

A ridiculous initiative you have to take seriously

An Oregon initiative petition drive now gathering signatures seeks to end “unnecessary exemptions to laws governing animal abuse, animal neglect, and animal sexual assault.”

In actuality, the initiative would make artificial insemination a sex crime; virtually end commercial livestock, dairy production and animal slaughter; and criminalize hunting, fishing and pest control.

It is an assault on food production, and on Oregon’s farmers, ranchers and fishermen.

Oregon law provides stiff penalties for people who abuse animals. Those same laws provide fairly conventional and sensible definitions of what constitutes abuse — reckless or intentional neglect or cruelty that causes injury or death.

The statutes also set out exemptions that allow for animal husbandry following accepted practices, regulated slaughter, fishing and hunting, pest control and rodeo events.

We believe that most Oregonians are against animal neglect and abuse, but at the same time don’t object to reasonable meat and dairy production or the harvesting of seafood. That said, we’ve seen a lot of crazy ideas take root as initiative petitions.

Enter Portland animal rights activist David Michelson. Last November he filed Initiative Petition 13 with the Oregon Secretary of State’s Office.

“If enacted, IP13 would remove some of the exemptions to our pre-existing animal cruelty laws that currently allow certain individuals to abuse, neglect, and sexually assault animals without penalty,” according to yesonip13.org.

Mary Anne Cooper, vice president of public policy for the Oregon Farm Bureau, said the result would effectively criminalize everything from

slaughtering livestock to basic animal husbandry, including branding and dehorning cattle, castrating bulls and docking horses, sheep and pigs.

The initiative also would re-classify livestock breeding and artificial insemination as sexual assault of an animal — a Class C felony.

Cooper said the petition is the biggest threat to Oregon’s livestock industry in decades. We agree.

Supporters of the bill are disingenuous in their depictions of the measure’s potential impacts and the current state of animal abuse enforcement.

“As they stand right now, not everyone is held to the same standard when it comes to animal cruelty, and some people are exempt from these laws.”

Farmers and ranchers are not exempt from animal abuse laws. Those who operate outside the accepted norms, or those who neglect their animals, are subject to prosecution.

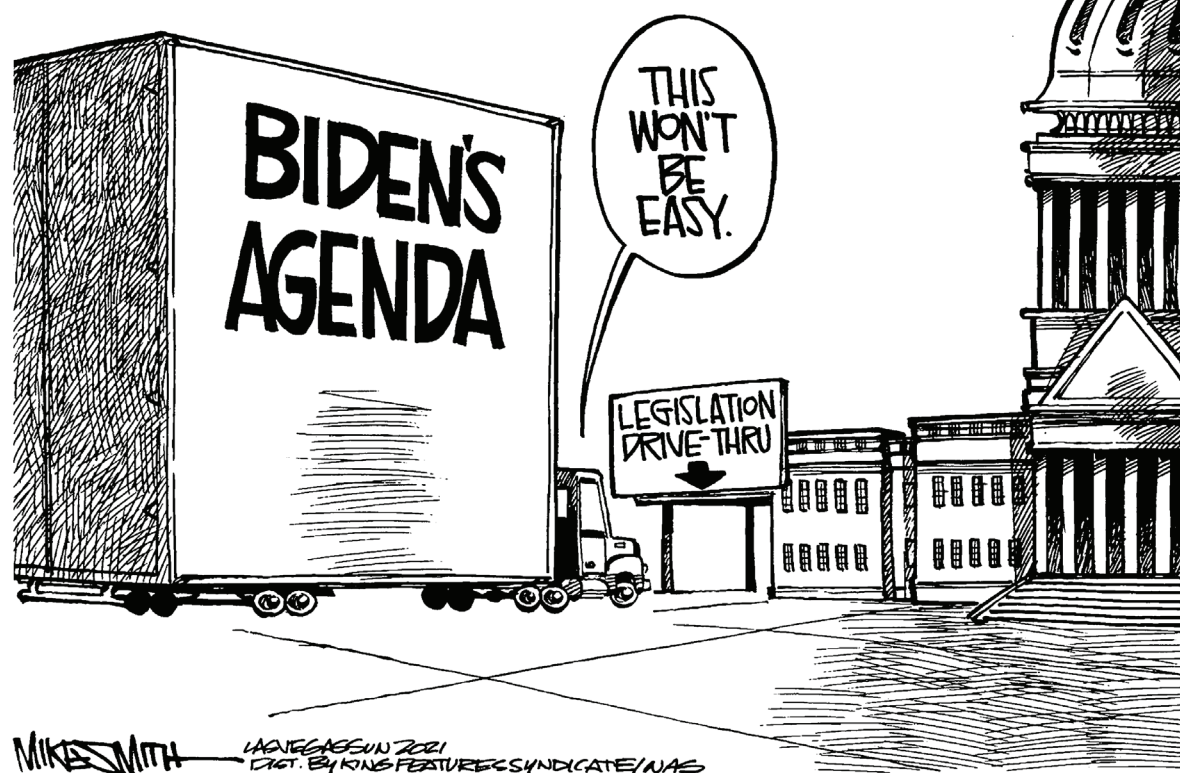
Yesonip13.org assures voters that nothing in the initiative bans the sale of meat, fur or leather, offering up the most ridiculous business model imaginable.

“After an animal lives a full life, and exits the world naturally and humanely, this initiative does not prohibit a farmer from processing and distributing their body for consumption.”

The public is hardly clamoring for meat from old and sick animals. It is illegal to sell meat from animals that have died a “natural” death.

IP13, though it sounds so reasonable in its description, is ridiculous. No meat, no backyard chickens, no goat milk soap.

But we are forced to take it seriously because, as we said, a lot of ridiculous ideas have become law via the initiative petition process. It must be stopped.



MIKE SMITH LAMING/REX USA 2021 CART. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/NAAS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

‘Make your voice heard!’

To the Editor:

Is Grant County aware that there is a proposal in place to sell the Dreamers Lodge, which will be turned into a home for released prisoners housing? I am unsure of the details, but it’s out there, people. Since most of the prisoners held in the Grant County Jail are not likely rapists and murders, these “ex-prisoners” are likely to be shipped in to our county, under a grant, because we all hid our heads in the sand when they took our livelihood, timber, away. We are left to allow the government to buy in to the county, and when it comes time to stand up to the repressive government, their hooks will be set too deep in our flesh. When will we stand up and stand together to take back our county? To live in a manner where we are more self-sufficient and not bought and paid for? Let’s not sell our souls yet again, thereby bringing more trouble on ourselves. Stand up and voice your opinion to the county court, to the mayor and to our commissioners. We do not have to allow ourselves to be bought and paid for, nor do we have to allow this proposed action to happen here. This is our county! Make your voice heard!

Marsha Christensen
John Day

Dreamers Lodge and Project Turnkey

To the Editor:

I am opposed to siting next to the “Main Street Revitalization Project” a home for people “transitioning” back to society from prison, inpatient drug and alcohol treatment or for people who lost homes due to the pandemic.

If the Project Turnkey grant under the CARES Act is truly being pursued for the benefit of bona fide Grant County residents only, then I feel there may be merit in it, and I could potentially be supportive of the idea. If the Dreamer’s Lodge motel is where this resource is ultimately positioned, however, I will never be in support of it.

Transitional housing is intended to give citizens who’ve had challenges a structured and supportive runway back into society. For a program of this nature to work well for the long term, it must be positioned as harmoniously as possible within the society it is intended to serve.

If the Dreamer’s Lodge transitional housing project comes to fruition, I suspect there will be many who will wonder why they were not surveyed or why there was no town hall to discuss the matter.

Regarding addicts, fewer than 20% of them who graduate from inpatient treatment will actually stay sober for one year. While you’re thinking about that, now consider the very real possibility of the defunding of John Day’s municipal police force. Sound familiar?

In my experience around the practice of giving and doing good, the question is never whether or not to be of service to others but rather when and how. There should be disengagement with respect to when and how we serve our fellow man especially when its success depends upon the enrollment, agreement and support of the collective. This is a human services endeavor. We are not laying asphalt, pipe or building a new bridge here. This is a matter that is personal and intimate by nature and should be treated as such. It is not something that should be foisted upon a community by an authority but rather thoughtfully, synergistically and most of all collaboratively woven into the fabric of a town and community that we all love.

Paul Sweany
John Day

‘Create a health economy for all of Grant County’

To the Editor:

We have lived and worked in Grant County for over 40 years. We have seen that, whenever one community does well, we all benefit. Grant County Court can help accomplish that goal by making a positive decision to pay the county’s fair share in the Fourth Street project in John Day.

Why is it our fair share?

The Fourth Street project is necessary because of damage done by the floods of two years ago, and its reconstruction will benefit the county in key aspects — health, safety and economics. Fourth Street is the shortest and fastest route from the hospital to the Grant County Airport, the Malheur Fire Rappel Center, the industrial park and flights for Air Life. The difference of a few minutes can make the difference in the life or death of a loved one, or in controlling a forest fire.

Both city and county residents pay taxes to the county General Fund every year. We expect the court to make decisions that help build a thriving economic base for our county. This is one such decision. The city of John Day has already invested their share of funds and effort into obtaining the FEMA grant and engineering design. The city has asked the county for only \$400,000 of the \$1.6 million cost.

What’s the good news? The county has the added benefit of an accumulated \$50 million Road Reserves Fund that has been funded by the federal Secure Rural Schools program. The purpose of the program is to provide funding for schools, road maintenance and other county services. The Fourth Street project fits that description of road maintenance and county services, so let’s use this excellent resource to solve a problem.

It is time for the county court to work in collaboration with the city to create a healthy economy for all of Grant County!

Adele and Mark Cerny
Bear Valley

‘Remember what Jordan said about staying out of politics’

To the Editor:

On a recent visit to John Day I absorbed much of the political anxiety that surrounds Eastern Oregon. There have been decades of census declines, combined with terrible economic inequality. The people are upset. I can’t blame them! While I’ll cast aspersions across the state, Eastern Oregon’s elected representatives deserve special blame. Instead of fighting for economic development, they keep nursing cultural grievances. Instead of fighting for economic progress, they wage the same failed wars, knowing their legislation will face imminent death in Salem.

I would also like to point out that you are a wonderful source of tourism. Portlanders flock to Grant County because the people are kind, and the area is geographically next to heaven. I honestly do not think most Portlanders harbor ill sentiments toward Eastern Oregon. Sure, you will get your occasional smarmy liberal. I deplore such individuals, but they are a tiny minority.

Some visitors might see the proliferation of anti-Kate Brown, Greater Idaho, Socialism signs and might wonder if they are welcome in John Day. I wish if they were human beings weren’t so tribal, but we all pick teams. Many Portland area residents are disappointed by some of Kate Brown’s exasperating decisions. But the vast majority of my neighbors voted for Kate Brown. Will they feel unwelcome in John Day? As long as tourists

are respectful and do not resort to cultural condescension, I do not see the harm in taking as much of Portland’s money as possible.

While I do not have the data on how often Eastern Oregon residents visit Portland, I would value their economic contributions. If I noticed an armada of Pro-Biden and Brown signs in or around a popular tourist district, I would ask that they be taken down. I always remember what Michael Jordan said about staying out of politics: “Republicans buy sneakers too!” Jordan didn’t see the business sense of alienating 50% of the population. As someone with an eye towards revenue, I agree with his sentiments.

Brian Fitzgerald
Happy Valley

‘Get vaccinated and release your new inner self’

To the Editor:

Significant issues have surfaced with COVID immunity beginning to permeate the growing population of the fully vaccinated providing a communal euphoria which liberates the injected from our months of barren social enclosure. What few realize is during our quarantine-like living, we have been fully immersed in absorbing massive quantities of intellectual-socio media enhancement. Long hours interacting with Netflix, Google, CNN, YouTube, Amazon Prime, Disney, Hulu, et al., have proven to be edifying.

Some denigrate this valued activity by callously calling it destructive binge-watching! Oh, sure, like going to the library or Kindle crunching is binge-reading! I find such comments outlanderish, lack endeavor, a gambit, not to mention a certain creek’s crowning crock of abbey ‘E’litis with an E!

So here is the truth. Emerging psychologists warn the newly vaccinated of “Induced Personality Enhanced Acuity Kognitiv Syndrome” or IPEAKS. They warn the immune of an engorged state of information and pent-up personality. You are full of news, perspective, conservatism/liberalism, mystery, glamour, violence/passion, theology, cheffing, Zooming, competitive sports theory and nearly infinite virtual travel. You are full of it all. Yes, you are an eclectic wonder! Warning: as you re-gregarate, don’t come on too strongly! Acclimate gently. You are very, very interesting, perhaps charming and could even be captivating! You could become a social icon! It depends on whether you practiced alpha or beta bingeing and your screen size.

Yes, you are the vaccinated! You are the liberated!

Here’s an opinion: Please join the fun! Get vaccinated and release your new inner self!

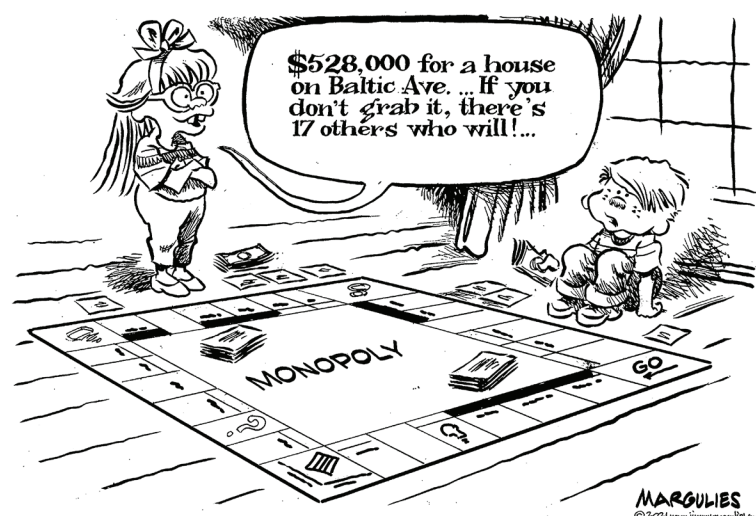
Wayne Spletstoser
Shedd

Protect others from your germs

To the Editor:

I read with interest the article in the Blue Mountain Eagle about various thoughts on the spread of COVID-19. Unless I am mistaken, one of the means of spreading the virus is by saliva. Way early in this virus epidemic, I happened to be in just the right angle in the sunlight to see how much we “spit” saliva as we talk and how far it reaches. I had a repeat of that experience about a week ago. By wearing a mask, each of us keeps our spit from going anywhere except on our masks. By wearing a mask when we are out and about, we protect those we come into contact from whatever germs we are carrying.

Sandra Sutton
John Day



Blue Mountain EAGLE USPS 226-340
Grant County’s Weekly Newspaper
Email: www.MyEagleNews.com John Day, Oregon
Phone: 541-575-0710

MEMBER OREGON NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

EDITOR & GENERAL MANAGER Sean Hart, editor@bmeagle.com
REPORTER Rudy Diaz, rudy@bmeagle.com
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MULTIMEDIA Alex Wittwer, awittwer@eomediagroup.com
MARKETING REP Kim Kell, ads@bmeagle.com
OFFICE ASSISTANT Alixandra Hand, office@bmeagle.com

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