

Opinion / Local

— EDITORIAL —

Teddy had it right

Congressman Greg Walden gave a particularly rousing speech in Baker City this weekend in which he quoted Theodore Roosevelt: “Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.”

This quote embodies the spirit of a long-ago America—a spirit we’d like to see renewed, rebuilt.

Too often these days we see a divide between those of whom the likes of William Wallace or Ronald Reagan would be proud—those Americans who want to create freely, to support themselves and thrive despite all risk—and those who want to feel safe, secure and taken care of even if that security comes at the price of their independence.

Where has our nation’s desire for self-sufficiency gone? Has mass timidity somehow overcome bravery and ambition?

Teddy had it right all those decades ago, but today in many circles he’d probably be looked at as “divergent.” He’d probably end up on a terrorist watch list.

Life is meant to be lived. The failures and successes along the way serve to grow our souls, and when our souls flourish, so do our families. When our families flourish, so do our communities. When our communities thrive, so does our nation.

Whether beholden to Federal dollars in order to farm your land, or that monthly welfare check that supports your perpetually unemployed family, the end result will always be a certain stagnation of spirit. You are living in the gray twilight.

Our wise friend Utah State Rep. Ken Ivory said to us once that this dichotomy has been the way of things since the dawn of time, this struggle between surrendering and suffering. We think he’s right.

But we also think there are pinpricks of light in that darkness. America has long been one of those greatest lights. But even her light won’t shine forever if her people are content to go dim.

—The Baker County Press Editorial Board

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

I support the trade agreement

To the Editor:
I urge Oregonians to encourage our Congressional delegation to support adoption of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement.

TPP boosts Made-in-America exports to some of the fastest growing countries in the world, eliminates trade barriers, creates a level playing field, and establishes rules stopping unfair trade.

In 2013 Oregon exported \$2.3 billion in raw agricultural products, as well as other value-added products. Oregon’s agricultural exports boosted farm income and supported about 17,400 jobs that can pay 20% more than jobs not connected to the international economy.

Foreign trade is crucial for Oregon’s urban and rural businesses. Standing still on the TPP is not an option.

With Oregon’s strategic Pacific Rim location the TPP is vitally necessary. For Oregon companies with products garnering international demand, Asia is essential for our growth.

The TPP will grow Oregon’s economy, add family-wage jobs, and support industry throughout Oregon.

Stan Baker, Baker Seed Technologies
Corvallis

Misinformation about lawsuit abounds

To the Editor:
I was amazed by the misinformation in another paper’s editorial on 3/18/2015. Tim Collins’ mistake was deciding he had the power to dictate sewer/water rates, only City Council can set rates. The person costing tax payers thousands of dollars is City Manager Mike Kee.

Mike can’t understand a simple one-page contract. In depositions Mike said “the City has no document that allows us to charge Langrell’s double for sewer/water.”

Mike convinced four members of City Council, one an attorney, to enter into the lawsuit instead of returning the over charged fees.

A double sewer/water rate was never part of the annexation. It was discussed, but never considered for the contract. The City offered the 10-year moratorium on taxes because none of us felt a need for more property in the city. We built in the county because we didn’t want to be in the city. None of the annexed property has been built on.

Judge Pahl’s ruling does not preclude the city from introducing evidence. It says Tim Collins has no authority to set rates and what was discussed during negotiations is not part of a written contract. The reason the city will not be introducing any evidence is because none exists.

I tried to get city managers to follow the terms of their contract for ten years. My

only choices were: allow the City to cheat me or take them to court. If I was the only one being cheated I would have let the City get away with it. It’s only because I am a member of the Baker City Council that I felt I owed the other people, who the city is also illegally double charging, my obligation to straighten this out.

I have endured one year of ridicule from the City staff, four members of the City Council and that other newspaper. I was wrongfully removed as mayor by those four council members. I risked paying about \$50,000 in attorney fees. If the mayor of Baker City has to go through this to be heard what chance does an average citizen have?

Richard Langrell
Baker City

Clearing the smoke

To the Editor:
On March 19, a press release was put out by the US Forest Service on “Focus turns to Forest Plan Revision public engagement as Travel Management [Subpart B] paused in the Blue Mountains”

This press release as nothing new, and bordering on an open attempt to confuse and give a false set of hope to the public on Travel Management.

1) Travel Management has been on the “back burner” of both the Wallowa-Whitman & Malheur National Forest Since 2012, this article states nothing new, and is a disservice to pretend they have done something new.

2) This release gives the false impression that the supervisors and regional forester are giving some sort of relief to the people of Eastern Oregon, when no such relief is been given.

3) Sub part A of Travel Management on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest is still being developed and the article fails to state that or how Sub A will be used as a spring board to Sub part B and the closure of the mountains.

Most importantly – This is not the Blue Mountains Forest Plan Revision. Restricting motorized use fully is in the forest plan revision through the designation of routes, and you are still fully looking at a closure of our mountains if it goes through as written with designation of routes. The message is the same, No designation of routes, No obliteration of roads, and No reduction of road densities in The Blues, period, end of discussion.

I cannot stress enough, this is a non-story and worse it gives people the false impression this is some sort of victory, IT IS NOT! Your access is still in jeopardy and your vigilance is needed and required to keep your mountains open. Do not get sucked into the hype, because it’s all smoke and mirrors.

Chuck Chase
Baker City

Letter to the Editor Policy: The Baker County Press reserves the right not to publish letters containing factual falsehoods or incoherent narrative. Letters promoting or detracting from specific for-profit businesses will not be published. Word limit is 375 words per letter. Letters are limited to one every other week per author. Letters should be submitted to Editor@TheBakerCountyPress.com.

Advertising and Opinion Page Disclaimer: Opinions submitted as Guest

Opinions or Letters to the Editor express the opinions of their authors, and have not been authored by and are not necessarily the opinions of The Baker County Press, any of our staff, management, independent contractors or affiliates. Advertisements placed by political groups, candidates, businesses, etc., are printed as a paid service, which does not constitute an endorsement of or fulfillment obligation by this newspaper for the products or services advertised.

County signs CCAA

Baker County has recently signed a Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

The main goal of the CCAA program is to assist landowners in preparing their land for the possible land use regulations that would come with listing the sage grouse.

Some have compared the potential impact to the ag industry to impacts

felt by the timber industry when the spotted owl was listed.

Landowners who are interested in the program would work one-on-one with SWCD staff to form a site specific plan.

These plans will help demonstrate that ag operations are not causing damage to the sage grouse habitat.

Landowners in Baker County who are interested in learning more about the

voluntary CCAA program are invited to attend a public meeting, hosted by the Baker County Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Speakers will include representatives from USFS and Baker County Commissioners.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, April 9th from approximately 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. at the OTEC meeting room in Baker City.

Ladd accident takes teen’s life

Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers are continuing the investigation of a single vehicle, fatal, rollover traffic crash on I-84 near milepost 277 - Ladd Canyon.

Preliminary information indicates that shortly after 7:00 p.m., a Blue, 2000 Ford Excursion pulling a toy-hauler type travel trailer, being operated by Todd M. Schroeder, 54, of Milton-Freewater, was traveling eastbound on I-84 and descending Ladd Canyon when the vehicle lost control and rolled over

into the center median. The vehicle was occupied by two adult and three juvenile passengers. The front seat adult passenger, Jerry W. Schroeder, 73, of Milton-Freewater, was transported via air ambulance to Legacy Emanuel Hospital in Portland with serious injuries.

The center seat passenger, Fisher Schroeder, age 14, of Milton-Freewater, was ejected from the vehicle and pronounced deceased at the scene. The driver and two other juvenile passengers suffered

minor injuries and were treated at Grande Ronde Hospital in La Grande. Information about safety belt use is still being investigated.

OSP was assisted by the Oregon Department of Transportation, Union County Sheriff’s Office, Island City Rural Fire Department and the La Grande ambulance. The cause of the crash is under investigation and any further questions can be referred to Trooper Robert Routt at the Oregon State Police office in La Grande

Released murderer warnings were made in error

Several in Baker County received a call last week stating convicted murderer Ward Weaver, for one, had been released from the Snake River Correctional Facility, and asking them to call if they felt their safety was threatened.

The wording led people to believe he and other convicted felons had been released to this area. It was all just a glitch.

Oregon’s VINE (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) system experienced a major technical glitch Friday evening. Routine system

maintenance appears to have triggered numerous notifications to victims in error. The contractor for the service, Appriss, working on the repair, and issued an "alert express" to everyone who received an erroneous notification

In addition to the alert express, victims and members of the public can check on the current status of inmates in the custody of the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC) by using the Oregon Offender Search. DOC and Appriss apologize for the erroneous notifications, and are co-

mitted to remedying the issue as soon as possible.

Oregon launched the statewide VINE service in 2001, becoming the 11th state to adopt the program. Oregon VINE, available in both English and Spanish, monitors offenders being held in county jails, Oregon Department of Corrections facilities, Oregon Youth Authority facilities, and individuals who are currently on community supervision. The program has sent more than 10 million notifications since its implementation.

Walden secures SRS funds

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Rep. Greg Walden (R-Hood River) today announced that he has secured a two-year extension of the Secure Rural Schools program for local schools, roads, and law enforcement in Oregon’s rural forested communities. The extension has been included in a bipartisan agreement to reform

how doctors are paid under Medicare, which the House is set to vote on this week.

“This two year extension gives us time to continue work on a long-term plan to reform federal forest policy to grow jobs in the woods, improve forest health, and provide certainty for essential local services like schools and roads,” Walden said.

The extension will provide funding to 33 cash-strapped Oregon counties. It is broadly supported by local teachers, sheriffs, first responders, and county commissioners.

If the county timber payments were not extended without another solution, the consequences could be dire for public safety and education in some areas.

— CONTACT US —

The Baker County Press

PO Box 567
Baker City, Ore. 97814

Open Monday-Thursday for calls
9 AM - 4 PM
Open 24/7 for emails
Office location: TBA

Phone: 541.519.0572

TheBakerCountyPress.com

Kerry McQuisten, Publisher
Editor@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Wendee Morrissey, Advertising and Sales
Wendee@TheBakerCountyPress.com

David Conn, Advertising and Sales
David@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Published weekly every Friday.
Subscription rates per year are \$29.95 all areas, e-mail delivery. \$39.95 print issue, home delivery, Baker City city limits only. \$49.95 print issue, mail delivery, outside Baker City city limits only.
Payment in advance.

A division of
Black Lyon Publishing, LLC

Copyright © 2014

YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

President Barack Obama

202.456.1414
202.456.2461 fax

Whitehouse.gov/contact

US Sen. Jeff Merkley

503.326.3386
503.326.2900 fax

Merkley.Senate.gov

US Sen. Ron Wyden

541.962.7691
Wyden.Senate.gov

US Rep. Greg Walden

541.624.2400
541.624.2402 fax

Walden.House.gov

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown

503.378.3111
Governor.Oregon.gov

State Rep. Cliff Bentz

503.986.1460

State Sen. Ted Ferrioli

541.490.6528

Baker County Commissioners Bill Harvey;

Mark Bennett; Tim Kerns

541.523.8200
541.523.8201