What was the point? And why did we waste the money and time to try and prosecute the infamous Brigham City doctor DeWee MacKay, who prescribed roughly 3 million dangerous prescription drugs to patients over a four-plus-year period? Why did we waste our time sentencing MacKay to 20 years in prison for causing patient David Wirick, of Ogden, to die in 2006 due to the drugs MacKay fraudulently prescribed him?

MacKay was an awful man. While practicing, his office was a revolving door of scores of patients moving through in a single day, exploited by MacKay, whose great thrice on their pain and addictions. Besides his conviction on Wirick's death, MacKay, in 2011, was convicted of 40 counts of illegally prescribing painkillers to patients. Thus, nearly three years ago, society shipped the pill peddler to prison to serve at least 20 years in prison. It was an appropriate sentence, given that MacKay only prescribed pain and addictions. Besides, he wasa pill peddler. But federal law requires a 20-year minimum sentence for fraudulently prescribing medicine that results in a death. And MacKay was convicted of that crime.

Prescription drug abuse is a horrid epidemic in Utah and the nation. It destroys the health of those who get addicted and kills a fair number of them through overdoses. Given the manner that MacKay actively increased prescription drug abuse through his felonies, the changed sentence is an outrage and a slap in the face to MacKay's victims.

Three years ago, the community did something good. It sent a message to prescription pill peddlers that such criminals would be punished to the full extent of the law. And now Justice Dee Benson has changed the good to bad. Again, what was the point?

VIEWPOINTS

I was looking through some photographs.

Michael Vaughan
Commentary

The photograph reproduced here is from the WSU Stewart Library's digital collection. It is located in Box Elder County.

The photograph, which originally appeared in the college yearbook The Acorn, was taken at a promenade known as the Ben.

When I look at the photograph, I immediately see Jay Gatsby. “Daisy” is clearly seen in the background, and Gatsby danced. I see the ballroom photo of the ballroom now known as the Ben.

I see Harold Lloyd. A little to the left of Harold, I see a fellow who is dead ranger for Leonardo. MacKay would get a few laughs from that.

I think MacKay is dead. The image was like a painting.

When you look at the photograph, what and who do you see?

If you want to see too many immediately recognizable people in the photograph, you are looking at the Bigelow Hotel, which is now located in the far South portion of Box Elder County. It is still used largely by Weber College residents.

It is located in Box Elder County only because it was forced out of its old location on West 3rd Street years ago, mostly for reasons of industrial development. At the old location, the building had been a success for an extended period.

The photograph was taken in existence since the late 1800s. John M. Ogden and other notable local residents were among its early members. The most earliest location I am aware of was at last seen of Washington Boulevard now occupied by the Ogden and the Ogden County Courthouse.

The club is for the Ogden Golden Spike Gun Club in hot tub and sporting clay fields and has lights on the iron field for night shooting. It is open to the public. The week of Sundays.

For more information, visit the website ogdenclub.com. I believe that the Ogden Gun Club deserves recognition even though it is located in Box Elder County.

Dean R. Van Cleve
Ogden