsty octopus. And enough storage to lose all manner of trinkets.

But driving through the Flori-

da Keys in a minivan — even with the windows down — wasn’t quite the experience we’d had before as we breezed through the Sunshine State with the T-tops out of our Trans Am.

It got us where we needed to go. We just felt like we needed a bumper sticker that said, “We used to be cool!”

The best part about that minivan was taking it back at the end of the vacation. After all, what happens in Florida, stays in Florida — and really how many cup holders does one need? You can only drink one drink at a time.

Not too long ago, after the arrival of their second baby, one of my husband’s friends, Ty, surrendered his muscle car for the more sensible family van. One afternoon, we had popped in to visit, and he was trying hard to convince us just how cool the decision was. He showed us the wi-fi option, and the folding DVD screens for each kid, night lights under the chairs and a back door that opens and closes with the push of a button. And on that self-closing

back window was a family of stick figures — thoughtful to let others know you’re a family man, since driving a hot minivan often gives off the impression of being wild and single.

“It drives so nice, and there is so much room,” Ty kept repeating. “And the gas mileage is great!”

“Well, it definitely looks as if you’ve got yourself a good dependable vehicle,” my husband agreed.

“Yeah, I just can’t believe all the features they put in these things. It’s pretty cool,” he gushed.

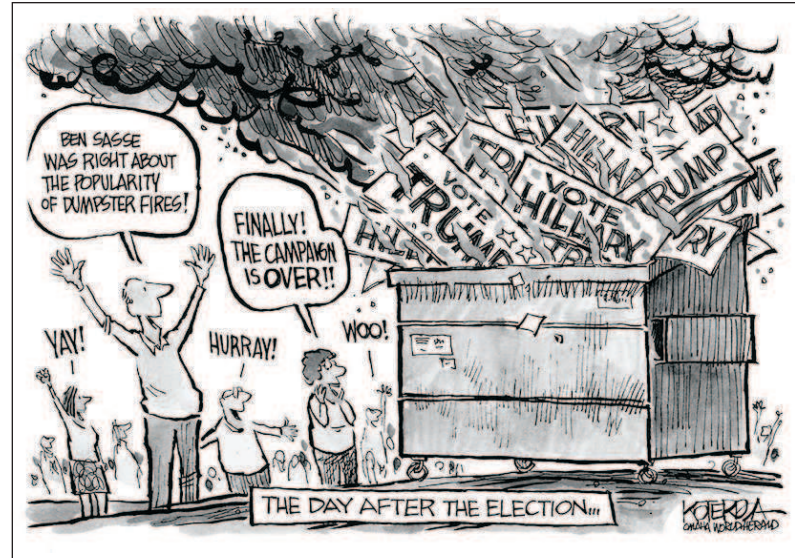
Ty continued extolling the virtues of the all-amazing mini. It had both AC and DC plugs, it had park assist, the chairs were extra wide, etc.

While our husbands continued talking minivan features, his wife and I had decided on dinner plans, but we found ourselves short a few ingredients.

“Hey, Ty, can you guys run to the store and grab some lettuce and french bread?” his wife asked.

“Sure, no problem,” he said, then he turned to me and asked sheepishly, “Can we take your Jeep?”

Brianna Walker occasionally writes about the Farmer’s Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### ‘God bless America and those who have the courage to act’

To the Editor:

“Not guilty of all charges!” Many are now vindicated and are no longer under suspicion of being a “patriot.” As if that is a bad thing. Perhaps the self-righteous, sign-carrying protesters will do some introspection and realize just what they were “het up about.” But the truth never causes a liberal to waiver from their path of deceit. If still fearful of patriotic fellow Americans, liberals can contact the All African People’s Revolutionary Party - Oregon. Yes, that is the group that provided security Oct. 7 when Rural Organizing Project was hosted by Grant County Positive Action. ROP aired a biased presentation on patriotism and anyone that believes that history indicates that militia roots were the key to American independence. Recant? Retraction? No, that would require an honest assessment of the issue and liberals run from responsibility. Their most common response when they have painted themselves into a corner is, “I don’t care. That’s just the way I feel.” Are they ashamed? Probably not, but mortified that those “criminals” at the refuge were just patriotic citizens standing up for fellow Americans. God bless America and those who have the courage to act.

Tad Houpt  
Canyon City

were still in the dark. Surely, Yockim informed the court and asked for directions and was approved the \$7,500 legal fee he charged the county. The court members and secretary represent \$150,000 per year expenditure to the county. And yet a system is not in place, so issues that affect the county can be known?! This mess smells and is reminiscent of Hillary’s emails and Obama only learning about them when the media broke the story. Someone lied then, and the truth is not being told now. Commissioner Labhart refrained from throwing the GCPFC under the bus like Myers and Britton readily did. Labhart wanted to “see all the facts” before he made a decision. An honest and novel idea. This is not over by any means.

Roger L. McKinley  
Prairie City

Editor’s note: Grant County Circuit Court Judge William D. Cramer Jr. has not submitted his full opinion regarding the nullification of the measure creating Public Forest Commission as of Nov. 3. He has only submitted an abbreviated opinion to inform the county clerk who was preparing ballots that otherwise would have included Public Forest Commission candidates.

### Thank you for your service, veterans

To our American veterans:

Veterans Day celebrates and honors the service, sacrifice and enduring achievements of the nearly 22 million living Americans who served our nation in uniform — at home and abroad — during times of both war and peace. We at Veterans Affairs not only honor our service members past and present, but the family members who supported you when you were called to defend our nation’s freedoms and after you came home — often dealing or struggling with issues as a direct result of your service to our great country.

When the world is threatened, it calls on America, and we call on our service members who serve without question and without delay. You served as our protectors and

defenders — warfighters, peace-makers and peacekeepers. You were the guardians of the greatest social and political experiment the world has ever known — representative democracy.

Consider this: Veterans Day is but one day a year. Year round, approximately 5,000 VA staff, volunteers and medical residents at VA facilities across the Pacific Northwest — about one third of whom are Veterans themselves — with the National Cemetery Administration, Veterans Benefits Administration and the Veterans Health Administration, are privileged, proud and humbled to support a common goal and mission: to fulfill President Lincoln’s promise, to care for those “who shall have borne the battle,” and for their families and their survivors, by serving and honoring the men and women who are America’s Veterans. The VA is currently implementing MyVA (<http://www.va.gov/myva>), the largest transformational project in the department’s history. We are updating systems and procedures to better serve you, and our goal is to become the top customer-service agency in the entire federal government.

We are privileged to live in the United States where the cost of freedom, as you especially know, is not free; it has been paid for by the sacrifices of the men and women like yourselves who have served and fought for the flag of our nation and all it represents. On this special day, we at the VA want to give a special thanks to you and to your families for your service and sacrifice in defending the freedom and liberty that we all enjoy. We are privileged to serve you, the American veteran. There is no higher honor. Thank you for your service.

Michael W. Fisher  
Director, VA Portland Health Care System

William F. Streiberger  
Director, Portland and Anchorage Regional Office

George Allen  
Director, Willamette National Cemetery

## WHERE TO WRITE

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