

VALENTINE SWEETS **FOR YOUR SWEETIE**

Versatile chocolate cookie recipe, made three ways, makes for a gift from the heart. FOOD, 1

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HOW REAL IS YOUR NEWS? THAT DEPENDS.

THE SPOKESMAN-

News has a way of helping readers separate fact from fiction. But what happens when news is fiction? Some fake stories of 2016 reaffirmed people's biases: "FBI agent suspected in Hillary email leak found dead in appar-

ent murder-suicide," while others were outright outrageous: "Woman Arrested For Defecating On Boss' Desk After Winning The Lottery." In a time of "alternative facts," consumers must be on the lookout.

MORE ON FAKE NEWS, PAGES 10-11

Populist surges torture truth

Expert: Facts at risk in times of upheaval

> **By Chad Sokol** THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Some in Donald Trump's inner circle have likened the new president to Andrew Jackson. A couple of weeks ago, Trump even had a portrait of Jackson - America's first populist leader - hung in



Breitbart false tale victimizes Idaho city

SHAWN VESTAL



Staff columnist

It's a perfect model for how to sell a false story. Exaggerate wildly. Manipulate statistics egregiously. Double down on lies. Apply grotesque, racist stereotypes. When people who know the facts tell you you're wrong, accuse them of being part of a globalist conspiracy. Bonus points if you can get an alternative-universe lawmaker or two, like Idaho's Heather Scott, to spread vour tale. That was the pattern of propaganda peddled by the alt-right echo chamber Breitbart News last year in its "coverage" of a ginned-up "Muslim refugee crisis" in Twin Falls, Idaho. Breitbart co-founder and former chairman Steve Bannon is perhaps the most influential

Both sides grilled on order

Judges ask pointed questions probing legality of travel directive

By Jim Camden THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The nationwide temporary halt to President Trump's order limiting travel from seven mostly Muslim nations remained in place Tuesday while a threejudge federal appeals court panel weighed

the limits of presidential power. The panel said it

Read more UW students file suit against travel order. News, 12

will make its ruling "as soon as possible"

on the federal government's request to throw out or at least scale back the temporary restraining order issued last Friday in Seattle.

See TRAVEL, 16



the Oval Office as a source of inspiration.

Whether Trump's social and political leanings are anything like Old Hickory's is a point of debate. But their paths to the White House do share an important feature: Both were accompanied by a resurgence of fake news.

Just as Jackson's wife became a target of salacious lies in the 1820s - one newspaper labeled her "a convicted

See POPULIST, 10



See VESTAL, 11

There's one alternative to the truth and a difference between beliefs, facts

ROB CURLEY



Editor

Asking someone you've just act same way. met what they do for a living is one of those super-safe, smalltalk conversation starters.

A few years ago, I began answering that fairly benign question differently. "I get paid to tell the truth."

I work with a whole bunch of

Oh sure, we make mistakes. And when we do, we correct them.

That's a key difference between what some people call fake news and what is actually them. news published by a legitimate news organization. An error is people who can answer the ex- an error. Trustworthy news

sources acknowledge errors and publish corrections.

The Spokesman-Review runs its corrections on Page 2. We run way more than we'd like. But we're also honest about

So, let's get back to the truth.

See CURLEY, 1

BREAKS TIE TO OK DFVOS



Betsv DeVos squeaked through the confirmation process to become secretary of education on Tuesday with the tiebreaking vote of

Vice President Mike Pence. It was the first time a vice president's tie-breaking vote was needed to confirm a presidential Cabinet appointment. Despite the win, DeVos emerged bruised from the opposition to her nomination by teachers unions, civil rights activists and half the Senate. NEWS, 3

POST FALLS GIRL **KILLED WHEN** TRAIN HITS CAR

A 15-year-old died Tuesday in Idaho when a locomotive struck the auto she was riding in at an uncontrolled crossing. NEWS, 5

TOURISM APP HELPS **USERS EXPLORE** WASHINGTON

The free ScenicWA 365 aims to assist people in planning road trips in and around Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Vancouver and Olympia. NEWS, 14



LAW WOULD NIX **BAN ON SUNSCREEN** IN SCHOOL

Without a note from a doctor and a parent, state law forbids students to bring sunblock to school. A new bill would change that. NEWS, 5

SEATTLE CUTS TIES WITH WELLS FARGO **OVER OIL PIPELINE**

The Seattle City Council voted unanimously to divest in Wells Fargo over its role as a lender to the Dakota Access Pipeline project. NEWS, 8



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FAKE NEWS: FROM FRONT PAGE

What's behind rise of 'fake news'?

Hoaxes are not new, but social media SITE TRACKS SPREAD, spreads misinformation far and fast **OFFERS ONLINE TOOL**

By Addy Hatch THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

The concept of "fake news" has evolved quickly.

First it was false or misleading stories spread on social media in the run-up to the presidential election. There was a lot of talk about fake news swaying the election results, and while bogus news stories were shared widely, researchers at Stanford University and New York University concluded in January they didn't have outsize influence on the election results.

Since then, President Donald Trump has criticized some of the nation's largest and most prestigious news organizations as "fake news" on Twitter. And most recently, Trump dismissed negative polls as "fake news."

How did fake news get to such an important place in the body politic?

It's easy to blame social media

Hoaxes aren't new. A research scientist at Indiana University who created a tool to track how unsubstantiated claims spread online said he first noticed the trend during the Ebola crisis in 2014.

"We started seeing a lot of content that was spreading, completely fabricated claims about importations of Ebola, (such as) entire towns in Texas being under quarantine," Giovanni Luca Ciampaglia told the Associated Press. "What caught our attention was that these claims were created using names of publications that sounded like newspapers. And they were getting a lot of traction on social media."

It's easy to blame Facebook, Twitter and Google, because social media is the vector that carries fake news.

Some fake-news sites have legitimate-sounding sites, like DC Ga-

zette and ABCNews.com.co. Others, like Nationalreport.net are satire, though that disclaimer isn't front and center on the website (instead, the label AMERICA'S #1 IN-DEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE is). And still others are conspiracyminded enterprises like Infowars.com, which racks up a half-million unique visitors daily, according to Alexa.com.

Facebook and Google were criticized for not doing more to stamp out fake news stories before the election. In response, Facebook announced in December the company would make it easier for users to report links as fake news, then partnered with third parties to factcheck those stories.

Facebook rolled out the same procedures in Germany and France ahead of those countries' elections.

"We've focused our efforts on the worst of the worst, on the clear hoaxes spread by spammers for their own gain," Facebook Vice President Adam Mosseri wrote in a blog post.

'Fake news' used to discredit media, polls

President Trump's recent spate of tweets is taking the fake news issue in a new direction – using the term to try to discredit both mainstream media and opinion polls.

"Any negative polls are fake news, just like the CNN, ABC, NBC polls in the election. Sorry, people want border security and extreme vetting," Trump tweeted Monday. He also called both CNN and the New York Times fake news.

On Monday, a Trump official told a radio talk show host that the administration will continue to brand news organizations as fake news until the media stops attacking the president.

Sebastian Gorka, deputy assist-ant to Trump, told "The Michael

A group of researchers at Indiana University have created an online tool called Hoaxy that seeks to visualize "the spread of claims and related fact checking online." Although it's still a work in progress, Hoaxy can trace the origin of, for instance, the false claim that millions of votes in the 2016 presidential election were cast by "illegal aliens." Type in your search terms and Hoaxy will report back with stories that spread the claims, as well as fact-checking articles that debunked

In this instance, the claim goes back to a November article from Infowars.com that was shared 17,961 times on Twitter and 52,200 times on Facebook, according to Hoaxy. The site only tracks actual links people shared, so it misses anything that's paraphrased or posted without a link.

A data visualization tool shows the intertwined web of Twitter users who spread both the claims and the fact checks, and how they are connected to one another. The researchers focused on Twitter because the service makes more data available to the public, which makes it easier to use in data-tracking tools than Facebook.

Associated Press

media sometimes airs reports that Medved Show" that "There is a "are not well-researched and are sometimes based on falseness.'

Conway noted that the administration has "a high regard for the facts."

The solution is media literacy and information

Tools to alert users to fake news or to block fake news sites "are only helpful if people use them," according to the Associated Press.

And even though fake news as an issue has been in the news a lot in the last six months, "A lot of consumers are not savvy about it," said Larry Chiagouris, a marketing pro-



WEEKLY WORLD NEWS

From Mother Jones In June 1993, the Clintons adopted the infant survivor of a UFO crash, whom they named John Stanley Clinton. An observer told the WWN, "He will almost certainly be educated and groomed for a life in public service."

fessor at Pace University who follows the fake news phenomenon.

Chiagouris believes we are at the "beginning of the beginning" when it comes to defining just what fake news is and how to combat it. But he and other experts say technological solutions are unlikely to get to the root of the problem, and that what's needed is media literacy among a more informed citizenry. The real solution, he said, will

start in school: "not college, grammar school."

 $Material\,from\,the\,Associated\,Press,$ the Washington Post, Politico and CNN was used in this report.

Bush press secretary offers a bit of advice

media understands how wrong

that attitude is, and how it hurts

their credibility, we are going to

continue to say, 'fake news.' I'm

counselor to the president, told

CNN's Jake Tapper that the global

news organization isn't fake news,

although the network and other

On Tuesday, Kellyanne Conway,

sorry, Michael. That's the reality."

By Chad Sokol THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

A former White House press secretary under George W. Bush has some advice for Donald Trump's communications office: Focus on policy, and salvage mated." whatever credibility is left to

able knack for grabbing headlines with less than 140 characters," McClellan said, referring to the president's habit of ranting on Twitter. "He knows how to play that game. To use a Bush-ism, he's not to be misunderesti- McClellan

But McClellan suspects waves through

White Washingof tion." In

h the nation's

verning like they would cov- itical views. House and er a campaign."

ton's Culture retary, McClellan occasion- site once headed by Trump's Decepally circumvented the White chief strategist, Steve Ban-House press corps by coordi- non. A number of Breitbart ing to say something that's the nating small-town presiden- staffers are expected to start not true," said McClellan, book, which tial appearances designed to new jobs in the West Wing, who worked for Bush when sent shock- generate local news cover- and the website regularly has he was governor of Texas age. The Obama adminis- writers at Spicer's daily press and followed him to Washtration employed similar tac- briefings. tics, and seized on social media as a new way to speak di- tive step to allow a wider arrectly to constituents.

A prime example is Breit-While he was press sec- bart News, a far-right web-

ter explained that Spicer had provided "alternative facts."

"Not once did President Bush come to me and say, at a press briefing, that we're go-

monumental desire on behalf of the majority of the media, not just the pollsters, the majority of the media to attack a duly elected president in

the second week of his term." Gorka added, "That's how unhealthy the situation is and until the

salvage.

"There is no such thing as alternative facts," said Scott McClellan, who served as the public face of Bush's administration from 2003 to 2006. "Credibility is your most important asset. And especially in the first 100 days, you want to keep a laser-like focus on the agenda."

That means less feuding with the news media, especially over trivial facts like the size of the crowd at Trump's inauguration, said McClellan, who now oversees communications for Seattle University.

"(Trump) has a remark-

the Trump administration's success in manipulating the national news media will be short-lived.

"They're determined not to let the New York Times or the Washington Post or the major networks set the narrative," he said. "But, you know, every president realizes they can't control the narrative in the long run."

McClellan is no stranger to criticizing the president. Two years after resigning from his White House post, he published a scathing tellall about his former boss and colleagues, titled, "What Happened: Inside the Bush

capital, McClellan accused Bush and his advisers of relying on "propaganda" to sell the Iraq War, which he called 'a serious strategic blunder."

Now, McClellan sees parallels between his former boss and the new commander-in-chief. Like Bush, he said, Trump is operating in a "permanent campaign mode," further propelling the country into "all-out partisan warfare."

He said news outlets share some of the blame for this also have taken advantage of strably false claim that the political polarization, because of their "bias toward conflict and controversy," and because they "cover go-

"I think the Obama administration, like our adminis- avoids favoritism when tration, put a heavy emphasis fielding questions from a on local media," McClellan said.

Trump's own use of social media, specifically his perresponsibility not to lie on sonal Twitter account, is unbehalf the president. precedented for a U.S. combriefing on Jan. 21, Spicer remander-in-chief. He and his press secretary, Sean Spicer, peated Trump's demona Balkanized media land- turnout at his inauguration scape that enables Ameri- was bigger than Obama's cans to select news outlets turnout in 2008. Trump adtailored to mirror their pol- viser Kellyanne Conway la-

McClellan said it's a posi-

ray of news outlets into press

briefings, but only if Spicer

roomful of clamoring re-

He also said Spicer has a

During his first press

porters.

ington, D.C. "It's interesting because Spicer does not have a long, established relationship with President Trump,' McClellan said.

McClellan said reporters should brush off Trump's frequent condemnations, or they risk distracting from important policy issues.

"Keep in mind that a president is not defined by his relationship with the press," he said. "He's defined by the results he achieves."

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POPULIST

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adulteress" - Trump and his political allies and opponents were featured in bogus articles throughout last year's campaign season.

"Fake news isn't new." said Cornell Clayton, a political science professor at Washington State University. "It often accompanies populist revival eras in politics. These things go hand in hand."

Clayton, who directs WSU's Thomas S. Foley Institute of Public Policy and Public Service, said fake news explodes in popularity in times of political polarization and distrust of "the establishment" - mainstream media included.

Stopping the spread of fake news and conspiracy theories is a unique challenge in the digital age. And it's difficult to measure how bad information influences democratic processes like a presidential election.

"It's interesting the kind of influence it appears to have," said Michael Treleaven, a political science professor at Gonzaga University who once worked as a freelance ricating." reporter.

'I had a conversation with **Filling in blanks** a relative last summer, and he was really avid on these alternative news sites," Treleaven said. "The names of

Hear from an expert

Cornell Clayton, a political science professor from Washington State University, will give a lecture on the history of conspiratorial thinking in American politics Thursday night at North Central High School in Spokane. The lecture, titled "Crazy Politics: Populism, Conspiracy Theories and Paranoia in America," will begin at 7 p.m. in the NCHS theater. Sponsored by Seattle nonprofit Humanities Washington, the lecture is free and open to the public.

heard of them, and I wondered why anyone would get their news from them. It's disturbing that people would rely on these fake news sites that are really obviously fab-

Who better to explain how fake news works than someone who creates it?

In January, the New York these websites, I had never Times published a profile of news because it reaffirms professor from the Univer-

interest in Maryland Republican politics and a need for cash," who wrote a wildly popular story claiming - falsely – that thousands of fraudulent voter ballots had been discovered in an Ohio warehouse, pre-marked in favor of Hillary Clinton.

"I had a theory when I sat down to write it," Harris, 23. told the Times. "Given the severe distrust of the media among Trump supporters, anything that parroted Trump's talking points peo-ple would click. Trump was saying 'rigged election, rigged election.' People were predisposed to believe Hillary Clinton could not win except by cheating."

Jestin Coler, who manages a small empire of faux news websites, gave a similar explanation to NPR, referencing a false story he had published about leaked Clinton emails and a slain FBI agent.

"The people wanted to hear this," Coler, a registered Democrat from Los Angeles, told NPR. "So all it took was to write that story. Everything about it was fictional: the town, the people, the sheriff, the FBI guy. And then .. our social media guys kind of go out and do a little dropping it throughout Trump groups and Trump forums, and boy it spread like wildfire."

president traffics in false claims himself.

Clayton, the WSU professor, said the spread of fake, salacious and misleading journalism hews closely to populist movements because "it explains why your group isn't doing so well."

When Trump falsely claims, for example, that millions of people cast fraudulent votes for Clinton, his supporters are likely to feel wronged by the electoral system. Fake news, crafted by a savvy 20-something looking the 2016 election – which put to turn a profit, can easily reinforce those feelings.

Few researchers have attempted to measure the impact that bogus news stories had on the 2016 election, but a pair of economists recently concluded that fake news didn't have enough influence to tilt the election in Trump's favor

Treleaven, the Gonzaga professor, said people should ing," said Uscinski, who parroutinely question their own beliefs and carefully scrutinize anything they read.

"Being reassured in my biases, and the folk knowthe reason I read a newspaper," he said.

'Conspiracy theories are for losers'

Before Barack Obama won re-election in 2012, Joseph So people believe fake Uscinski, a political science

Cameron Harris, "a new col- their biases - and, some- sity of Miami, asked voters if disposed to doubt what news lege graduate with a fervent times, because the American they believed in any conspiracy to rig the election.

"About 65 percent of partididn't win, it would have been due to fraud," Uscinski said. "We asked people after the election ... and that number cuts in half, and it's mostly only Republicans who believe that the outcome was due to fraud. Why? Because a Democrat won."

A more recent poll has shown that a large portion of Democrats believe Russians hacked voting machines in a Republican in the White House.

For that reason, Uscinski often says, "Conspiracy theories are for losers.'

It's not an insult or a reflection of his own political views, he said, but a scientific observation of human nature.

majority of people "A think the other side is cheatticipated in a panel discussion Monday in an auditorium full of WSU students.

Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha of the University of North ledge I have already, is not Texas also participated in the panel discussion at WSU and cited polls showing less than a third of Americans trust mainstream news media. That, he said, makes it easy for Trump to lambaste major news organizations like the New York Times or CNN.

"Most Americans are pre-

media report anyway, so why not begin by raising questions about the intermediary. sans said if their candidate about the media, instead of trying to work through them?" Eshbaugh-Soha asked.

While that may be an alluring approach, he said Trump would do better to foster collaboration with the journalists tasked with recording his every move.

"Most presidents dislike the media but understand the necessity for mutual benefit," he said. "The president needs the media to reach the public. And, ultimately, the public is a vehicle in a democracy to help the president achieve his goals when he may not have overwhelming support in Congress, when he might try to do something that other politicians are reticent to support."

But Trump has shown no signs of halting his condemnations of "dishonest" journalists. He and his chief strategist recently called news media "the opposition party."

"I think that antagonism certainly appears to be the strategy of Donald Trump," Eshbaugh-Soha said. "I don't think it will be a sustainable strategy."

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FAKE NEWS: FROM FRONT PAGE

candidates such as Charles Evans

Hughes, Calvin Coolidge and Her-

bert Hoover. When Franklin D.

Roosevelt ran as a Democrat, The

Spokesman-Review consistently

backed his Republican opponents -

despite the Roosevelt family name

and the fact that the paper found

plenty to praise in Roosevelt's lead-

ership skills during the Great De-

In general, the paper stuck to its

Republican roots – and not only on

the editorial pages. Ashley Holden,

The Spokesman-Review's political

writer in the 1940s and 1950s, was an

unabashed supporter, in print and

behind the scenes, of Albert Can-

well, a Republican state legislator

Un-American Activities committee.

dent Harry S. Truman uttered his

famous opinion of The Spokesman-

1948: "The Chicago Tribune and

this paper are the worst in the Un-

This helps to explain why Presi-

pression and World War II.

Newspaper's history complicated

Political leanings have run gamut, defy easy categorization

By Jim Kershner FOR THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

Fresh young reporters at The Spokesman-Review quickly learn another paper, The Spokesman, that they have been pronouncing run by William H. Cowles. The the name of their paper wrong.

"It's the Socialist-Review." neighbor will correct them, with a grin.

learn, possibly from neighbors on 1854 meeting in Cleveland. the opposite side of the street, is since it marches in lockstep with the GOP.

In most cases, this tells you more about the political leanings of your neighbors than it does about the paper. A look into the political history of The Spokesman-Review shows that the reality is more complicated.

The "Republican" part of the story reaches all the way back to the newspaper's origins as the Spokane Falls Review. That paper was founded in 1883 by Frank Dallam, specifically as a Republican newspaper. In those days, many papers unabashedly embraced one party or another. The growing town of Spokane Falls already had a Democratic newspaper, the weekly Spokane Chronicle, and Dallam saw an velt never waned and perfectly reopening for a Republican newspaper.

not publish anything but a paper advocating Republicanism." Yet through Spokane's streets. from the very first issue of the Spokane Falls Review, the paper declared its intention to think independently.

Dallam wrote that his paper "was not established for the purpose of representing any particular clique, but comes to the front unshackled, good of the community from which Teddy. it receives support." He also added that there would be no attempt to Spokesman-Review reliably en-

please everybody," because "that would require too much acrobatic skill with the pen."

In 1893, the Review merged with Spokesman was also a Republican paper – in fact, a member of the Cowles family, Edwin Cowles, was said to have been present at the The second thing that they'll birth of the Republican Party, at an

However, the editorial pages of that their paper might as well be the newly established Spokesmancalled The Spokesman-Republican, Review proved its independence almost immediately. The Spokesman-Review endorsed Democrat William Jennings Bryan for president in both 1896 and 1900. Bryan was a populist Democrat. The politics of The Spokesman-Review at the time could be more accurately described as progressive (which at the time meant pro-reform and pro-prohibition, among other things) than strictly Republican.

In 1904, The Spokesman-Review energetically endorsed Republican Theodore Roosevelt. He was possibly the ideal candidate for the paper, being both Republican and progressive. In fact, Cowles would become a friend and occasional adviser to Roosevelt.

The paper's devotion to Rooseflected the attitude of the Inland Northwest at large. A crowd esti-In fact, Dallam said he "would mated at 50,000 people once gathered to see Roosevelt parade

In fact, it was Roosevelt who would cause The Spokesman-Review to once again buck the Republican Party. In 1912, Teddy Roosevelt ran as the progressive Bull Moose Party candidate against Republican William Howard Taft and Democrat Woodrow Wilson. The with the sole aim of laboring for the S-R snubbed Taft and endorsed

In the ensuing decades, The

to meetings - often, incredibly parents had. They don't have rite baseball team has a chance to boring meetings - and end up pensions. They can't afford a va- win it all. cation, and they drive a used car. They rent their home because

way most journalists feel about paper newsroom, there's nothing low and wages are up across our pitching staff, and we just traded country, but they can't see it. our best player for another guy I It's kinda like the anticipation That's not their life. And that's swear I've never even heard of. certainly not their facts. That gets me back to the idea can't. that most journalists see this profession as a calling, not just a job. I used to work with a lot of Most of the things I listed above about my childhood friends can be said about the exact people help newspapers publish on the I'm so blessed to work with each I was literally a Boy Scout. Back day in our newsroom. you often have to justify to your family, friends – heck, sometimes hard to do, they didn't say it was even to yourself – why you do it. word up to define it. A lie is when

Facts are indisputable.

Despite my beliefs, I know my favorite team has an incredibly They hear unemployment is low payroll, a completely suspect

Beliefs can be argued. Facts

A GUIDE FOR OUR READERS

Judging by online comments, there's a lot of confusion about the different parts of a news report - is it a story, an editorial, or a column?

When people got their news exclusively from the printed newspaper it was much easier to differentiate. An editorial appeared on the Opinion page. A local news columnist's work looked different from a regular news article, usually because it included the columnist's photo. Those visual cues aren't as apparent online.

And while someone from Spokane likely knows Doug Clark or Shawn Vestal are columnists, a person reading their work on the other side of the country probably doesn't.

Here are the definitions most journalists use for different kinds of content:

News story

This is the plain vanilla of journalism - reporting about something. It might be a news conference, a disaster. a trend, a personality profile or an investigation. The more complicated or controversial the topic, the more sources the story should include. And a news story should try to convey the essence of the event or the issue from all perspectives.

Editorial

These run on the Opinion page and reflect the consensus view of Publisher Stacey Cowles and Opinion Editor Gary Crooks on local, regional and national matters, including candidate endorsements before elections. Cowles doesn't work in the newsroom, and while Crooks does, he doesn't answer to or share his work with Editor Rob Curley or any other news staff prior to publication.

Column

Like most midsized and large newsrooms, The Spokesman-

CURLEY

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I've wanted to be a journalist since the third grade. That's the their job.

It's not a career. It's a calling. It almost has to be. The pay no job security. And then there's the hostility - sometimes from year. the people we write stories about and sometimes from the people we write the stories for. A survey comes out annually listing the worst jobs. For several years now, newspaper reporter the world. The second-worst job: lumberiack. You don't submit yourself to all of that unless it's a calling. I've never met a journalist who told me they wanted to do this because of some political issue or stance. And certainly never for the money.

talking to lots of people who really don't want to talk. It's not glamorous work.

For many who work in a news-

quite like covering an election. nd excitement many of us felt on

they can't afford a mortgage.

President Theodore Roosevelt visited Spokane in 1911 and laid the cornerstone for Lewis and Clark High School. The Spokesman-Review was a longtime supporter of Roosevelt. dorsed Republican presidential truth in politics in its life and it

SPOKESMAN-REVIEW ARCHIVES

had not, needless to say, endorsed Truman. The paper's more recent political history has been less predictable.

wouldn't know the truth if it met it

coming down the road." The paper

It endorsed Democrat Bill Clinton in 1992 - which is one reason local talk radio enjoyed calling it the "Socialist-Review." However, it did not endorse Clinton in 1996. It endorsed Republican George W. Bush in both of his elections and endorsed Republicans John McCain and Mitt Romney against Barack Obama. However, in 2016, it endorsed Democrat Hillary Clinton as "the only rational choice."

So, while it remains true to its who chaired the state's red-baiting roots in endorsing many Republicans, it also remains true to its roots in "not representing any particular clique."

As for that "Socialist-Review" Review during a Spokane visit in moniker?

Socialism has never been, at any point in the paper's history, one of its enthusiasms. Its historic attitude Truman actually knew little may best be summed up by a 1909 front-page editorial cartoon, showing a woman labeled "Spokane," dressed as Lady Liberty. In her grasp is a tiny member of the radical-socialist Industrial Workers of the World. She is, quite enthusiastically, throttling him.

kane and told a crowd that The Jim Kershner is a former Spokesman-Review staff writer and columnist, and author of "Carl Maxey: A

Republican and tough on Demo-In 1952, Truman returned to Spo-

Spokesman-Review was "the second-worst paper in the United States" and that it "never told the Fighting Life."

about The Spokesman-Review. He was simply echoing the appraisal of Democratic Sen. Warren Magnuson uttered privately, a few minutes earlier – that the paper was firmly

ited States.'

crats.

They say things like how much they love to tell stories and want to help people understand what's going on in their community. So, they dig through documents, go

typically terrible. There's almost Christmas Eve when we were kids. It's the best night of the

> computer and software programmers as we developed systems to internet.

One thing they used to say that has been named the worst job in always made me giggle was "nontrivial." When something was difficult. They said it was nontrivial.

Covering an election is non- core to who I am. trivial.

But this past year's election was different. Our country is so polarized right now. There always is tension during an election, but this year was different. friends from my childhood who proven. don't have the kind of life their

For me, it's simple. I love beliefs. And I love facts. Both are one.

between beliefs and facts.

A belief is something you have trust in, even if you can't fully explain it. Some call that faith. Be-My Facebook feed is filled with for – even those things can't be

Every year, I believe my favo- ever wanted.

And there are no such things as alternative facts.'

I grew up right smack in the middle of the Bible Belt. My family went to church every Sunday. in my hometown, we called When your career is calling, alternative facts what they really were: lies.

None of us need to look that you deliberately mislead some-

That gets to the core of why so But I also know the difference many of us decided to be journalists. We want to use facts to tell our community when it is being misled.

We get paid to tell the truth. liefs can be things that you stand Even if mathematically it's the worst job in the world.

And it's still the only job I've

Review has news columnists These are people who are paid to share their opinions on local and regional news topics. Doug Clark frequently takes a humorous look at the day's news, while Shawn Vestal usually writes about policy, politics and government. And Sue Lani Madsen who is a freelancer, not a staff writer - typically looks at policy issues from a conservative perspective. Other columnists for The Spokesman-Review whose work sometimes appears in the news pages include John Blanchette in Sports and Paul Turner in Arts & Entertainment.

Addy Hatch

VESTAL

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aide to President Donald Trump right now, and the Breitbart coverage of Twin Falls is an object lesson in the kind of broad-brush thinking now operating in the West Wing: Muslims are dirty criminals, even their children are terrorists, and they're being imported by Obama to take away jobs from Americans.

And that's before you even get to the comments section.

"The Muslim migrants have devastated Twin Falls," wrote the anti-Muslim gadfly Pamela Geller at Breitbart in August. "The refugees in this community are often living in squalor; Twin Falls has repeated bedbug epidemics at their low-class motels. A Twin Falls resident ... told me about the wake of the Muslim migrant invasion: trashed apartment buildings, cockroach infested with broken lighting in the stairwells, broken stair banisters, and more."

Twin Falls that sounds familiar to Shawn Barigar, the city's mayor.

been using," Barigar said this

Breitbart spotlight. "It really painted a false picture of the community."

Barigar supports immigration and refugee resettlement in southern Idaho, and says it has contributed to the economy and culture of the region for decades.

"We have been a welcoming and humanitarian community since the 1980s, and all of a sudden it became the focus of bigotry and hatred," he said.

Breitbart and other farright outlets seized on Twin Falls starting in July, with a story about sexual assault by a child against a young girl that it turned into a screaming scandal about a Muslim ever-more sensational direc- actually believed what he "gang-rape at knifepoint." The case involved inappropriate touching and was videotaped by an older child on his phone, and was clearly a troubling, unfortunate incident. The boys were prosecuted, but case details were sealed. Two of the boys involved were refugees.

migrant activists in Twin views to the local media, and Falls helped fuel the cover-This is not a description of age, raising hell at council meetings, fueling conspiracy talk and feeding the Breitbart mill. From the very start, "Surreal is the word I've the site got key details of the truth," said Greg Lanting, a CHAOS, story wrong and inflamed week in an interview about the Muslim angle, and it con- mayor. "That was the sca- SUITS AS TRUMP PROthe town's experience in the tinually got them wrong in riest part - that he may have TECTS NATION."



ASSOCIATED PRESS

White House chief strategist Steve Bannon listens Tuesday as President Donald Trump speaks in the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, D.C.

tions – according to police, prosecutors and public officials in Twin Falls.

Breitbart dispatched a reporter, Lee Stranahan, to Twin Falls, where he filed a insisting that if someone like number of reports wallowing in sordid details, picking fights over minor matters, testifying at City Council A small group of anti-im- meetings and giving interblasting press coverage of the whole charade.

> "When you would talk to him, in his mind, everything ests: he was printing was the GROUP CAIR CAUSING city councilman and former PROTESTS

was saying was true."

Stranahan defended his coverage in a combative interview Tuesday. "It was absolutely accurate," he said, me questioned his reporting that I was defending what was morally depraved.

After months of coverage have moved on, finding a frightening Muslim angle in the recent nationwide prot-"TERROR-TIED AND LAW-

After the initial stories not authored by Stranahan sexual assault, this time by dropped the charges in that case, which went unreported on Breitbart.

For several weeks, the site depicted Twin Falls as a blasted wasteland, a ruined landscape of decent white Americans devastated by dirty Muslim criminals. It PLANT. delved into how many Twin Falls police officers are immigrants, finding it important to note that seven of the city's 72 officers are resettled refugees from Bosnia Herzegovina, where 51 percent of the population is Muslim.

It hammered repeatedly on suspicions that a Chobani yogurt factory owned by a Turkish immigrant and backed by "the government" was behind a surge in bringhappened to the child and ingin cheap labor. It referred often to "waves" of recent refugees, of floods and surgof Twin Falls, he appears to es in refugees – when in fact, Twin Falls has relocated about 300 refugees a year for decades now.

It peddled scurrilous nonsense like this: "TB SPIKED these days. PROMOTING 500 PERCENT DURING 2012, AS CHOBANI YO-GURT OPENED PLANT." That piece - which was

about the sexual assault, was a particularly illustra-Breitbart kept at it in Twin tive bit of "journalism." Tu-Falls. Stranahan would later berculosis cases in Twin write about a second alleged Falls did indeed jump by 500 percent that year - from one an adult refugee. Police case to six cases. No connection to the yogurt factory. Then it went down to two. back up to four, and back down to one in the next three years. In other words: TB cases PLUMMETED BY 500 PERCENT AFTER **OPENED** CHOBANI

> "It just did not let up all summer," said Barigar.

> Barigar said that by the end of the coverage, the narrative that emerged was: "I personally as the mayor was getting money from the Obama administration to turn a blind eye to whatever Chobani wanted to do."

> To read the Breitbart coverage is to enter a world where the simple sight of a burqa is terrifying. It is to enter a world where the "other" is always dirty, dishonest and evil. It is to enter a world where there is no difference between a terrorist and a refugee and a Muslim child.

> It's a world that sounds a lot like the White House

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