

# Federal regulations in need of review

President-elect Donald Trump, affirmed Monday by the Electoral College, in his deluge of campaign promises said he would work to reduce costly regulations.

The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, earlier this month provided a review of federal regulations that carry criminal penalties. The list would be a good place to start, and its point is well taken.

In civics class we learned that the legislative branch makes law, both civil and criminal, and the executive branch enforces those laws. Congress, for example, passes a law making bank robbery a federal crime, defines the elements of the crime and establishes a penalty.

Simple. But, as is often the case in Washington, D.C., things are rarely ever simple.

In 1911, the Supreme Court held in *United States v. Grimwaud* that Congress had the power to pass the broad strokes of law and delegate to the executive the details of the rules and regulations to implement the law. The case revolved around the secretary of agriculture's authority to make regulations concerning the use of Forest Service lands for grazing and other purposes, and to attach criminal and civil penalties provided by Congress for violations of those regulations.

The ruling was a boon to Congress, a busy institution without time, expertise or often particular interest in the arcane details. More time on details means less time for law-making. How might that look to the voters back home?

So, to pack in more law-making Congress has left it to federal agencies to make the rules, and to decide which violations will carry civil penalties and which will be federal crimes that carry jail time.

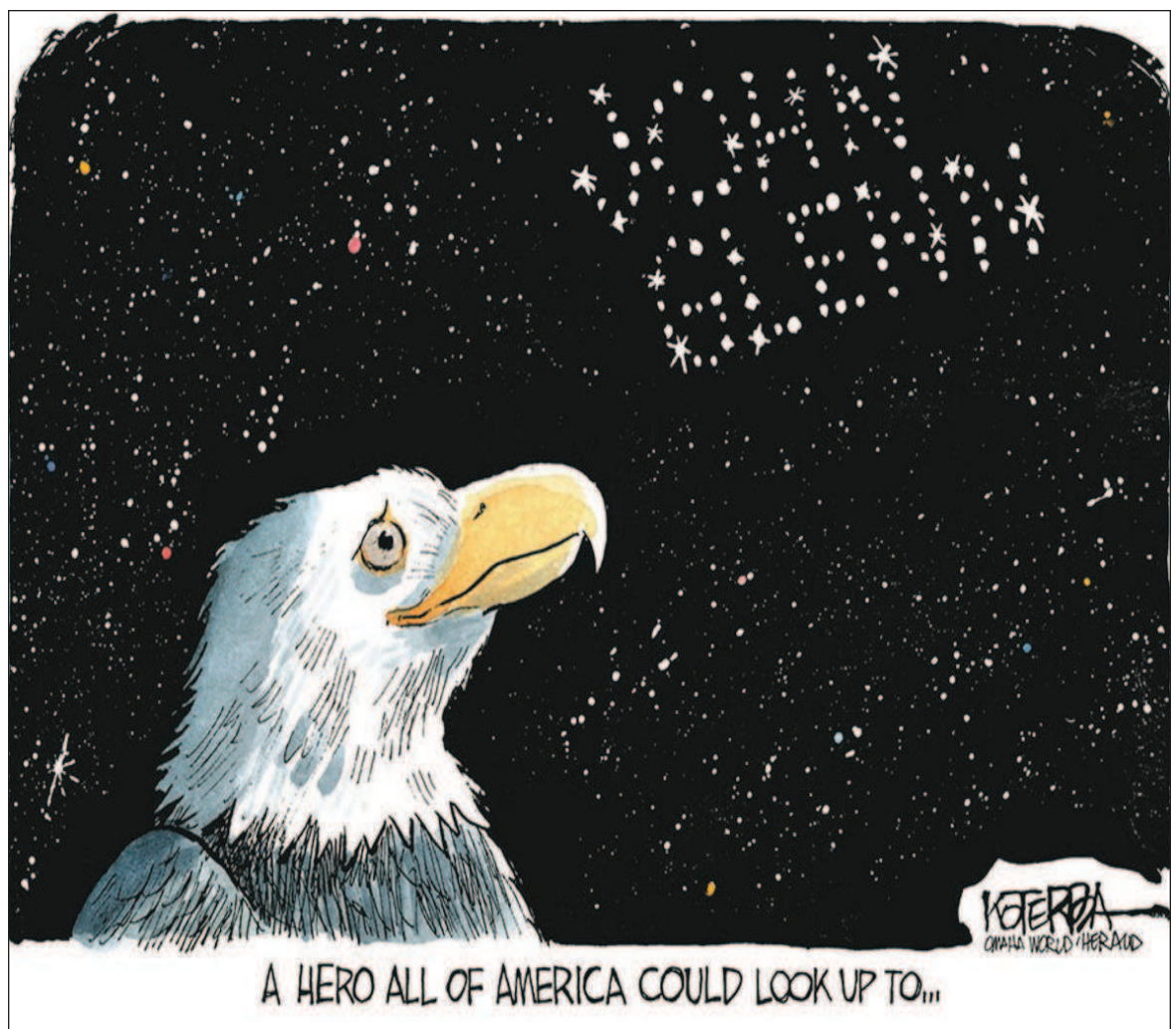
Bank robbery is a pretty straightforward crime, and one needs no more than an understanding of the Commandment "Thou shalt not steal" to know it's wrong. But the violation of many regulations that carry criminal penalties is nowhere near as obvious. Without any criminal intent, an unsuspecting violator can face jail time and criminal fines for even the most innocuous action.

Equally alarming is that the number of potential criminal violations grows annually as agencies make more regulations. No one really knows, but critics say violations of as many as 300,000 regulations carry criminal penalties.

"With little to no input from or accountability to voters, bureaucrats have run amok with the power to create new crimes," the foundation says.

If regulations are to be enforced, there must be penalties. However, for all but the most egregious violations, the threat of civil fines should be adequate to force compliance. Congress should reserve for itself the power to define federal crimes. Citizens should demand that accountability.

In the meantime, we agree that the next president should curtail the creation of new federal crimes by bureaucratic fiat.



## GUEST COMMENT

# Who needs more stuff?

By Tim Trainor  
EO Media Group

It's almost Christmas, and many procrastinators — myself included — are still searching for the perfect gift.

Perhaps they are window shopping downtown. Perhaps they are working late nights in their shop or quilting chair to finish something beautiful for someone special.

But here's some radical advice this gift-giving season: Don't do it. Much of the developed world has hit "peak stuff." Many Americans, and many people all over the world, have too much of everything. And our future happiness depends on realizing that.

This is, relatively, a good thing. We're a materially sufficient society. And it's not necessarily doom and gloom for many retail businesses, or the economy of the future. In fact, some of the world's biggest makers of "stuff" are embracing the idea that the world doesn't need more of that.

NPR reported earlier this year about hitting peak production, peak supply and peak demand. Beef and sugar sales, for instance, cannot conceivably go any higher. We're also — as a species — coming up against peak population, a hazy number that scientists and philosophers have been debating for centuries.

Still, there has to be a limit somewhere — whether it's humans or candle holders.

"The use of stuff is plateauing

out," IKEA executive Steve Howard told NPR last year. IKEA, of course, is a company that sells nothing but stuff — often cheap, easily replaceable stuff.

It reminds me of George Orwell's classic dystopian novel "1984." The government-controlled world of the future is in a perpetual state of war as a means of psychological control, but also as a means to destroy things. Because destroying things eventually requires rebuilding, and that requires the making and buying of stuff. An endless cycle.

Yet, perhaps it is a cycle we can break.

Those weirdo Europeans, who have a lot more old stuff than we do, are thinking about ways to deal with the glut.

The "Library of Things" in London is one answer — a sort of cooperative where people pay to rent everything from a carpet cleaner to a rake, from a backpack to a garden hose.

It helps city residents save money and save space, and it saves hundreds or thousands of duplicitous things from being purchased and thrown out and purchased again.

For a world that continues to see human populations increase — and steadily migrate from rural spaces into cities — space is a real concern.

Consider that the U.S. self storage industry generated \$27.2 billion in revenues in 2014, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. The newspaper noted that the industry has been the

fastest-growing segment of the commercial real estate industry for the last 40 years. About 90 percent of the country's storage units are in use, and about 10 percent of American households currently rent one.

If you have space, Americans are likely to fill it with stuff.

Still, it is important to note that there are plenty of people out there, in this country and in others, who are in real need. They lack the stuff that make a life complete.

The Christmas season is perhaps the best time to think of them, and donate and give of ourselves and our dollars. A toy can brighten a child's day, but food can give deeper pleasure, and a scholarship can brighten a lifetime. An hour of your time, a long-term mentorship and sustained neighborly care, can deeply and powerfully impact a person's life. Teaching your child a family recipe or taking a friend to your favorite secret, snowy trail can fire up new synapses in the brain. Those experiences can nourish the soul and open a new route to happiness. Giving the gift of time, even to yourself, can cure many ails.

Christmas is a spiritual holiday. And while everyone who will wake up Christmas morning to a BMW with a bow on it is bound to feel some real joy, a longer and deeper peace can be found in having and needing less. And besides, renting that BMW means you don't have to change the oil in the middle of the winter.

*Tim Trainor is interim editor of the Wallowa County Chieftain.*



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Parents should play role in preventing bullying

To the Editor:

Perhaps during the Christmas break from school, teachers and parents can take the time to take seriously their role in stopping the bullying that is going on in our communities.

I don't know many who have students in John Day, but I know of some here in Prairie City who are dealing with their kids being bullied.

It is inconceivable that a parent asks for help and is dismissed, or ignored, and their child continues to be harmed by others who, for whatever reason, carry on this timeless evil against their fellow students.

It damages the kids who are bullied, and what does it say about those who are the bullies?

We hear too often about kids who either take their own lives to end the torment, or lash out against the bullies because no one stepped up to help them.

Do nothing, and we risk more heartbreak for families, and the blame falling where it should won't undo the harm done.

If your daughter played soccer in Prairie City, ask them if they were part of the ugliness and destroying a possible good memory for another girl who would have loved to be a part of the team, or at least ride the bus without being kicked.

Parents need to ask their kids if they are being bullied, or are a bul-

ly. Teachers need to listen, and do something!

Mary Brown  
Prairie City

### Please return stolen Christmas lights

To the Editor:

On Saturday night at my home on Humbolt Street, someone stole my Christmas lights!

The sad thing about it was that my 4-year-old grandson asked Santa to bring lights for Grandma and Grandpa's house! The lights weren't for us; they were for him. If you can find it in your heart to return them, we would be grateful for Sammy!

Diane Blake  
Canyon City

Letters policy: Letters to the Editor is a forum for Blue Mountain Eagle readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters will be asked to be contained to 350 words. No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. No thank-you letters. Submissions to this page become property of the Eagle. The Eagle reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content. Letters must be original and signed by the writer. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. We must limit all contributors to one letter per person per month. Deadline is 5 p.m. Friday. Send letters to editor@bmeagle.com, or Blue Mountain Eagle, 195 N. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845; or fax to 541-575-1244.

## WHERE TO WRITE

### GRANT COUNTY

- **Grant County Courthouse** — 201 S. Humbolt St., Suite 280, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0059. Fax: 541-575-2248.
- **Canyon City** — P.O. Box 276, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0509. Fax: 541-575-0515. Email: tocc1862@centurylink.net.
- **Dayville** — P.O. Box 321, Dayville 97825. Phone: 541-987-2188. Fax: 541-987-2187. Email: dville@ortelco.net
- **John Day** — 450 E. Main St, John Day, 97845. Phone: 541-575-0028. Fax: 541-575-1721. Email: cityjd@centurytel.net.
- **Long Creek** — P.O. Box 489, Long Creek 97856. Phone: 541-421-3601. Fax: 541-421-3075. Email: info@cityoflong-creek.com.
- **Monument** — P.O. Box 426, Monument 97864. Phone and fax: 541-934-2025. Email: cityofmonument@centurytel.net.
- **Mt. Vernon** — P.O. Box 647, Mt. Vernon 97865. Phone: 541-932-4688. Fax:

541-932-4222. Email: cmtv@ortelco.net.

- **Prairie City** — P.O. Box 370, Prairie City 97869. Phone: 541-820-3605. Fax: 820-3566. Email: pchall@ortelco.net.
- **Seneca** — P.O. Box 208, Seneca 97873. Phone and fax: 541-542-2161. Email: senecaoregon@gmail.com.

### SALEM

- **Gov. Kate Brown, D** — 254 State Capitol, Salem 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111. Fax: 503-378-6827. Website: www.governor.state.or.us/governor.html.
- **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.



## Grant County's Weekly Newspaper

PUBLISHER..... MARISSA WILLIAMS, MARISSA@BMEAGLE.COM  
 EDITOR..... SEAN HART, EDITOR@BMEAGLE.COM  
 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT..... JACKIE OSBORNE, JACKIE@BMEAGLE.COM  
 REPORTER..... RYLAN BOGGS, RYLAN@BMEAGLE.COM  
 COMMUNITY NEWS..... ANGEL CARPENTER, ANGEL@BMEAGLE.COM  
 SPORTS..... ANGEL CARPENTER, ANGEL@BMEAGLE.COM  
 MARKETING REP..... KIM KELL, ADS@BMEAGLE.COM  
 OFFICE MANAGER..... LINDSAY BULLOCK, OFFICE@BMEAGLE.COM

### 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION RATES

(including online access)  
 Grant County .....\$40  
 Everywhere else in U.S.....\$51  
 Outside Continental U.S.....\$60  
 Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER  
 send address changes to:  
 Blue Mountain Eagle  
 195 N. Canyon Blvd.  
 John Day, OR 97845-1187

USPS 226-340

www.facebook.com/MyEagleNews @MyEagleNews