

Opinion / Local

— EDITORIAL —

Just when we thought of going back to Starbucks ...

We'll admit, we stopped going to Starbucks a long time ago due to their anti-second amendment sentiment, but just when that white chocolate mocha was starting to sound tempting again, here comes their CEO Howard Schultz with an attempt to force a national race discussion down our throats.

When we want an overpriced, overly caloric drink, the last thing on our minds is a philosophical debate about race relations at the behest of a clueless, arrogant company.

If we order that white chocolate mocha is it somehow offensive to mixed race individuals? God forbid we order a cup of house blend—black. What conversation might that trigger? This campaign has to be the dumbest idea ever.

From the point of view of the poor baristas—these folks have just been put in the line of fire. Armed with only a sharpie and a need for a paycheck, we can imagine them standing there like Bambi in headlights the first time someone takes their “Race together” cup and tells them to shove it. When they signed on, their job wasn't to promote a political ideology.

The new plan is equally disrespectful to customers. The discussion assumes Starbucks know more than you, is somehow more enlightened than you. It is an assertion that the opinions of Howard Schultz are so special that they're to be considered fact.

“Here's your double-shot of hubris topped with a flu fly helping of contrived white guilt.”

Thanks, but we'll pass.

—The Baker County Press Editorial Board

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

Gun control must be stopped

To the Editor:

Let's talk gun control. The factual aspects of controlling the personal possession and use of firearms. It appears quite simple to me, having been raised with them.

They are merely tools that can, and are, used for good and bad. Law abiding people use them wisely and safely. The bad guys, outlaws, use them destructively. This last sentence explains, for the most part, why gun control laws haven't yet and never will work to increase safety of our citizens. As a matter of fact, areas of this country with the strictest control of guns, Detroit and Washington D.C, have the highest gun crime rates. Only outlaws have guns, the unarmed population are their victims.

The new gun law passed in New York City is a perfect example of disaster designed to happen. The capacity of guns, including .22 caliber rifles, as I understand it, is restricted by law to seven rounds. Insanity! Proponents of the law claim the restrictions are for safety. For whom? It certainly isn't for the safety of the home owner who might be awakened to discover multiple robbers armed to the teeth. And perhaps the person being robbed is aged or disabled. Which party is the law designed to protect?

We have repeated examples of our schools being invaded by killers. Yet we have laws and signs declaring that schools are gun free zones. To an intended killer of children it simply means defenseless children! Will we never learn?

Recent history is replete with examples of nations where the citizens first gave up their right to be armed and shortly thereafter the government became a brutal dictatorship and the people were without the ability to resist. Could it eventually happen here?

If you read the U.S. Constitution carefully you will see it means that each person has the God-given right to be armed! The Second Amendment merely emphasizes that right. There are two primary reasons to disarm the American people. The first is ignorance: ignorance of the consequences facing a defenseless people. The other, simply put, is deceit: those who know the consequence and yet deliber-

ately want their fellow man defenseless. Isn't it time we identify each?

Jasper Coombes
Haines

Law enforcement agreement part of bigger picture

To the Editor:

In reading the article concerning the proposed cooperative agreement between Baker County and the U. S. Forest Service relative to law enforcement issues I agree with Commission Chair Harvey that such an issue is linked to broader considerations such as the Forest Service's proposed Travel Management Plan. If, as it appears, the Forest Service is in spite of local and regional input hell bent on closing off access to portions of public land (our National Forests) from the very people who own that land (citizens) then I think the question of signing an agreement with them becomes extremely important.

There is another question that needs to be answered in looking at the proposed agreement. USFS law enforcement officers are clearly empowered to enforce federal law on federal land. However it also appears that their authority to enforce provisions of state law only comes when the local Sheriff authorizes them to do so. Does that authorization come as part of the proposed agreement? If so, to me that is another reason for thinking through very carefully whether the signing of such an agreement really serves the best interests of Baker County residents.

The Sheriff in at least one other Oregon County and several out-of-state Sheriffs that I am aware of have revoked the authority of Forest Service officers to enforce state statutes within their counties. Their justification has been the less than above-board tactics used by the Forest Service to restrict the rights of citizens to responsibly use the forest as citizens have for generations.

Perhaps it is time for Baker County to consider doing the same. Contributing in any way to a federal agency that is at odds with local needs and desires is not worth any amount of money and certainly not the paltry sum of \$6,500 currently offered by the Feds.

Jerry Boyd
Baker City

Elks announce eye injury prevention contest winners



Todd Arriola / The Baker County Press

Sydney Lamb and Jadyn Berry pose with Hal Huntington after accepting their awards.



Todd Arriola / The Baker County Press

Caitlin Lien of Haines accepts her first place award from Hal H ntington.

The Oregon State Elks Association Annual Eye Injury Prevention Poster Contest's local winners were announced Tuesday at the Baker Elk's Lodge in Baker City.

Hal Huntington is the Elks Lodge 338 poster chairman.

The contest ran from September 7, 2014 through February 2, 2015 with students from South Baker Intermediate, Keating Elementary and Haines Elementary, Harvest Christian Academy and Baker Valley Seventh Day Adventist School invited to compete so long as they were in the 4th through 6th grades.

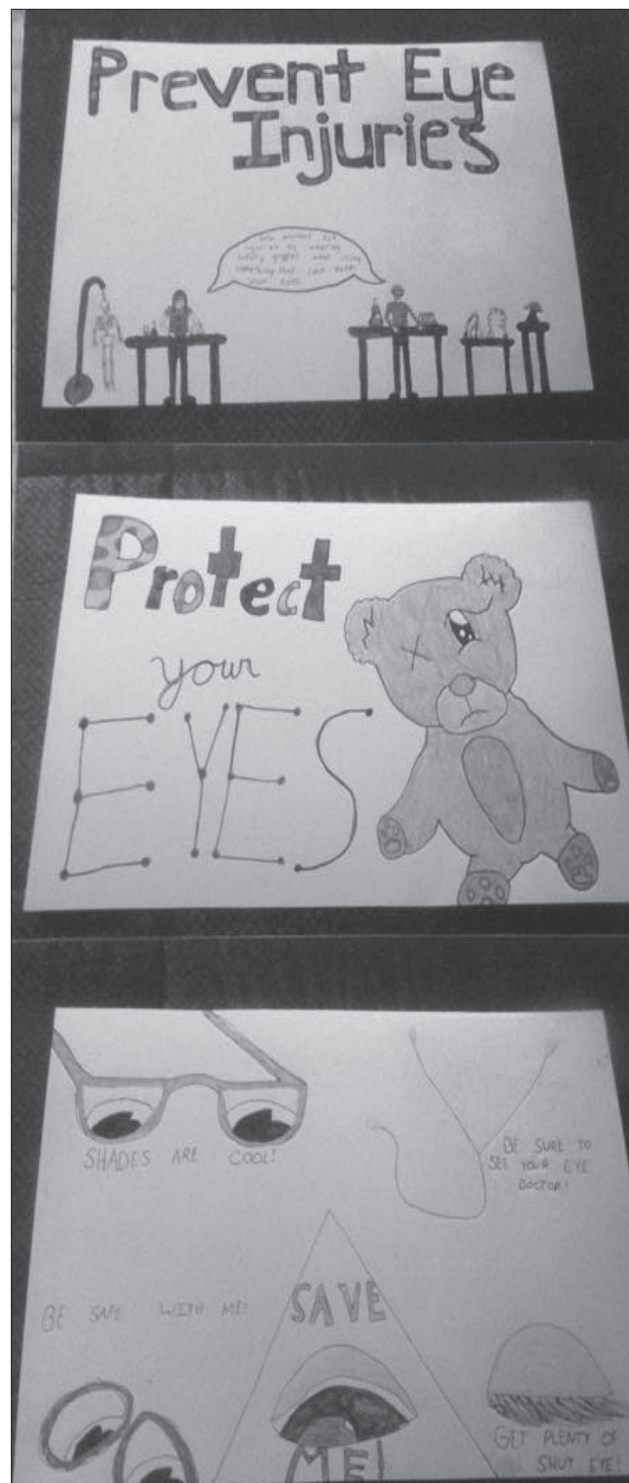
Teachers invited to participate were given ground rules and contest dates.

Huntington received 158 posters from ten different teachers on February 3, 2015.

The three local winners were: first place, Caitlin Lien, fifth grade, Ms. Richard, Haines Elementary; second place Sydney Lamb, fifth grade, Mrs. Hensley, South Baker Intermediate; third place, Jadyn Berry, fifth grade, Mrs. Schwin, South Baker Intermediate.

Huntington contacted the schools to arrange for the winners' announcement and Traveling School Trophy presentations.

The three winning local posters were sent to compete in the District judging on February 14. Lien's poster placed second at District and Berry's poster placed third.



Submitted Photo.

Top: First place went to Caitlin Lien of Haines. Bottom: Sydney Lamb took second place with this poster. Middle: Jadyn Berry earned third place.

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