

OURAY COUNTY Opinion

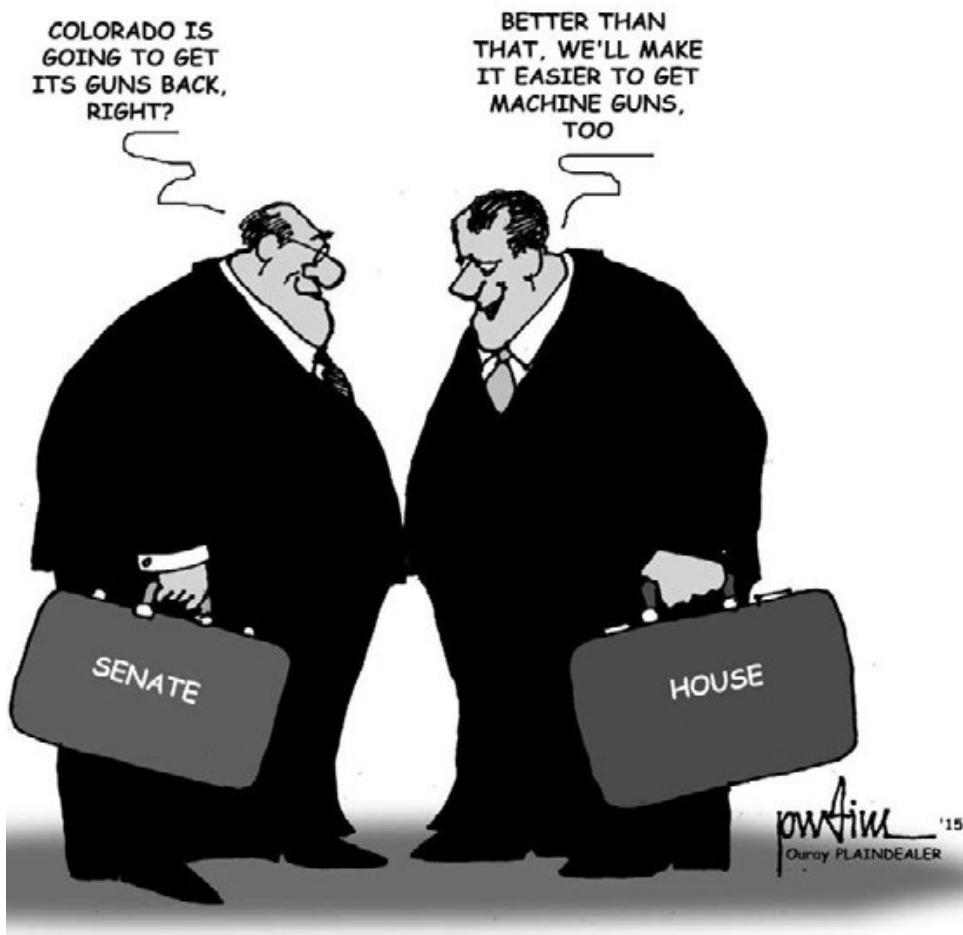
"The people up there would like us to do something to make it better this summer."

Pete Whiskeman, Ouray County Road Committee member
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COMMENTARY

Sometimes winning is losing

A few weeks ago on "ABC's This Week" Sunday morning gathering of political experts, Cokie Roberts gave an aside along with her answer to a question. The answer, to most, was obvious.

Alan
Todd



Magazine, all but one two-term presidency and/or presidency coupled with successor to fill a two term has lost state legislative seats since the FDR/Truman terms.

The question was why President Obama spent time discussing a tax plan during the State of the Union speech that was dead on arrival in Congress before he ever finished his sentence.

Roberts, a journalist and author, offered that the president was delivering "something for people to run on."

At this point, with being two years out from the golf and speaking circuit, it's a good guess that all the president has left is tossing softballs to Democrats who will have to follow his wake.

So, after Roberts served the obvious, she added, "He's lost almost 70 Democrats since he's been president," as quoted by politifact.com, "and more than 900 state legislators. So he needs to give Democrats something to run on."

That second number, the losses in legislatures across the country, made Politifact.com take pause.

Was Roberts correct? The fact-checking website says yes.

The actual number is 910 state Democrat state legislative seats lost from 2009 to the 2014 mid-terms.

What makes this staggering is that number represents nearly 25 percent of the total 4,082 state legislative seats across the country that have been lost in the president's wake.

Colorado lost 15 percent of its Democrats. Other states, such as Indiana (-42 percent), Missouri (-36 percent), West Virginia (-51 percent) and Alabama (-50 percent) are more notable examples of the 48 states that have shown losses in the president's party.

In addition to state legislative losses for Democrats, Politifact notes that during Obama's presidency his party has lost 11 governorships, 13 U.S. Senate seats, 69 House seats and 30 state legislative chambers.

It's not unusual for a two-term president to leave losses like this in his wake. According to an article in Politico

FDR/Truman (-191)
Eisenhower (-843)
JFK/LBJ (-437)
Nixon/Ford (-800)
Reagan (+6)
Clinton (-524)
G.W. Bush (-324)

What does this mean for the 2016 nominee for president for the Democrat party? Not good news. For all but one two-term presidential term since the FDR/Truman transition, no incumbent party has won a presidential election following losses like those above except for the one instance when there were no losses. H.W. Bush followed Reagan after Reagan notched the only positive gains in state legislatures during his two terms after the FDR/Truman duo.

Is it that cut and dry? Probably not. Politifact, for instance, points out that lately voters are more inclined to punch a ticket straight down party lines as opposed to voting habits throughout the 70s and 90s, when voters would zig-zag down the ballot. These days, voters tend to stay in the same column from "White House to the courthouse."

It's also pointed out that minorities and younger voters tend to steer clear of mid-term elections, the two scenes in which Obama's party was clobbered.

Given that there are variables, and there always are variables including redrawing of congressional and state house districts, the next Democrat nominee for president has a pretty deep chasm to bound.

Back on the home front, where we send our best to Kima Buhler on a speedy recovery. Your friends at the Plaindealer are thinking of you. We have no doubt you're in good hands with Mike at your side.

atodd@ouraynews.com

LETTER TO THE PLAINDEALER

Firefighter training a success

Dear Editor,

Recently 36 dedicated volunteer firefighters from Ridgway, Ouray and Log Hill Fire departments attended an all day training. Charles Balke, Assistant Chief from Cortez Fire and also a State Fire Academy Instructor presented a class on Arson Awareness and Scene Preservation. Katherine Ridenhour, also a State Fire Academy Instructor from Pagosa Springs, presented a review class on Analyzing Fireground Risks and Benefits, along with Radio Communications relating to Arrival Reports and Scene Size Up. It was truly an amazing experience to have so many volunteer members from three Ouray County fire departments in the same room, as well as having this kind of training at home!

This event was made possible with the help of many people from our county to whom we are greatly appreciative. Thank you to the county commissioners, who

donated the 4-H Event Center, and to Susan Long, for helping coordinate the event. The following businesses donated food, drinks and services: True Grit Café, Duckett's A G Market, Artisan Bakery and Ridgway Office Supply. Lodging for the instructor was provided by Chipeta Solar Springs and the Twin Peaks in Ouray. A big thank you to Katherine and Chuck for coming and sharing their expertise and knowledge.

Thank you so much to everyone who made this day possible. The overwhelming and generous support of the community was incredible and in return we are better prepared to serve you. Sincerely,

Cristy Orvis

Ridgway Fire Department
Ouray Fire Department
Log Hill Fire Department

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LETTER TO THE PLAINDEALER

Love the pictorial pleasures

Dear Editor,

I don't mind renewing at the higher price, as the value of your pictorial choices is giving much pleasure. In fact, I've scissored quite a few to share with family (a few counties south) since we have nothing like an ice park, for instance, not even a cuckoo bird!

But we do have drought, finally relieved with two December rains, and one in January as well. It brought the dead lawn back to life; quite a surprise.

My house is on a double lot, and when we arrived in 1990, I made a lengthy attempt to incorporate all the botanical joys to which we were accustomed in

Ventura County. Water prices now are impressive, over the low limit suggested. So far I've lost two pines, but had the larger's trunk made into a statute. Two more of the other types in the rear also declined.

It was fun to visit in the Plaindealer "digs" last summer and chat with you across the desk. You can see my "far-sure address" (on this letter). Next, I move to a table and try to cope with papers and lists re: income tax preparations.

Good luck with all your "machinations" as well. Happy 2015.

Charm Kaiser
Los Osos, California

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