



Happy New Year to All!

We apologize for not having a December Newsletter, but Covid had its way with our office. However, all have recovered and are back to full power!

It is really interesting to watch the news. It is almost like watching a soap opera; although we did not watch it for the month of December, it did not really change very much.

1. **Russia** appears to be getting ready to do something - invade the Ukraine. That is not new. They have wanted to do that for many many years. Besides having excellent port access, the Ukraine is rich in coal, oil, natural gas, iron ore, manganese, the largest uranium and graphite deposits in Europe, mercury, potash, salt, gold, building materials, ornamental stones, and hydropower resources. It truly is a plum and Putin would love to pick it - or at least part of it.

2. **Covid** - To mask...Not to mask. Vaccine, boosters, annual boosters...Not to vaccine. To test... Not to test. The controversy continues. If that is not annoying enough, new varieties or variants of Covid are promised...just to keep everyone worried.

The Coronaviruses are causing havoc all over the world, not just here. Examples in the news:: Ghana's president warned yet again that the healthcare system was at risk of collapsing, China builds camps to hold 4000 Covid victims, Israel requires an Israeli ID for vaccinations - Palestinians must find somewhere else to get a vaccine, mail service and businesses in countries vastly affected by virus absences, and vaccine mandates implemented and thrown out in many countries.

3. **Politics**, Politics, Politics. He said, she said, they did... and nothing constructive is being done about the economy and inflation, voter fraud, an invasion by illegals, and our low regard by other world leaders.

**It feels like a merry-go-round or the Groundhogs' Day movie.**

### The Ukraine



**Even the headlines from an online world news agency - reflect that Covid dominates the picture.**

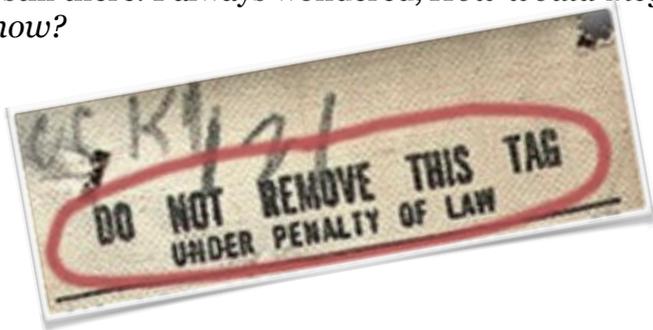
1. **Coronavirus Updates**
2. Marches in Nepal
3. Niger Village Attack
4. **Coronavirus Updates (2)**
5. North Korea Developing Tactical Nukes
6. Possible Plane Crash in Indonesia
7. **Coronavirus Updates (3)**
8. US Bans Chinese Products
9. Protests in Belgium Turn Deadly
10. President Museveni Wins Re-election
11. **Coronavirus Updates (4)**
12. Uganda Election Drama Continues
13. US Accuses China of Genocide
14. Explosion in Madrid
15. Protests in Russia
16. **Coronavirus Updates (5)**
17. Suicide Bombing in Baghdad

## Headlines Distract and Overwhelm Us

In one of our previous newsletters, [August of 2021](#), we discussed the various types of governments that are in the world... all the 'isms' that you have heard of: communism, socialism, totalitarianism, fascism, and several others.

In this day and age of media control, agency control, judicial control, legislation control, and executive control, and all attempting to force a great reset of our values and principals. A few of these 'isms' have been captured in an **umbrella control faction**, dictated by the federal government.

Our government behaves now as if it owns us and it is a privilege, not a right, to live and work in this country. We have to get permission for almost everything we do; I'm waiting for them to charge us for our sleep. Oh wait - there is a threatening label on my mattress - **Do not remove this tag under penalty of law**..... you have seen this I am sure. They have modified the verbiage lately, but the idea is still there. I always wondered, *How would they know?*



The conclusion to all of it - our government is too large and controls the population far more than our founding fathers desired. Non-elected bureaucrats touch on every area of our life and we often feel powerless to do anything about the major issues that have invaded our security and pursuit of happiness.

Most of the issues have come about slowly and they seems to follow a pattern. But there are ways to turn things around - we must use the Constitution to change the legislators that have been imbedded in our government for a very long time: vote them out and add term limits in an amendment to the constitution by using Article 5. That is right - let us call for a **Convention of States**.

Our founding fathers experienced a government that had become tyrannical and ignored the will of the people. We fought wars to gain and retain our God given liberties. So many men and women fought and died for our country to keep us free from these types of oppression. However, they will have died in vain if we allow our constitutional republic to become a socialistic state.



Very forward-thinking men, the Framers of the Constitution created a federal government that had very limited powers. All powers not delegated to the federal government were retained by the states. However, they were very concerned about the federal government becoming tyrannical and ignoring the will of the people. So they added a provision to Article V, the part of the Constitution that deals with how the Constitution is amended. This clause was added near the end of the convention and gives the states the same ability to propose amendments to the Constitution that Congress has.

## What is a Convention of States?

A Convention of States is a way for our states to propose an amendment(s) to the Constitution of the United States independent of the federal government. Our legislators in our state, who represent us, draft an application for a convention for proposing amendments in accordance with Article V of the Constitution. They send the applications to Congress, who must, in a timely fashion, issue a call for an Article V convention once 34 applications are received. The states select delegations to go to the convention where they will debate and potential vote on amendments being proposed for ratification.

Now there are a few caveats to this:

1. Two thirds of all the states must pass a resolution in both chambers of their legislature (House and Senate), which is called an application for an Article V convention for proposing amendments. The governor does not need to sign it. The passed applications are sent to Congress.
2. The applications list the amendment (s) that are to be discussed and voted on at the Convention - and the topics **MUST BE THE SAME** from each state. You can't have one state wanting to discuss one thing and the others wanting to discuss something else. The amendments to be discussed listed in the applications, **must match from ALL 34 states.**

3. The applications are then sent to **Congress, who is obligated to call the Convention;** setting the time and place. That is the only jurisdiction that Congress has as far as the Convention is concerned. **Congress has no control over the Convention** once it is called. *If Congress does not issue the call for the Convention in a reasonable time period, the states can force a call for the Convention in court, due to inaction on Congress' part.*
4. **The states choose their representatives to the Convention** in their own way. This is left up to the states to decide how and who. They can send more than one representative.
5. **Traditionally, each state gets one vote** on any proposed Amendments.
6. **The Convention votes on the Amendment or amendments** - but **this is just the first phase.** **Now they must be ratified by three-fourths (38 in total) of the states.** This would be done in the **individual state legislatures** or at a state ratification convention. **The amendment (s) do not become law unless ratified by 38 of our states.**



**It is going to be up to us working with our own state legislators to limit the federal government's overreach. We cannot and do not expect the federal government to control itself.**

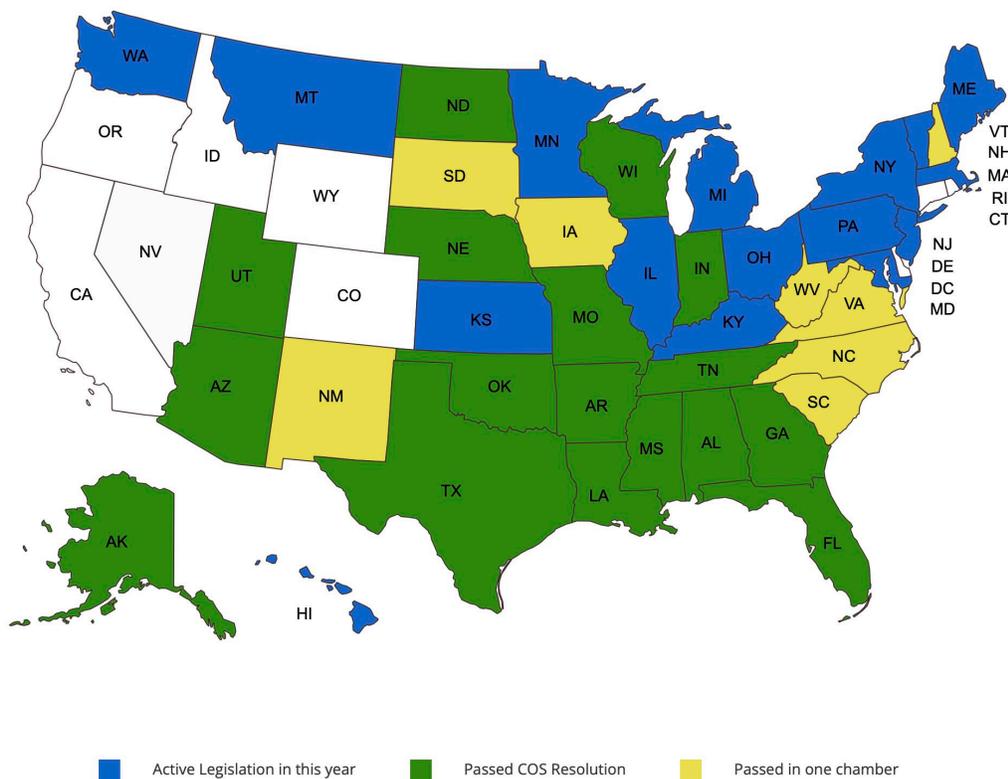
Our founding fathers wanted most of the control to be handled by the states, which would give the people a much stronger voice and keep the will of the people close to home.

However, the Federal Government has grown so large and it does not want to relinquish any of its power to people. They believe that they know better than the public does. They have forgotten that they work for the people - not the other way around.

There is a movement across our country that is calling for a Convention of States designed to rein in the federal government consistent with the original intent of the Constitution.

The map shows how many states have **passed** an application for a Convention of States.

A number of the states (Pennsylvania for one) have kept the resolution (for an application) vote from getting to the floor because of pressures within their voting sections. A tool used by voting blocks within the state is to threaten our legislators' jobs. Although it does not represent what the people of the state want, they can bottle-neck it in committee and prevent it ever coming to the floor. ***The shame is theirs!***



Although it is a long and arduous process, a Convention of States needs to be called. The Convention of States applications (which must all be about the same subjects) are calling for an Article V convention to consider amendments in three topics:

1. **Impose fiscal restraints on the Federal Government.**
2. **Limit the power and jurisdiction of the Federal Government.**
3. **Limit the terms of office for its officials and for members of Congress.**

The opponents are naturally falling along party lines. Their cry is “Power to the Government!” Not “Power to the People or the States!” We must encourage our state legislators to approve a Convention and not be pressured into doing what certain voting blocks want or certain parties want.

## ***A Tribute to The Smokejumpers***

A smokejumper is a fire fighter who jumps from a fixed winged aircraft into inaccessible wild land areas in an attempt to control the blaze or prevent it from spreading - if possible. They are dropped into wild areas with tools and enough food and water for two days. They setup camp and are on their own without any outside help. If something happens, they must take care of it. It is very dangerous work - jumping into heavily wooded areas and dealing with out of control flames.

Smokejumper recruits learn the basics of rugged terrain parachuting during an intense six-week training course in smokejumper and fire management operations. Many have over ten seasons of fire experience and a few over twenty. Many have advanced degrees in fire management, ecology, forestry, engineering, sociology, biology, and various other sciences.



Smokejumpers are employed by the federal government in a seasonal capacity - April to October.

*A smokejumper earns around \$16.00 per hour. A smokejumper foreman earns about \$24.00 per hour. Smokejumpers are paid nothing extra for making parachute jumps; however, they do receive hazard pay equivalent to 25 percent of their base pay when working on an uncontrolled wildfire. Smokejumpers must provide their own boots, watch, and knife for the job. Smokejumpers may be reimbursed for boots up to \$500.00 once every five years. When firefighters are away working fires in travel status, they are either provided with meals or reimbursed for the cost of meals taken.*

*If the fire season permits, smokejumpers assist in project work on local National Forests and Ranger Districts. This work commonly includes prescribed fire planning and implementation, brush disposal, fence construction, trail maintenance, radio and Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) maintenance, timber work, fisheries work, forest rehabilitation, and tree cone collection.*

Courtesy of the US Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service.

## **How It All Began**

This all started back in the 1930s. Parachutes were experimented with to drop water and chemicals on the wild fires in the west. Although it didn't work very well, they did learn a lot about parachuting into the region, and in 1939 the Aerial Fire Control Experiment moved from California to Washington; this was to direct all the parachute jumping. Nine jumpers volunteered for the project along with two consultants from the Eagle Parachute Company. They made 60 successful parachute jumps during the summer of 1939 into northern Washington.

During the summer of 1940, the US Forest Service smokejumper project became fully operational. There were six smoke jumpers that were based at Winthrop Washington and seven that were located at Moose Creek Ranger Station in Idaho; two of the Moose Creek jumpers made the first official fire jump when fire broke out in the Nez Perce National Forest of Idaho. Eight more jumps were done before the winter and the end of 1940 fire season.



**Caption:** Group of jumpers about to take off in Ford Trimotor plane at Missoula Airport, Missoula, Montana, for practice jump with static line.

**Date:** June 30, 1941

**Photographer:** Swan, K. D.

Courtesy of Forest History Society

In 1941 the entire project which now had 26 jumpers, was moved to Missoula Montana. They moved there because the Johnsons Flying Service, which was the private contractor that supplied the smokejumpers with aircraft and pilots, was located there. The need for more smokejumpers was great; the personnel shortage reached a critical stage in the spring of 1943, due to the World War II. With only five fire fighters left, they decided to start using members of CPS (Civilian Public Service), which was made up mostly of conscientious objectors to the military draft. They were trained as smokejumpers and continued their service until the end of the war.

In 1945, the members of the All Black 555 Parachute Infantry Battalion, which was a trained airborne unit,

were told that they were going to be sent in to what they thought was the Asian theater of the war. It was a secret mission called operation Fire Fly. They thought that they were going to join Douglas



MacArthur's troops, but that was not the case. They arrived in Oregon in May and they learned that they were actually going to be trained as firefighters to help protect our western forests from Japanese fire balloons.

In order to keep these missions under wraps, the entire operation was classified - top secret; they did not want to panic the population or let any spies on our soil know if their strategy worked. The 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion put out other types of fires as well as wild forest fires during that time; the 1945 fire season was a very deadly season.

Between 1944 and 45, the Japanese sent about 9000 fire balloons towards the western coast of North America. Although the exact count is not known, it is believed about 1000 actually reached the United States and 300 were actually seen flying over the west the coast. After three days in the air, each balloon dropped in an incendiary bomb. The Japanese hoped to burn some of the much needed natural resources or hit a city.



In 1949 the fire season was not only an extremely busy one, but also tragic as twelve smokejumpers were fatally burned while attending to the Mann Gulch fire in Montana. Although not due to parachuting into the area, the wild fires and smoke took their toll. This was to be the most fatal tragedy in smokejumper history and remains so today.

During the 1950s, the smokejumper projects grew in number and size reaching 398 smokejumpers by 1958. During the 1950s the smokejumper projects had expanded; bases were maintained in New Mexico, Montana, Idaho, and Alaska.



In 1970 after 31 years of operation and 90,000 parachute jumps, the first smokejumper died due to a parachute drop in northern California.

The BLM (Bureau of Land Management) also had a smokejumper project which grew significantly during 1960s. Many changes had taken place during that time and in the 70s they started using smokejumpers on a national scale. About 400 smoke jumpers were maintained during the 1980s and although they had done over 200,000 parachute drop jumps, they had only one plane crash take place.

Today the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and many other agencies that are responsible for wild fire suppression, rely on smokejumpers in an ever developing science service.



We applaud the brave men and women who volunteer to perform this service; it is highly dangerous and is much needed to protect our wild forests.

Photos and information Courtesy of Civilian Public Service, Forest History Society, US Dept. of Agriculture, and Wikipedia.

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