

# Opinion / Local

— EDITORIAL —

## 2A protects freedom of the press

The first time it happened was about a year and a half ago. We were at a table during a local gun show selling subscriptions and handing out copies of our newspaper. It didn't strike us as unusual to be at a popular community event, but the comments came quickly from visitors.

"Now there's something you don't often see," said one man—who gave us the thumbs up sign.

"The media here? What do you *really* want?" another man joked.

Most of the comments we heard were good-natured, but we quickly realized that this more light-hearted tone occurred only because we personally knew a lot of the folks there. But what if we hadn't? How would the reaction have changed?

Suddenly, because we now operated a newspaper, we were on the other side of the wall looking in at the room in which we'd always existed comfortably before. The sensation was odd, to say the least.

We got yet another probably more honest feel for how the media is viewed across our country in relation to law enforcement and second amendment issues last weekend.

We attended the Oregon Sniper Challenge, a private event. Only after we arrived did we realize how much of a leap of faith it must have taken for the event's organizers to not just allow us in for coverage, but to make us feel welcome.

As we began to talk to the participants, early on came the words, "I'm only talk-

ing to you at all because [insert name here] said you're okay."

We got a lot of that.

As the men around us gradually relaxed, we began to hear stories, mostly off the record, of their past experiences with the media across the U.S. and in other countries. Those stories weren't pretty. They were horrifying, actually.

By the end of the weekend, after we'd wrongly assumed everyone there pretty much knew who we were, one 6'4" gentleman spoke to us cautiously.

He stood there for a moment looking like he'd stepped straight out of the pages of a suspense novel. "You're with the newspaper?" he finally asked.

"Yes, *The Baker County Press*."

He took a breath and laughed—one of those nervous laughs that are never good. "Every time I've had a ride-along, the reporter ends up throwing me under the bus."

This was the last, albeit brief, conversation we had at the event, and it stuck with us.

We came away disheartened in a sense, not because we're sometimes viewed so wrongly, but because we know second amendment proponents, law enforcement and military often *do* get "thrown under the bus" by modern-day, mainstream media. We'd be leery, too.

We don't know how it came to this.

Our second amendment rights defend all the other rights of Americans—to hear from a free press, to speak freely. In their 2A attacks, it seems to us that certain media outlets are committing the slow murder of their own occupation.

The second amendment holds up the first. What's not to understand?

At the very least, you'd think those out there in the line of duty trying to uphold and support our Constitution deserve fair media coverage.

We're just one voice in the wind. But hopefully our message begins to echo.

—*The Baker County Press Editorial Board*

## Inmate dies at Snake River Correctional Facility

An inmate died unexpectedly early Wednesday morning at Snake River Correctional Institution (SRCI) in Ontario.

As with all unanticipated deaths in state prisons, the Oregon State Police Criminal Investigations Unit is conducting an investigation.

At approximately 7:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 10, a Correctional Officer found James Papineau, 66, unresponsive in his cell, where he was the sole occupant. Medical staff began life-saving efforts to no avail.

He was pronounced deceased at 7:15 a.m. No other details are available at this time.

Attempts to locate next of kin have not been suc-

cessful. The department asks that anyone familiar with the deceased contact one of the numbers listed above.

Papineau originally entered DOC custody on August 20, 1988, on multiple charges, including robbery in the first degree, burglary in the first degree, and coercion.

He paroled on May 3, 2004, later violated his parole, and returned to DOC custody on February 1, 2006, with multiple new charges. His earliest release date was June 4, 2030.

SRCI is a multi-custody prison in Ontario that houses approximately 3,000 male inmates.

SRCI has multiple special housing units in-

cluding disciplinary segregation, intensive management, infirmary (with hospice) with 24-hour nursing care, and an administrative segregation unit.

SRCI participates in prison industries with Oregon Corrections Enterprises including a contact center, laundry, and sign shop.

SRCI specializes in incentive housing, specialized housing, inmates with mental health/medical vulnerabilities, education and trades programs, cognitive and parenting programs, and institution work programs. SRCI opened in 1991 and is the largest correctional institution in the state.

## Self-pump gas bill goes to Governor's desk

A house bill designed to allow self-pumping of gas—but only during the night (6 p.m. until 6 a.m.) and only in rural communities of less than 40,000 people—has now also passed the Oregon Senate.

The ban against self-pumped gas began in

Oregon in 1951.

New Jersey is the only other state that has such a ban.

It's been about 12 years since a proposal to lift the ban, even partially, has been entertained.

The bills sponsor, Representative Cliff Bentz,

R-Ontario, says the bill focuses on having fuel available in very rural areas where gas station hours can be limited.

The bill is now on Governor Kate Brown's desk, where it is expected to be signed.

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

### Business development salary is misuse of tax dollars

To the Editor:

\$96,000 per year to manage economic development for Baker County? You are kidding, right? I don't know the recipient of those tax dollars. I've never met him. But it isn't about him anyhow. It is about results, and as The BCP editorial asked what, specifically, do we have to show for expenditures of our tax dollars to this individual over the past two years? How many businesses, and which businesses, have taken up roots in Baker County during that time period directly attributable to his efforts? If he has economic development contracts in other Oregon counties does that not constitute a conflict of interest which borders on the unethical?

Just for comparison purposes, the Sheriff of Baker County who is responsible for the safety and well being of 16,000 residents is not paid \$96K a year. Nor are his Deputies who put their lives on the line and must make life and death decisions. Come to think of it, I am unaware of any department head (Police Chief, Fire Chief, Health Director, Public Works Director, etc.) who makes that kind of money in our county.

If there was proof that as a direct result of his efforts enough businesses were attracted to our county that, collectively, they paid enough taxes to compensate for his salary I might be more supportive. I doubt that is the case and unless and until it becomes the case as one lone tax payer I resent this misuse of my tax dollars.

**Jerry Boyd**  
*Baker City*

### Global warming is a fairy tale

To the Editor:

This letter is in response to Marshall McComb's letter to the editor on global warming. I agree with Marshall to a point; we have come a long way in controlling pollution. Our pollution expertise 50 years ago was leading the charge on polluting

our planet. That is until The Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act which stopped this insane practice of spewing Nitrous Oxide, Sulfur Dioxide and other polluting gases that hung over the cities like a fog.

But it seems now it is fossil fuel, oil and natural gas that contribute to carbon dioxide gas. We as humans contribute by the air we inhale and remove the oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. The trees and the vegetation love us because they need it to survive and thrive, and they give out oxygen so that we may survive and thrive also. The Al Gore's thinking on Global Warming could be self-serving because Al owns business building green energy equipment.

The Marshalls of the world want us to quit using carbon polluting oil and natural gas to cut down on the nasty old carbon dioxide. But even Marshall is a loss for words when you mention the volcanic fire chain in the south pacific erupting several hundred times a year spewing out tons of carbon dioxide.

Just the eruption in Iceland alone wiped out all of the Al Gore and Marshall McComb's hard work and put more carbon dioxide in the air than we have since we started cutting back on carbon dioxide, that isn't even counting the hundreds of eruptions a year. Not only that when a forest or even a grass fire burns it gives up to the atmosphere all of the carbon dioxide it has consumed in its entire lifetime.

Back when Oregon was just an inland sea, volcanic eruptions, lava flows and mountain building were prevalent in Oregon. So much so the carbon dioxide levels were so high that it super saturated the inland sea with carbon dioxide. This super saturation settled to the sea bottom and contributed to the limestone deposits that Ash Grove is mining today that are thousands of feet thick.

I deal with fact and quit drinking cool aid and believing in fairy stories when I was a kid.

**Chuck Chase**  
*Baker City*

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## Baker City looks to fill vacancies on various boards

### Parks and Rec.

Baker City is looking to fill three open positions on the Parks and Recreation Board. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was created to represent the community regarding matters related to our local parks. The Parks and Recreation Board is a two-year term commitment. The terms will expire in July of 2017.

### Tree Board.

The Tree Board has the duty to maintain a written

plan for care and maintenance of tree/shrubs in parks, along streets, and in public areas. The board will consider and make recommendations on any special matter or question within the scope of their work as requested by the City Council. The board will issue or deny, after a hearing, tree permit variances. The board may also order the removal and remedial treatment of unsafe, dead, diseased or potentially injurious trees

on public or private property. The two vacancies are three year terms that will expire in July 2018. The vacancy will be advertised until filled.

Anyone interested in volunteering for appointment to the above board may contact Luke Yeaton at City Hall, 541-524-2033 or [lyeaton@bakercity.com](mailto:lyeaton@bakercity.com). Applications may be submitted electronically through [www.bakercity.com](http://www.bakercity.com).

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