

# Opinion

## — LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

### Justus edges out Nichols

To the Editor:  
This letter is intended to assure that you vote for the candidate for County Commissioner that best represents your values. Both, in my view, are capable candidates but with quite different views of how Baker County, and the rest of Oregon, should be managed and what our long term objectives should be. I do not personally know either of the gentlemen.

One candidate, Mr. Bruce Nichols, is quite well known, largely because of his business relationship with local farmers. He appears to have a good business understanding, including budgeting, which could be of benefit to the county. He appears to be content with the manner in which the federal agencies manage a large portion of the county lands and a very large portion of its natural resources. This includes law enforcement on public lands. For the most part he would like to help run the county more smoothly.

The competing candidate, Mr. Kody Justus, is not nearly as well known, has a strong agricultural background and a reputation for honesty. He believes in the U. S. and Oregon Constitution, and lives the law of the land to the extent presently possible. He believes that local government should, and has the constitutional authority to, manage local natural resources on what are now considered to be federal lands and are strictly controlled by federal agencies to the detriment of the local economy and way of life.

This, to the best of my knowledge, is the major difference between two good candidates. The one who gets your vote defines what sort of environment in which you choose to live and to pass on the next generation. I, personally, believe in our rights as set forth in both Constitutions and therefore stand firmly behind, and with, Mr. Justus.

**Jasper Coombes**  
*Haines*

### Nichols helped develop golf course, volunteers

To the Editor:  
As a business owner and lifelong Baker County resident, I am supporting Bruce Nichols for Baker County Commissioner. I have known Bruce for over 30 years and I feel I know a lot about his character and commitment to Baker County.

Bruce has been involved in countless projects that have benefited the people of our county. I worked with Bruce before and after he volunteered to be on the golf board. He worked very hard in helping to develop the back nine at the Baker City golf course. His vision was not just about having a back nine in Baker City, but the potential tax revenues for the City and County that the housing around the new course would provide. This is the kind of vision I want our commissioner to possess.

I feel Bruce would look out for the economic interest as well as our personal freedoms that are so important to the people of Baker County.

I hope you join me on Election Day in supporting Bruce someone who will represent everyone in Baker County.

**Scott Warner**  
*Baker City*

### Nichols will bow to feds

To the Editor:  
Baker County's economy is stagnant, and declining. Yet it is very rich in natural resources. Mining and timber and ranching were once the core of local prosperity, but no longer. Why the disparity?

I say it is over-regulation by the federal government, as it unlawfully and unconstitutionally subjects the counties to the crippling policies of the New World Order. Loggers and mills are no longer able to produce, and miners and ranchers are forced off our public lands. We should be already aware of the many horror stories.

Baker County has a wonderful law (Ordinance 2001-1) that requires federal agencies to come to the table and agree with the Commissioners about every regulation that may affect the health, safety and welfare of the local people. But it has never been enforced.

The previous Board of Commissioners ignored it. They bowed to the pressure of the federal agencies, and became subservient slaves. We all suffer as a result.

Kody Justus is committed to restoring

the local economy by taking control of local resources away from the federalies, And it can be done! It is now being done in several states, with great results.

But what about Bruce Nichols? Does he not proudly proclaim his intimate working connections with federal agencies and bureaucrats? Does it seem that he is up to his ears hobnobbing with the social elite who are content with the status quo? Was he not recently overheard saying that he wanted to be "much nicer" to the USFS, and intended to cooperate with them instead of requiring them to coordinate with the County under binding county law?

Has Nichols made any public statements supporting the people who are opposed to unlawful closures of public roads in the forests? Does he oppose the unconstitutional BLM power grabs of public lands? Does he advocate more limited government? Does he take a stand to defend fundamental Second Amendment rights from federal attacks? I think not. But Kody does.

We all know what Kody Justus stands for. Maybe we should take a close look at Bruce Nichols. Your future may depend on it.

**Kasey Wright**  
*Halfway*

### Fiscal responsibility needed

To the Editor:

A key element among the many responsibilities of a county commissioner is to be fiscally prudent. We are fortunate to have Bruce Nichols running for commissioner. His background and experience will serve the people of Baker County well. There are many areas of impact within the county that the commissioners influence and we believe Bruce Nichols has the temperament, analytical ability and credentials to do an excellent job.

**Dean Defrees and Ron Rowan**  
*Baker City*

### Justus got information firsthand

To the Editor:

Throughout the current commissioner campaign, the January 2016 *New York Times* article regarding Kody Justus' visitation to the Malheur County Refuge continues to be mentioned. While it is important to understand Mr. Justus' reasoning for his visit, another perspective should also be brought to light.

The *New York Times* and other media sources, including Oregon Public Broadcasting and the LA Times to name a few, also visited the Malheur County refuge and spent time with the occupiers; however, no one questioned their presence or intent as to why they were there. Is this because we have been programmed as a society to "trust" the main stream media to guide our thoughts and emotions, without questioning their motives as a public information source? Think about this: the media felt safe enough to visit the refuge and interview the occupiers for nearly 41 days. Why? To collect data for the public. Therefore, my question is, why then is it wrong for the common individual or our public officials to do the same?

Kody Justus went to the refuge to collect information—to listen; as did anyone else who visited the refuge or who attended the public events where the occupiers and local citizens voiced their concerns. Isn't this what we are asking from our public officials—to listen to us?

Perhaps the old adage "actions speak louder than words" rings true. It's time to take action, ask questions and educate ourselves—and to expect our leaders to do the same. When it comes to the issues that effect Baker County, I believe Kody Justus has the tenacity to work hard and a desire to do his own research to bring educated and informed decisions to the commissioner's table, instead of relying on the swayed opinions of the media or the political desires of a select few. Baker County needs strong leaders who are approachable and who will listen to the concerns of all Baker County residents and to be a voice for our community as a whole. On May 17th, please vote Kody Justus for Baker County Commissioner.

**Rosemary Dayhoff**  
*Haines*

### Nichols has financial experience

To the Editor:

"It is the duty of every citizen according to his best capabilities to give validity to

his convictions in political affairs." Albert Einstein

Bruce Nichols is an outstanding example of a man prepared to stand up for his convictions. I've had the pleasure of doing business with Bruce for over ten years and have sought his guidance on numerous occasions regarding financial affairs. Bruce has always been forthright, timely, totally accurate with information, fair and a delight to work with.

There is no candidate as qualified as Bruce Nichols, CPA, to face these financially stressful times. He is honest, and well acquainted with all aspects of Baker County life; i.e., farmers and ranchers, small business and single entrepreneurship, as well as the struggles of part-time workers and retired citizens.

"Can a people tax themselves into prosperity? Can a man stand in a bucket and lift himself up by the handle?" Winston Churchill. I think not. Vote Bruce for common sense and stability.

**Susan Castles**  
*Baker City*

### Nichols' fiscal decisions don't add up

To the Editor:

Who will make the best decisions dealing with our county budget? That has been a repeated question the last few months.

In my line of work I make decisions based on results (rate of gain, cost of gain, etc.).

During the primary campaign I noticed a couple interesting choices. None of the candidates had enough time to gather signatures to both file and place their statement in the voter's pamphlet.

Bruce Nichols elected to collect the 114 signature required to file avoiding the \$50 fee, that breaks down to \$.44 per signature.

Bruce then elected to pay the \$600 fee to put his statement in the voter's pamphlet.

Kody Justus decided to pay the \$50 filing fee and collect signatures for his statement for the voter's pamphlet avoiding the \$600 fee, that breaks down to \$3 per signature.

I guess being a CPA doesn't automatically mean you make wise decisions. I want a commissioner that gets the best bang for the buck. I am going with Kody Justus.

**Lance Cosby**  
*Baker City*

### Justus will fight for rights

To the Editor:

A month before the takeover in Harney County, the occupiers petitioned Commissioner Grasty, Sheriff Ward, and the District Attorney to address video and eye witness accounts of the BLM deliberately setting fire to local rangelands that resulted in cattle being severely burnt alive and private ranch structures being burnt to the ground. While no charges were brought against the public employees for their actions, the Hammonds were convicted of a far lesser crime. Furthermore, their supporters tried to get due process through the legal channels to address their extreme sentences. Every correspondence with local authorities fell on deaf ears. Harney county officials refused to investigate claims or address concerns. Desperate, frustrated and feeling they had no recourse, the occupiers moved in on the Malheur refuge in protest.

After the occupation ended, Sheriff Ward held a press conference with Commissioner Grasty and chastised the occupiers for "not following the rule of law,"

and told them that we have due process and legal structures that should have been followed.

While it was wrong for the occupiers to force a takeover of that public facility, and I do not support their actions, I find it hypocritical that the elected officials turned a deaf ear to repeated attempts at due process and then lectured the occupiers for not following the rule of law.

I feel that we are seeing the same logic from Bruce Nichols. He has publicly stated that he is against Bill Harvey's efforts with coordination and that he will reject any attempt at due process in challenging Federal agencies that control and manage public lands within our county. What other recourse do we ranchers, miners, hunters, firewood gatherers, outdoorsman and recreationists have? These issues impact our jobs and economy and our way of life here. Nichols repeatedly makes the point that we are a nation of laws, but then refuses to use laws to hold our government officials accountable. His campaign slogan is, "Minding the county's business." Sounds to me like his plan is to ignore it?

**Joseph Brown**  
*Halfway*

### Like Nichols but won't vote for him

To the Editor:

We have known Bruce Nichols since 1973. We have always liked Bruce, we chose him to do our taxes, would we chose him to be our commissioner, "no."

Presently all three commissioners are on record as supporting coordination. By this time, everyone knows, coordination is the last tool available in dealing with the federal agencies. Mr. Nichols was quite clear at the last two forums that he will not take on the chore of standing up and demanding, yes demand, the federal agencies conform and follow the law. By the way, coordination is the law, not a choice, unless you have a lazy board of commissioners that choose to let the federal government dictate our way of life.

Together, BLM and the USFS control about half of our land base in Baker County. Virtually all the wealth (minerals, timber, grazing, or recreation) on these holdings are controlled by their dictates. Collusion creeps into dealing, whether projects proceed, etc., kick in a little extortion with trade off of roads and you end up not knowing where the fox is denned.

For many many years the direction our local representatives have chosen, "go along and get along." What has the return been. I'll begin with the Travel Management Plan, many of us recall the slap in the face from the forest service, with their Record of Decision that totally ignored local voices. The list continues, Boardman/Hemmingway Line, BIM Sage Grouse, Blue Mountain Forest Plan Revision, Blue Mountain Resiliency Project and more in the pipeline. BLM resource plans and countless endless projects from the forest service. Jerking us around with their comments and appeals. Our efforts have been rewarded with obvious predetermined handouts. This is known as collaboration.

The time is now, a voice that will speak up for the people and our area. Kody Justus, will be that voice. He will stand with Bill Harvey and Mark Bennett, to form a united team.

**Tork and Wanda Ballard**  
*Baker City*

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