

# Opinion / Local

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

## No more gun control

To the Editor:  
I didn't want to do any more writing but I feel compelled to speak out a bit on "gun control" in order to maybe stop the low information voter from making what might be an irreversible mistake. The Founding Fathers were educated men and wrote the Second Amendment as a direct result of their experiences with dictatorial governments. If I used the phrase, "crossing the Rubicon" with them they would know what I meant. Very few gun control advocates today would have a clue.

Human nature has not changed. People like to gain and consolidate power. The usual routes for this is for a strong man to get control of the military and police forces. The founders knew this. They didn't even want a standing army. They would rather rely on the "militia" which was the people, an armed populace. They were the ones who met the British at Lexington and Concord.

Subsequent history taught them that a standing army was necessary but they also knew that the dangers of a standing army were still there.

Never once will you find any reference to a National Guard being the militia. Nowhere in the Constitution will you find any reference to hunting. You will find, however, in quotes from almost all of them about the need to remain armed as a barrier to tyranny.

Manufactured terms like "assault weapon" belie the fact that since 1934 the rate of fire on all firearms has been one projectile per trigger pull.

The reason I need a good "military" type weapon is because the military has them. The reason I would need a police type weapon is because the police has them.

Do I believe that we are in imminent danger of takeover of the government? No. Do I believe it possible in some future time? Only if the Democrats succeed in an Australia-type gun control agenda.

My fear is that someday a ban or order to confiscate will dredge up an Australian scenario of grinding up 600,000 rifles. This is not Australia. Be careful of getting

what you think you want.

Steve Culley  
Baker City

## "I've got the government's back" is more accurate

To the Editor:  
"I've got your back" — a phrase heard a lot in Grant County the last few years. Generally spoken by the Grant County Court and Commissioner Boyd Britton. When using the phrase who was he referring to? Almost exclusively it was in support of another government agency. Harney County Judge Steve Grasty, Malheur National Forest Supervisor Steve Beverlin or Gov. Kate Brown.

"I've/We've got your back" has become a mantra in the County Court, but it is only reserved for those who play along with authority figures, and those that are seen as part of the social fabric of the community. You've seen how that works in last week's paper with Mr. Beverlin coming out to sing the praises of Mr. Britton and his work ethic with the Forest Service, not much to anyone's surprise since Mr. Britton has told him on more than one occasion, "We've got your back."

As a public official, Mr. Britton is to remove himself from anything that has the appearance of a conflict of interest, and he lays it out very clearly that for the last five years he has averaged roughly \$4,200 in payments from the Forest Service, while they bring forward business to the court, that he not only votes on, but lobbies for, all while he applies for jobs, while lobbying the merits of Forest Service policy. That is not "baseless." That's a clear conflict of interest. It's just unfortunate he cannot see it.

Mr. Britton is clear in his statements; he does not believe Grant County has the guts to remove him from office. He thinks he will slide right through this. Time will tell, but for me it's an easy ballot cast, and it's a yes vote to remove him from office.

John George  
Bates

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# Sumpter: No new mayor, Oakley resigns

BY MEGHAN ANDERSCH  
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On Tuesday, July 12th, Sumpter City Council members Samantha Rowan, Carey Clarke, and Robert Armbruster met to hear reports and conduct City business. Clarke presided over the meeting at the request of Rowan and Armbruster.

The council approved previous meeting minutes and bills to be paid, with the exception of 4x4 use reimbursement requested by Lori-Jean Pruitt for park-related business. This item was tabled for further clarification.

### Utility Manager

Jeff McKinney reported the water treatment plant restoration is nearly complete and going well. He anticipates the high quality 2-part epoxy undercoated with rust preventer will serve the City well for years to come. The number 2 valve is broken and will be replaced or repaired.

McKinney spoke with the county regarding the street improvement project. The material for the project is crushed and available. McKinney stated they are working out the details, but

he hopes to see that project underway soon.

McKinney thanked Clarke for spending most of a day repairing playground equipment in the rain. McKinney stated that also with Clarke's assistance, he's been able to meter and sell water to High Desert Construction for the Granite Highway paving project. \$7,553.28 has been billed out so far. Figuring in rent on the hydrant meter, the City will clear over \$7,000 in unbudgeted income.

### Fire Department

Jim Sheller reported two medical call outs the past month. Training on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays is going well. All volunteers are able to run engines and pumpers. They are well-trained on fire and wildfire and "we will continue training hard."

### Planning Commission

Leanne Woolf reported the Commission met on 6/16 and reviewed information from the County Building Department, including that premade sheds are subject to the same rules as those made "from scratch."

The Department required the Planning Commission emphasize that just

because sheds are on skids, doesn't mean they get to be moved around, especially those of a size to be subject to building permits.

The Commission also reviewed the first draft of a letter encouraging identified landowners to take action regarding zoning irregularities.

On June 25 and June 28, the Commission reviewed applications returned for amendment. On July 7, Woolf was renamed from Commission Vice President to President. Two conditional use permits were approved and two returned for amendment.

### Sumpter Pines RV Park

Clarke explained a meeting was held with the RV Park owners, Armbruster, a former City Recorder, and himself to discuss the amount of \$925 the owners are requesting returned to them.

He said at the end of the meeting, they decided to uphold the \$925 charge. Since then, Armbruster changed his mind. Clarke stated he was good with splitting the cost with the owners if they are willing.

SEE SUMPTER PAGE 5

— GUEST OPINION —

# Reflecting on Dallas

By Retired Police Chief Jerry Boyd  
Special to The Baker County Press

Like most Americans, particularly so as a former SWAT Commander, I was greatly disturbed by the outright assassination of five law enforcement officers in Dallas at the conclusion of a Black Lives Matters protest march.

I was concerned also for the well-being of the additional officers who were injured by what has now been determined to be a lone sniper trained tactically both through his military experience and independent study.

Two thoughts jumped quickly to my mind. One, from the officer's perspective this incident had absolutely nothing to do with race. There are numerous media accounts citing blacks who have clearly stated that their lives were saved by the heroic actions of Dallas police officers. Second, the vast majority of the march participants, while they protested what they believed to be an unnecessary use of force by police in other cities, did not direct even as much as verbal taunts toward the Dallas officers assigned to the event.

This was clearly the work of one radicalized individual, and it is important to keep that in mind. Having said that, however, law enforcement officers across the nation are, as they must be, on high alert.

Unfortunately, at present there are groups of different ethnic, racial, or other makeup, which advocate the killing of cops.

Living in rural Eastern Oregon, one might assume we are immune from the type of incident that occurred in Dallas, and that is probably a correct conclusion. But what we are not immune from is an apparent, growing tendency for violence directed at our law enforcers.

Cop killing, unfortunately, can and does happen in all regions of the country, and it would be imprudent for any police officer to fail to keep that in mind.

There seems to be little disagreement that the active shooter/assassin in Dallas needed to be neutralized. The outcry, if there is one, is in regard to the use of a robot carried explosive for that purpose. I wasn't there, but from accounts available to me it seems certain that the suspect sniper was in a location where he was still able to fire at officers.

In the military and in law enforcement, we refer to that as a "sniper hide." However, it was not a location where officers could eliminate the immediate threat using conventional means.



Submitted Photo

Jerry Boyd is a retired Chief of Police. He is the current Reserve Commander for the Baker City Police Department.

While I do not expect use of explosives to neutralize suspects to become a common, or even frequent, practice, that tactic in this case seems both reasonable and necessary. Legally, morally, and ethically if deadly force is necessary and justified, the means of force at that particular time is a secondary concern.

Another, but I think, important comment: An officer's decision to use deadly force, no matter how it is delivered, is not really an officer's decision at all.

I have never met an officer who really wants to use deadly force, though we are trained to do so, and must not hesitate when such action is required. In the vast majority of incidents—and clearly in Dallas, since they attempted to negotiate with the suspect over a long period of time—suspects are given both opportunities and encouragement to surrender peacefully. However, if the suspect, through his continuing use of deadly force directed at innocent people, dictates that like force must be used against him, then he, not the officer, has made the deadly force decision.

Last weekend, many Baker City Police officers worked the Hells Canyon Motorcycle Rally event. There was an outpouring of support for our officers by residents and visitors to our town. Several officers were asked if what happened in Dallas affected them in any way. Their answer was yes.

An incident like Dallas reminds each officer of the deadly potential the profession has, no matter where one works.

The support local officers have received from this community, in the aftermath of Dallas, has been very much appreciated.

Let us hope and pray that there are no future incidents of this sort, and let us be thankful that the likelihood of such an incident in our community, while it cannot be discounted entirely, is extremely small.

— CONTACT US —

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