

A short, civil session

For much of Oregon's history, a biennial legislative session was enough to attend to the matters of the state. Every odd year, elected representatives, lobbyists and citizens would meet at the Capitol to debate and enact law while developing and approving a budget.

In 2010, voters approved a Senate resolution to create a 35-day special session in even years with the explicit purpose of making necessary adjustments to the budget or addressing unforeseen consequences of previously passed legislation.

So here we are, two weeks away from the fourth such "short session" in state history — and a politically fraught one at that. While the U.S. Congress can't figure out whether shutting down the federal government is an acceptable way to settle a dispute or not, citizens are feeling an ever stronger push toward one partisan camp or another.

Meanwhile it's an election year in Oregon, with Gov. Kate Brown campaigning for her first full term and Rep. Knute Buehler leading the field of Republicans looking to challenge her. While much of our political energy is spent watching D.C., Oregon state politics is at a crossroads of a kind in 2018. Next month's short session will mark the first few steps down that road.

So what should we expect of our elected leaders in Salem this February? Here are a few pointers.

• **Bipartisan or bust**

While debating new rules and laws during a full session requires a fair amount of posturing, party line toeing and negotiation, we feel that should be set aside in the short session.

A legislative committee convened in 2017 to examine how the sessions have been functioning since 2012 and made the suggestion that any bill should be required to be sponsored by a representative of both parties to be considered. The concept wasn't enacted, but we think it's a good one and should be followed.

It makes us nervous to see a list of goals including a Clean Energy Jobs Bill and gun

regulations coming before a body with just over a month to debate and enact law. We've previously written that the pursuit of meaningful PERS reform this session is doubtful, but while politically difficult it would at least meet the principal of why these short sessions exist in the first place: Taking action early so that future budget problems don't spiral out of control.

• **Deal with Measure 101 fallout**

Oregon voters will decide Tuesday how they feel about the Medicaid funding tax on Measure 101, which will have a major effect on how legislators will spend their in-session time. If the temporary health care taxes are approved by voters, it's a tip to legislators that voters remain supportive of their work, and that health insurance for all Oregonians is something we're willing to pay a little extra for.

However, if the measure fails, legislators will be sent scrambling back to the Capitol with some difficult decisions to make. Money will have to be found, or cuts will have to be made. More than likely, it'll require some of each.

• **No politics**

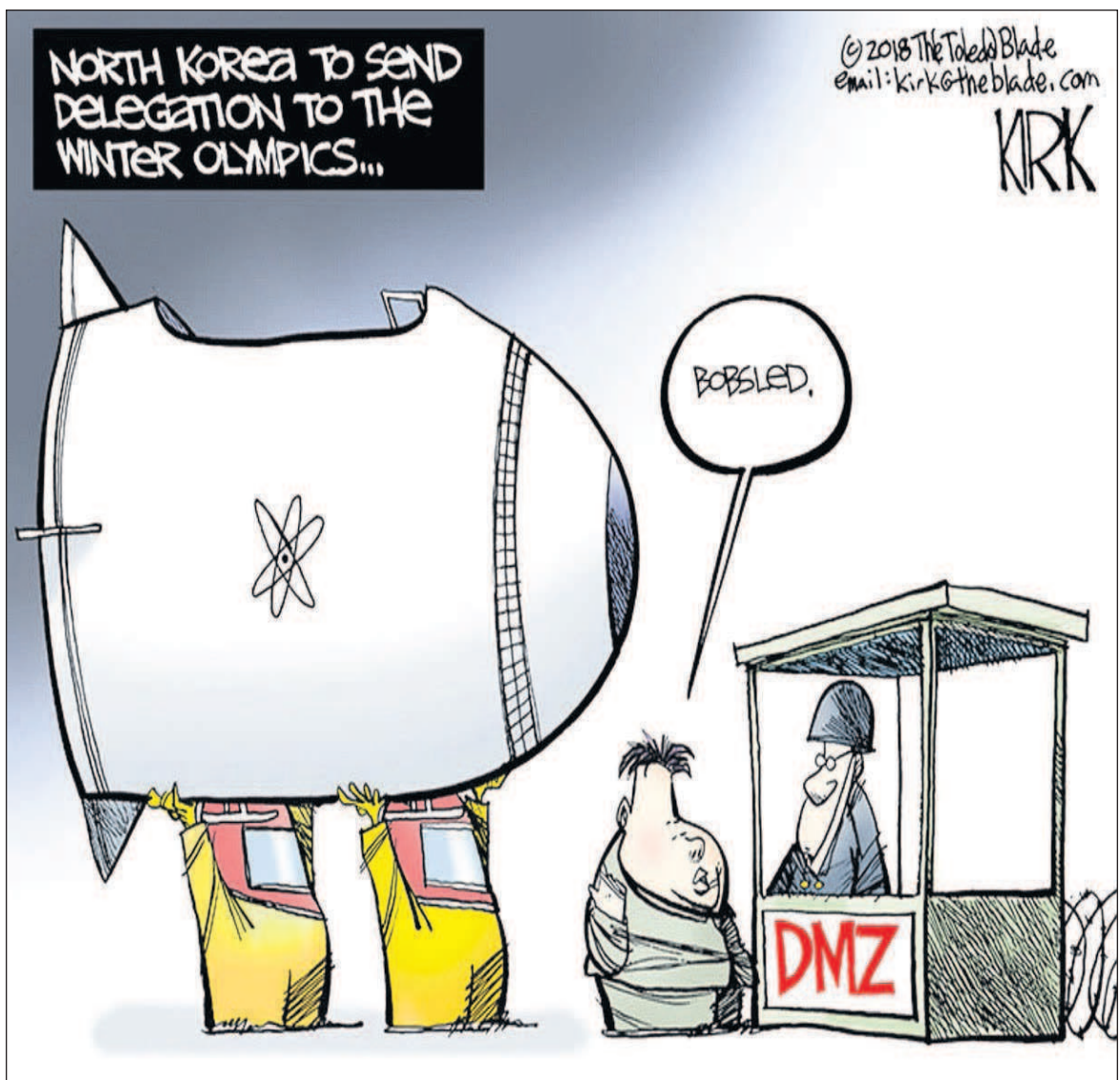
Gov. Kate Brown is Oregon's top government official, so she should be able to guide legislative action during the 30 days.

She told the EO's Capital Bureau reporter this month that she hoped to tackle gun control, affordable housing, PERS paydown, opioid epidemic and state procurement practices. We're not sure how many, if any, of those are possible, and the likelihood goes down if Measure 101 goes down, too.

But we're sure that Brown and Democratic lawmakers will try to hang some tough votes on likely Republican challenger Knute Buehler.

The same rules stand for Buehler and the Republicans, too — who will likely look to the session as a chance to gather ammunition to use against Brown.

All is fair in love and war, but we hope the politicking is kept to a minimum and that for these 30 days legislators keep their eye on what's best for Oregon. Once it's over, then we can let the campaigning begin.



FARMER'S FATE

'I do' means 'I don't'

By Brianna Walker
To the Blue Mountain Eagle



Brianna Walker

Hot water gurgled up around me as I sunk into the mineral water carved basins on the side of a cliff overlooking the cold rapids of the river below. The scenery was glorious. Rock basins filled with various temperatures of water cascaded waterfall-style down the side. It was a lovely way to spend an anniversary.

Thirteen years ago, we said, "I do." And while I thought we were both on the same page as to what that meant, we weren't. It has taken many hours of tractor driving with all that alone time for me to finally put my finger on what went wrong — but it finally came to me. When we both said, "I do," what we meant was "I don't."

I don't see the need to kill spiders anymore. If I would have wanted to kill my own spiders for the rest of my life, I wouldn't have married a Spider Killer! So stop complaining; it doesn't matter that the spider is closer to me than you — it just means you must hurry faster before it reaches me! I'm pretty sure that was in the fine print of the marriage vows, "I don't have to kill spiders ever again as long as you are within screaming distance."

When I said, "I do," I also meant I don't need to put fuel in my car — or DEF fluid, or change the oil, or install new brake pads. Yes, I know I am perfectly capable. Yes, I know I did those things (except the DEF) for nearly 10 years before we got married — but you know what they

say: Women let it all go once they finally get married, and I let all that knowledge go. So if I run out of fuel, and have to wait alongside the road for assistance, expect that I will feel

it is your fault.

I don't have to warm my own feet up anymore. I see no reason to bring a heating pad or warm rice sock or hot water bottle to bed in the winter anymore. I married my foot warmer. Since your legs and feet are always warmer than mine, it seems only fair to me that you allow me to press my feet-shaped ice cubes on your nice hot calves. I share my ice; you melt it.

When those vows were spoken, there must have also been some unspoken clause that said shaving is no longer a priority for him. Before the vows, shaving occurred nearly every time we saw each other. After the vows were exchanged, however, it became weekly for church — then, only for special church functions, then it was for the holidays, and now? I'm not even sure he knows where his razor is. The silver lining, though (besides what's on his face), is that I have almost forgotten how to clean whiskers out of the bathroom sink!

"I do" for him also meant I don't have to scan things into the computer ever again. Every time the computer acts up, one can almost read his thought subtitles above his head:

I don't have to worry about what programs I need to open documents, or how to save or attach files. I married my secretary. She can have the headache of not having the right kinds of file extensions; she can hook up all the electronic devices, cords, cables, TV, DVD, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi. I don't want to know, I don't need to know and, besides, I just used the instruction manual to kill her spider!

When he said, "I do," he meant I don't need to pick up my dirty laundry anymore. I don't need to wash it — or dry it or fold it — because those sticky socks kicked off in the corner magically become bleached and mated and tucked back into my drawers. If I wanted to do laundry or keep house I would have stayed single or hired a maid. Instead, I said, "I do."

When someone tells us how long they have been married, my husband is usually quick to ask, "But how many good ones?" So while we each went into "I do" thinking a little bit like "thank goodness I don't have to..." we have still enjoyed all 13 years of marriage.

I have run out of fuel a bit more than I was expecting, and he has run out of clean socks a bit more than he was expecting — but at the end of the day, I still get to put my cold feet on him, and he doesn't have to mess with queuing up our favorite Netflix episode. And the rest is rust and stardust.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Let's work together to develop solutions for all

To the Editor:

At meetings of the Harney County Restoration Collaborative, we value the participation of everyone who shows up, and to that end, everyone has an equal opportunity to listen and to be listened to. That format usually results in respectful differences of opinion that we can discuss, revise and usually find our way to consensus decisions. Unfortunately, at a meeting I was facilitating in John Day on Jan. 8, one person did briefly verbally disparage other participants. That person then said he shouldn't be par-

ticipating and left the meeting. It's a shame that outburst happened. At no point was discussion oppressed — we go around the circle and make sure everyone has a chance to have their voice heard — and at no point was there a threat of violence.

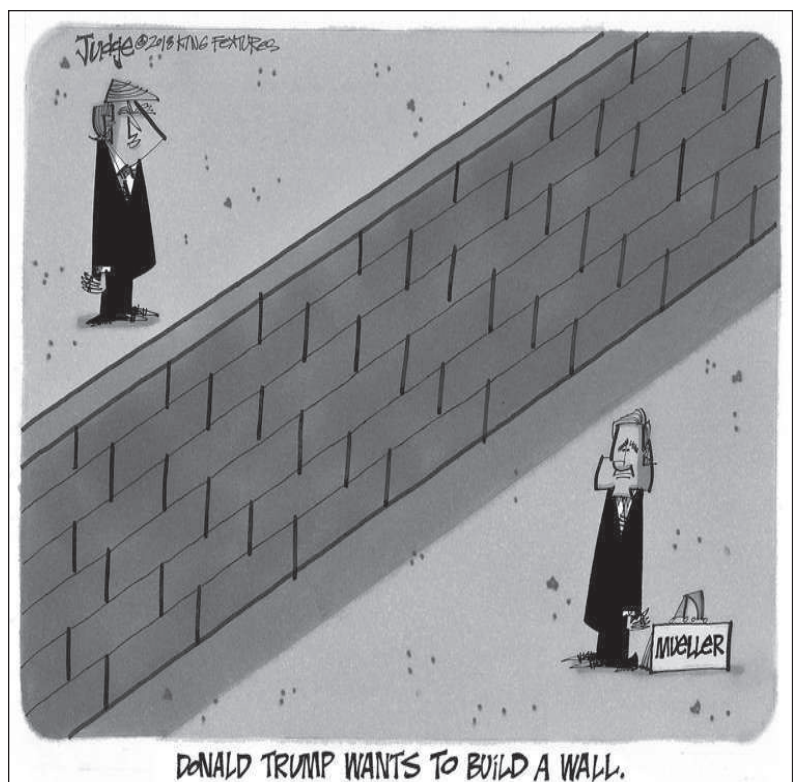
By having an HCRC meeting in John Day we were able to get participation we usually don't get at our Burns meetings from the public in Grant County as well as the Forest Service. After the one brief episode, we continued our meeting and obtained — from everyone in the room — some excellent suggestions regarding fire management and public outreach that will help us with the continued restoration of the southern

Malheur National Forest.

Collaboration is hard work. It requires time, patience, the ability to listen and the energy to create solutions that work — not only for yourself — but for everyone in the room. I tell folks, if I had either the influence to legislate or the money to litigate, I probably wouldn't be doing it. However, for most of us, it is the one thing we can do in our local communities to bring about significant change in the health of our forests and improvement in our local economies. Let's continue to work together — in a respectful, inclusive and creative manner — to develop solutions that work for all of us.

Jack Southworth
Seneca

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.



Blue Mountain EAGLE
PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY
EC MEDIA group

Grant County's Weekly Newspaper

PUBLISHER..... MARISSA WILLIAMS, MARISSA@BMEAGLE.COM
EDITOR..... SEAN HART, EDITOR@BMEAGLE.COM
REPORTER..... RICHARD HANNERS, RICK@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
OFFICE ASSISTANT..... ALIXANDRA PERKINS, 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

Copyright © 2018 Blue Mountain Eagle
All rights reserved. No part of this publication covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means — graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping or information storage and retrieval systems — without written permission of the publisher.