

Our View

It's a crucial time to donate to and support the ERRA program

There's never been a more crucial time for the North Woods community to support the Eagle River Recreation Association (ERRA), and the organization got a huge boost earlier this month at its Bourbon and Beer event.

Because of high participation and big donations from a generous community, the event netted more than \$40,000 that will help fund some of the major renovations and upgrades that are being completed on the historic Dome and the Cube skating rinks on Highway 70 east.

The ERRA is not only Eagle River hockey tradition at its best, but a fantastic recreational program that hones the skills of hockey players and figure skaters. Supported by 175 families, the association and its facilities don't rely on taxes of any kind.

Times have never been more challenging than today for the ERRA. Not only are general class sizes and participation numbers down from years past, but the original hockey arena is in need of serious upgrades to an ice-making plant that is no longer economically feasible to repair.

They've already spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to enlarge and revamp the playing surface, replace ice-making infrastructure and permanently shore up the unique but aging roof structure over the dome.

At a time when youths and families face more challenges than ever before, the ERRA shines as a productive outlet that provides entertainment, training and fitness. The athletic programs teach far more than the fundamentals of hockey and skating, exposing youths to lessons they'll use for a lifetime — teamwork, sportsmanship, the benefits of hard work, competition, perseverance, respecting authority, the importance of details and why they should always strive to do their personal best.

From an economic standpoint, businesses in the city and surrounding towns get a huge boost from the nine youth tournaments each winter and a 3-on-3 tourney in April. There are motels and resorts here that would be hard-pressed to survive without the ERRA. Summer figure skating and hockey schools draw even more people.

Hockey is another of those things that has put Eagle River on the map. Home to the Wisconsin Hockey Hall of Fame, Eagle River is now recognized by the state of Wisconsin as the State Hockey Capital. It is the location of the country's largest pond hockey event, the USA Hockey Pond Hockey National Championships.

Fundraisers such as the Bourbon and Beer event are more important than ever these days, considering the association is funding two indoor rinks with complete ice-making systems. The second rink is great for meeting community demand but tough on the budget.

The bottom line: it's a family-oriented youth program worth supporting.

Behind the editorial 'we'

Members of the Vilas County News-Review editorial board include Publisher Kurt Krueger, Editor Michelle Drew and reporters Jon Eichman, Stephanie Dye and Doug Etten.

EDITORIAL

OPINION/COMMENTARY



JUDGED WISCONSIN'S WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR



NATIONAL GENERAL EXCELLENCE THIRD PLACE, 2018 SECOND PLACE, 2020 FIRST PLACE, 2022

A child lives in us at every stage

IN THE CYCLE of life, people in their mid to late 40s still feel they are children. Most feel youthful, no different than when they were 35. And they will be children forever.

After all, at age 45 you are in the prime of life. Most people at that age have few serious health issues, are at the peak of their careers and have 30 to 40 healthy years ahead, maybe 45 years.

Let's say you were 45 to 50 when your father died at age 76. It may have been hard to believe your 76-year-old father had gotten old. While he may have aged physically, he didn't act old, and you wanted to believe he was still young at heart. Then his life ended.

You may have wondered why he was



People Make the Difference

BY BYRON MCNUTT

referred to as a senior citizen. Then you realized his health was starting to fade. His eye sight wasn't so good. He was having trouble hearing, his shoulders slumped, his memory had some lapses. His hair was gray and receding. He complained about sore knees and hips.

Folks 70 to 80-years-old can't believe how fast the time has gone. Just yesterday they were 50-years-old. As we navigate our 70s, we realize how young people in their late 70s and early 80s are. How could we have been so wrong?

Now that we are in our mid-70s, we don't feel so old. Our bodies might not be as toned, but inside we feel youthful. We may be rebellious and we haven't accepted the idea that we won't walk around forever young outside. We still feel like children inside with a long time to live.

How do we reconcile the fact we are nearing the age that our father passed away? Was the age of his death preordained by heredity? Is that our destiny? Did his parents die in their mid-70s? Did your uncles

and aunts die at that age or did they live well into their 80s, or even 90s?

In writing about this topic, Jim Sollisch of Cleveland, Ohio, said: "I now realize how young my father was when he died. He craved all the joys and temptations he always had. I know that the voice inside his head was still youthful and he walked around forever young inside. At any age, we are all children still, dressed in our costumes of age, time's makeup perfectly applied."

It dominates the news cycle. It is difficult to imagine that these indictments would be happening to anyone whose name isn't Donald Trump. By that,

To McNUTT, Pg. 13B



Winning smile

Fresh watermelon juice drips down the face of a young girl who was the first to clear her rind of the pink sweetness for her age group during the watermelon-eating contest at the Vilas County Fair last weekend. She smiles victoriously as she clutches the yellow and green rind. —Staff Photo By MICHELLE DREW

Pride goeth before the fall

PRIDE GOETH before the fall. It's an old proverb, but it's still true today. So is the saying that the Fish Gods will be angry if you trash talk another fisherman too much.

I know these things for a fact, for my pride went for a huge fall a week ago, thanks to a 10-year-old and a 12-year-old, both of whom turned out to be very proficient fishermen.

The story actually started a few days before our fishing adventure. It began with an outing I was on with a pair of women who both on most days will run circles around me when it comes to not only fishing, but also actually catching fish.

Laura and Peggy, wives of two of the far northwestern Illinois rednecks who annually give me great grief and drink most of my Crown



Trails & Tails

BY WILL MAINES

Royal for a week at duck camp in North Dakota, were my fishing partners for the day.

While their husbands headed north of Boulder Junction to fish one afternoon, I got to share the boat with Peggy and Laura, sort of the beast and two beauties.

Since I have in recent years become one of the world's greatest bass fishermen, at least in my own mind, I took them to a lake where I guaranteed each would catch smallmouth until their arms fell off.

For Laura, that turned out to be true. We barely got started and she got a 15-inch brawler in the boat, thence back into the water. I

followed her lead shortly thereafter with a fish of about the same size in and then back out of the boat.

Peggy sat on zero fish for quite a while before wrestling in what at the time was the biggest one of the day, a pretty 17-inch bronzeback. Unfortunately for her, that was to be the last bass to grab her crawler rig for about two hours.

In the meantime, Laura and I, especially Laura, kept adding to our take, most of the fish in the pound and a half to three-pound range.

That's when the trash talking set in. Me, not Laura. She would nev-

To MAINES, Pg. 13B



Cal Thomas

The Afghanistan withdrawal re-examined

ONE OF THE advantages to a change in majority in one or both houses of Congress is that the public gets to see what the other party won't address or has been covering up.

Such was the case last week when Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) held a forum in Escondido, California, with parents of the 13 service members killed when a terrorist bomber detonated his vest during a chaotic withdrawal from Kabul Airport nearly two years ago. The parents claimed there has been a cover-up and insensitivity to their concerns from the Biden administration.

Unlike so many hearings we are used to seeing in Washington where members posture and occasionally talk more than witnesses, Congressman Issa allowed the parents to pour out their hearts. They did, and while doing so they also criticized President Biden, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Mark Milley for not responding to their numerous requests for information on how and why their child died. It was gripping and highly emotional.

One parent said a Marine had the terrorist in his sights but could not get permission from higher-ups to fire. Another parent said his son's cellphone was returned to him, but without the sim card that might have contained pictures, messages and other information he

To THOMAS, Pg. 13B



SUBMIT LETTERS TO:
 News-Review Editor
 P.O. Box 1929,
 Eagle River, WI 54521
 or info@vcnewsreview.com

See Letters Policy for guidelines

Rustic Road is beautiful and should be preserved

Dear Editor:
 I was in Vilas County recently and I was curious to see signs on Highway K that say "Save Our Rustic Road.org."

When I looked into it and found that they plan to tear down 13 feet of forest on both sides of this beautiful road, I was shocked! It is not a busy road. It's so beautiful and the only Rustic Road in that area.

Several years ago I was watching TV in the morning and a show came on called "The Most Beautiful Wooded Drives in the World," and there it was, Highway K in Vilas County.

I was thrilled to see Highway K featured on the show. People have been enjoying its beauty for years, including my family. It is a tragedy to destroy it.

My father called the area "God's County" because of the beauty. The area itself is so unique because of the concentration of so many freshwater lakes, some of which you can see when you drive on Highway K. Not many places in the world have so many small freshwater lakes in one area and such a scenic Rustic Road.

Why destroy it? Highway K between Highway 51 and Star Lake truly is one of the most beautiful wooded drives in the world.

Personal matters made it impossible for me to spend time in Vilas County over the past three years. Wish I would have known about this earlier! Please don't destroy it!

Sincerely,
 Nikki Taylor and
 Eleanor Gauger
 Wauwatosa

Convention of States allows amendments to Constitution

Dear Editor:
 Listen close and you'll hear me laughing way out here in Colorado.

I just read the Biden boast by Robert Reich in the Aug. 9 edition. It's a prime example of a liberal's delusional view of our world. Your first paragraph set the tone. You assert that America will overlook Biden's age and give him a second term because "most Americans find Trump so loathsome."

That's a false assumption.
 But this ain't about Trump. Let's discuss your alleged booming economy. Bidenomics. That's a cute word. Catchy. But what does it mean for the average citizen?

Gas prices stay sky high. Groceries continue to rise. Our food and supply chains are fragile. It seems like a train wreck or factory fire happens every month (coincidence or conspiracy?). Millions of illegals are breaching our border and infiltrating our country. Criminals grin with glee, planning another crime spree. Insurance companies flee cities, unable to pay soaring insurance claims caused by rampant crime.

Certain leaders insist on a "woke" military which detracts from our defense capabilities. Many children suffer moral, social, and intellectual decay due to a questionable education system. Homeless people live under bridges and on the streets. The American way of life has changed, and not all for the better.

So don't ramble on about how "Bidenomics" will save America. Use your common sense and face reality. America needs help, and it ain't Joe.

Yes, age is a factor. It's very obvious in his speech and appearance. I believe all politicians

To STATES, Pg. 14B

McNutt

FROM PAGE 12B

Bill Lehman of Phoenix says it means two things: First, the former president brought it on himself by his foolish, immature and careless actions in handling classified documents, his actions on Jan. 6, 2021 and his persistent lies about the 2020 election being stolen.

Second, Democrats and their allies in the press, the bureaucracy and at the top of law-enforcement agencies are equally foolish and stubborn in their relentless, politicized campaign to get Trump irrespective of long-standing precedent, short-term political implications and the good of the nation.

It is hard to decide which side is worse.

Jason Method of Bordentown, N.J. adds: Yes, the system has had a double standard. Hillary Clinton was let off

after a more egregious crime, but that doesn't absolve Trump. The Republicans need to get behind a new, fresh candidate for 2024.

Method says: Two wrongs don't make a right. Sure, point out the hypocrisy on the left, but hold Trump accountable.

Brian Tracy shares this observation: "Successful people are always looking for opportunities to help others. Unsuccessful people are always asking: 'what's in it for me?'"

Letters Policy

The Vilas County News-Review/The Three Lakes News welcomes letters from its readers. Letters should be written legibly, or typed, and must include the name, address and telephone number of the writer. No letters will be published without the writer's name. Initials and/or pseudonyms will not be used. Unsigned letters will be disregarded. While the maximum limit is 600 words, writers should note that shorter letters will receive top priority. **No political letters will appear in the last issue prior to an election.** They should be mailed to us at P.O. Box 1929, Eagle River, WI 54521; email address: info@vcnewsreview.com.

OPINION/COMMENTARY

Maines

FROM PAGE 12B

er do that to her best friend, although I did note a sly smirk on her face each time she landed another bass.

I, on the other hand, was fool enough to start trash talking, something for which I should know better. Then again, I'm not always a fast learner, so my trash talking got lengthier and more evil all afternoon, although I professed to be only joking all the time.

Since Peggy was once a Division III college champion javelin thrower in her younger days, and could probably throw me at least half as far as a javelin, common sense would have told me for my own good when to be quiet. It didn't.

In the end, I did hold up my end of the fishing rod at day's end just a couple fish shy of Laura, while Peggy salvaged a little pride with a beautiful 3-pound smallie a short while before we quit.

Needless to say, when my next fishing outing was set to begin with Tigh and Charlie, I figured I would continue to be the fishing guru who would teach those young whippersnappers how you do it.

Fortunately, I did not pre-bragging about my prowess before we left the landing. When we anchored at my favorite spot, it took Tigh all of one cast to land the first bass of the day, a respectable 13-incher.

Shortly thereafter, he had two or three more in the boat before ei-

ther Charlie or I had so much as a hit. Charlie then jumped in with a few fish of his own. We worked over several of my "can't miss" spots, and the two of them did not miss. I did.

I think we were about two hours in when I caught my first smallie, a whopper that was four inches if he was an inch. Truthfully, four inches might even have been a bit of an exaggeration. My night-crawler was longer than the bass.

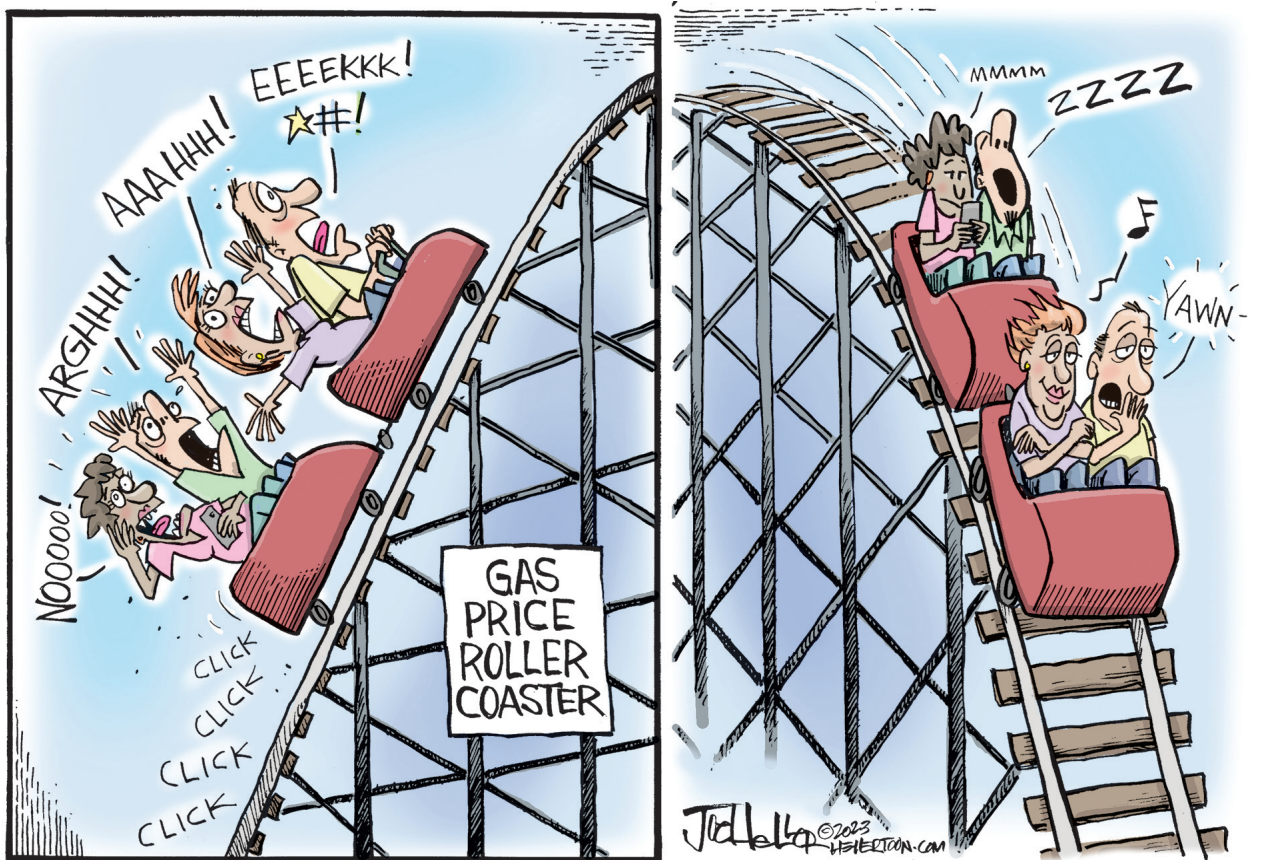
Fishing with the same technique I assured the boys—correctly, I might add—would catch lots of bass, I continued to catch nothing. Sometimes they would even set their rods down for a rest, only to have to make a mad grab for

said rods when a foraging smallie nearly jerked an unattended rod out of the boat.

And so it went. Four hours went by as the boys kept it going, especially Tigh. Finally, just before quitting time, I salvaged a tiny bit of pride when the biggest fish of the day, a 19-inch bass, whacked my jig.

All I could do as we got back to the landing was offer up thanks to the Fish Gods for letting me catch at least that one big fish. I also offered up a sincere vow to those same Fish Gods that I would never again trash talk a less fortunate fisherman than I.

Never again, I promised the Fish Gods, would I give a reason for my pride to take a fall. Think I'll keep that promise?



Regulations ignored to the detriment of the North Woods

Dear Editor,
 Short-term rentals, unregulated and unenforced, are creating serious short- and long-term negative impacts. Change is needed to protect the North Woods from becoming southern Wisconsin.

Just a few years ago, homes for rent were just fill-ins while the owners were away. Now it seems many are hotels with little to no regulation.

The result is an excessive influx of visitors who care little or not at all about the community and the environment in the North Woods—crowding residential areas, lake channels, emergency and law enforcement systems, and local government meeting agendas.

Tensions are high for visitors too, expecting the good time they paid for with no regard for regula-

tions on the water and land or the overburdened restaurant and grocery store staff they yell at.

Safety, health and environmental impacts are my greatest concerns. I know well a home that was once four bedrooms but was redone by a short-term rental group to nine bedrooms, now advertised to sleep 28.

Should this be okay from a health department standpoint? And who's checking ceiling heights, trees felled, and fireworks on the lawn, creating fire danger?

The "flipper" built an illegal beach, tore out trees and removed the fish habitat along the shore. Their penalty? A slap on the wrist, a few sticks planted, and grass in the beach area.

This year, over the Fourth of July, an area rental used the front

yard to launch professional grade fireworks. These included a lantern that got stuck in the tree—just when wildfires are roaring in the U.S. and Canada.

Another home advertising space for six cars had 10 in the driveway with no way to get an emergency vehicle in if needed.

Citizens can help to remind visitors of rules like life jackets on paddle boards, but only if you want to be shown the finger. Such disrespect hurts.

I could go on. Regulations are conveniently being ignored even by local realtors and managers, and neighbors are forced to become the reluctant, embittered patrolling enforcers.

I don't know a complete solu-

To REGULATIONS, Pg. 14B

Thomas

FROM PAGE 12B

wanted to have.

Anyone watching the entire forum must have been moved by the pain expressed by each parent. Two said they had "protected" their child while he or she was growing up and had faith that the Marines would do the same while under their care.

At a minimum they want an apology from the government, an admission by President Biden that mistakes were made and the resignation or firing of

people who made those mistakes that caused the deaths of their loved ones. That's unlikely to happen because as we've seen in too many instances, when you are in government, being wrong is more likely to get you a promotion than a pink slip.

And in fairness, the chaotic withdrawal from the longest war in U.S. history, spanned two administrations, not just Biden's. In February 2020, the Trump administration negotiated a withdrawal agreement from Afghanistan that freed more than 5,000 imprisoned Taliban soldiers and reduced U.S. troop levels from 13,000 to 2,500. Would those 13 Marines have been better protected if the draw down hadn't been so drastic?

But grieving parents aren't concerned with policy. The buck stops at the Oval Office, and whoever is sitting in the big chair when the buck gets there, gets the blame.

However, one parent said when President Biden shook her hand at Dover Air Force Base where bodies of service members are returned, he told her he could identify with her pain because his son, Beau, was killed in Iraq. She knew he wasn't killed in Iraq but died from cancer. This added to her suspicion, she said, that she was being lied to by her government.

She wasn't the only one who claimed the parents have been getting lies or silence from the administration. The father of Marine Corps Sergeant Taylor Hoover accused the Biden administration of lying to them to evade public accountability for mistakes they made.

Kelly Barnett, mother of one of those killed claimed, "We are told lies, given incomplete reports, incorrect reports, total disrespect." She labeled the military and civilian leadership "incompetent cowards" and "evil."

Defense Secretary Austin issued a statement at the time of the terrorist attack in which he said, "We mourn alongside the families of those who were lost, and we will never forget your loved ones' heroism and sacrifice. They gave their lives trying to save the lives of others. And I know that you share my pride in them." The families say they have heard little or nothing since.

You can watch the entire hearing on YouTube. It is riveting and emotional.

Predictably, some Democrats are saying President Biden and the military leadership did nothing wrong. Watch the video and make up your own mind. I've made up mine. Those young Marines deserved better.

Readers may email Cal Thomas at tcaditors@tribpub.com. Look for Cal Thomas' latest book "A Watchman in the Night: What I've Seen Over 50 Years Reporting on America" (HumanixBooks).

OPINION/COMMENTARY



Choices galore

A main attraction of fairs near and far is the food, and Vilas County Fair is no different. Ranging from funnel cakes to cheese curds to cold lemonade and nachos, there were plenty of choices for visitors this past weekend.
—Staff Photo By MICHELLE DREW

Donald Trump for president is a risky bet

Letter to the Editor:
Beginning in March, 2016, I had written about the looming and then actual presidency of Donald Trump.

Even before his unfortunate election in 2016, it was clear enough to anyone willing to take the time and effort that a Trump presidency was, at best, a risky bet on a known fraud-and-con man. Events since then, especially in the aftermath of his failed re-election bid in 2020, have shown just how risky that bet was.

Now, here we are in 2023 contemplating yet another Trump run for high office. Here we are considering the possibility that a twice impeached, thrice indicted (with a fourth likely coming soon), convicted sex offender, and failed businessman should again be the nominal leader of this country.

Once seen as a quirky gadfly with a lot of money and a mouth full of runaway nonsense, Don-

ald Trump needs to be seen for what he really is; a darkly narcissistic, would-be autocrat who represents a real danger to the American people.

The first Trump presidency had at least a few officials who understood what reality was and attempted, however unsuccessfully, to act as guardrails against the president's unhealthy impulses.

Rex Tillerson, James Mattis and John Kelly come to mind; serious enough people who, luckily for their own reputations, were soon gone.

In the end, whatever sanity had once existed was now replaced with the likes of Rudy Giuliani, Sydney Powell and John Eastman. Nonserious people who themselves are at high risk for criminal indictment and/or disbarment from the legal profession.

For those willing or eager to place another bet on this man, all I can say is be careful what

you wish for. As for the rest of us, I propose the following bit of political advice: Trump... expect the worst and you will never be disappointed.

I am, as ever, a proud Never Trumper.

Jeff Laadt,
Eagle River

Regulations

FROM PAGE 13B

tion, but the problem goes beyond first glance.

Economic impacts are serious, and I'm looking both short- and long-term. Here and around the world, what first appeared to bring economic benefits is now impacting the availability and willingness of developers to complete moderate housing for teachers, firefighters, hospital workers, and restaurant workers, just to name a few.

I'm told teachers have come and gone from Eagle River unable to find affordable housing. A large restaurant in western Vilas County is closing because they cannot find housing for staff to keep doors open.

How can we sustain? At what cost are we encouraging this new kind of tourism? No loon chicks, fewer fish and murkier waters from \$350,000 wakeboats' disturbance; lakeshore erosion from overbuilding and ignoring no-wake signs just for sport; and invasive species entering lakes unguarded in boat ballasts. Next?

From Granicus: "Even though this new accommodation brings substantial economic benefits to communities, when unregulated, Airbnb-style rentals can put pressure on communities and all the accommodation industry. With the immense growth of short-term vacation rentals in every community, ignoring the impact, whether positive or negative, is not an option anymore."

Let's continue to support our towns as they seek to work towards effective and enforceable regulations while handling complaint calls, repairing channel buoys, and working with county zoning. We need a statewide solution!

We don't mind sharing, but we must protect what residents and visitors alike cherish in these North Woods: trees, lakes, fish, wildlife, fresh air, kind people, and quiet. Without that, we're just another city.

Carol Marshall
Eagle River

States

FROM PAGE 13B

should have limits on their terms as well as their age.

In my opinion, a vast majority of people in their 80s are lacking the mental and physical capacity to fulfill the enormous task of being president. It's unreasonable for elderly statesmen to make laws that they won't have to live by.

We should elect new people with fresh ideas. Let them make laws and decide

how they want to run the country. After all, it will be theirs in a few years as we all must pass on.

Term limits are nearly impossible to impose. Biden, Feinstein, McConnell, and many others desperately cling to their power. However, we have Article V of the Constitution to solve the problem. It allows we the people to call for a Convention of States and amend the constitution.

This is a grassroots movement that will give

our country back to the people. Convention of States also advocates for a balanced budget and limiting government overreach, among other initiatives that will benefit America. Check it out. They have an excellent website, conventionofstates.com. Sign the petition. Get involved.

This can be the answer to our country's problems, but we the people have to make it happen.

Respectfully,
Guy Richter
Rye, Colo.

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