

Opinion

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

Why change what works? Vote no on 1-74

To the Editor:

The Baker County Commissioners have been Partisan for at least the past 25+ years. The primary election process has served Baker County well with Democrat Steve Bogart being elected as Baker County Judge in 1990, then Republican Brian Cole was elected followed by Democrat Fred Warner being elected in 2002. Then in 2014 currently Republican Bill Harvey was elected.

The election has gone back and forth between the two parties. It wasn't until Fred Warner Jr was defeated in 2014 that there has ever been any question or concern as to the primary and party system and the successes that the different Elected Commissioners have brought to better Baker County along the way.

Why change what has served us well for several years? It just doesn't make any more sense than trying to change State Senators and Representatives, Governor, Congress or House of Representatives, or the United States of America President from Partisan to non-Partisan. They all have accountability to the Citizens on how they vote on different issues that many times will fall along platforms and ideologies of the two major political parties. Especially when it comes to Natural Resources as is the case with Baker County. Even Fred Warner Jr. stated in the debates that he changed from a registered Democrat to Republican because he aligned himself more with the Republicans stance on Natural Resource issues.

Vote no on measure 1-74.

Lorrie Harvey
Haines

I support 1-74

To the Editor:

I am supporting measure 1-74 and urge my neighbors to do the same. If passed, this measure would mean all of Baker County has a vote and a voice in who becomes our elected county officials. Our candidates would have to appeal to and represent all citizens, not just those in a particular party. Baker City Council is nonpartisan and as a former City Councilor, I don't recall a single instance where party affiliation mattered or should have mattered. I believe our county officials should also be nonpartisan and urge you to join me in voting yes on 1-74.

Gail Duman
Baker City
Submitted by Jan Kerns

Vote yes on 1-74

To the Editor:

As a concerned citizen and supporter of Baker County Measure 1-74, one message came across loud and clear as I visited with folks. People are tired of having to change their party registration to vote for a County Commissioner candidate they prefer in order to cast a vote in the partisan primary election. Their concerns had several good points:

1. They don't have to be a particular political party to vote for City Council or School Board members – both boards make responsible decisions on behalf of the public;

2. They don't believe that a party label tells the only story on the values and core beliefs of an individual candidate;

The three County Commissioner positions are the only partisan positions in all of the 167 elected offices in Baker Co. We need to change that so everyone can vote on the County Commissioners at the primary level.

Please join with me in voting yes on 1-74. Let us have Baker County join with 28 other Oregon counties who have seen the wisdom of making the County Commissioner positions non-partisan, and truly represent the choice, and will, of all of the voters in all elections.

Bob McKim
Baker City
Submitted by Jan Kerns

Hoopes for sheriff!

To the Editor:

I am writing in support of John Hoopes for Baker County Sheriff. John Hoopes has been with the sheriff's department for 16 years and has acquired an abundance of knowledge and skills that insure he is the best choice for the job. John has an extremely strong and sound rapport with Baker County residents. His integrity is impeccable. John's honesty, sincerity, moral values and devotion speak loudly to his ability to be Baker County Sheriff.

Marilyn Shollenberger
Baker City

Commissioners do not only do County's 'day to day business'

To the Editor:

Just recently few people have said, "The Commissioners job is just to run the day to day business of the County." That is misinformation! The Commission Chair does oversee the day-to-day county business but you have a Chief Financial Officer, Human Resources Director along with the Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor and numerous Department heads that are all very capable of performing day-to-day business of the County.

Your three Elected Commissioners deal with a wide variety of issues that need to be addressed outside of the day-to-day business. Some of these issues include forestry, use of our natural resources, public road access, grazing needs, public safety including your second

amendment rights and public land use management planning with the Government agencies.

It is very important that you have the confidence as Baker County Citizens that these will be dealt with, and voted on, in regards to policy and procedures with ideologies and beliefs stated during their candidacy. I believe in a conservative and historical approach on how to deal with making the hard decisions and leading our County in a positive direction. The Republican Party has always stood for less Government and regulations when leading our Nation. They stand for Local Government and placing the power of the people closer to home.

I do not want someone else choosing a candidate with different views than my own. That is why I am asking my fellow Republicans and every other voter in Baker County to vote no on 1-74. Don't let someone else talk you into giving up your rights to a closed primary. The other political parties have always had the same rights to pick their candidates but for the last few years they have chosen not too! The system that we have in place does work when you use it and I would like to keep it.

These are my own views and I do not represent my co-Commissioners.

Bill Harvey
Haines

Hoopes is my choice for Sheriff

To the Editor:

I am writing to endorse John Hoopes as the Republican candidate for Baker County Sheriff.

John is a native resident of Baker County and has proudly served our community for the last 16 years. His pride and respect for the area we live in and the people he serves have created a solid foundation for his campaign and have been a driving force to generate positive change; and positive change is exactly what this county needs. People need someone who is willing to listen, and dedicate the time and energy needed to solve the major issues Baker County is facing right now. John Hoopes is not afraid to face these issues head-on and resolve them in a practical and Constitutionally-minded manner.

John also served our country as a Marine which has provided invaluable experience and training for the position of Sheriff. It takes a lot of courage and selflessness to dedicate four years of your life to fight for your country; I respect all of those who have given of themselves for our Constitutional freedoms and rights. The Marines provide an education that cannot be obtained through any other institution. Nothing even comes close to matching the skill and knowledge gained in through military service. A man who is willing to set his life aside to serve his country is a man with the honor and discipline needed to serve this county.

There is a definite need for positive change in Baker County and I believe John Hoopes has the dedication and experience to help bring about this change. We are living in tumultuous times; our livelihood is being threatened and the federal government just keeps tightening their grip on rural Americans. We need someone who is willing to fight for our rights as citizens and who will go the extra mile to make sure everyone's voice is heard. I support John Hoopes for Baker County Sheriff and I am asking the citizens of this county to do the same.

Joelle Crowther
Baker City

Hoopes best suited to job

To the Editor:

I have had several opportunities over the past few months to get to know John Hoopes and to consider the goals and objectives of both of the candidates for the upcoming election. John Hoopes' honest and practical approach to solving the issues Baker County is faced with is what sets him apart from the other candidate. His willingness to listen to people's problems with genuine concern and respect is commendable. I am writing today to show my loyalty and support for John Hoopes for Baker County Sheriff as I believe he is best suited for the job.

Creg Talbott
Baker City

Clintons have left horrible legacy

To the Editor:

Wow, what a legacy the Clintons are leaving for their grandchildren. If Hillary wins, she'll be Liar in Chief with Bill as "First Laddie."

In 2005, Hillary stated, "Look, the average Democrat is so stupid (just plain), they are easy to manipulate. That's the easy part." And boy is she proving it!

Isn't she good at name calling?

She has been at the taxpayer trough for over 30 years and wants to sop it dry.

Money does not make for integrity!

Ester Evans
Baker City

Let's defeat the nonpartisan issue AGAIN

To the Editor:

Baker County voters, for the second year in a row are considering (again...) turning our County Commissioner positions from partisan to nonpartisan positions. Last year, 2015, Baker County voters turned down this same proposal. In true liberal fashion, the same handful of people has brought the same issue back to the voters again. They cannot seem to take "NO" for an answer. These same people have lost sight of history and why this is such a bad idea for Baker County. A Nonpartisan system is a bad deal; it is the forerunner of a one-party system. I remember from last year a Letter to the Editor from Alberta Bailey of Baker City, which said, "In the 1930's and 1940's, Italy and Germany were both nonpartisan—one party. As I remember that didn't work out so well. Vote no."

Know your history and understand our commissioners are the rule/law makers for Baker County. Just like our elected legislatures at both the state & federal levels. Let's keep the politics transparent in Baker County, Vote no on Measure 1-74.

Suzie Dyke
Baker City

Nonpartisan switch was disaster in Josephine County

To the Editor:

Baker County Residents, I urge you to vote no in switching to a non-Partisan Commissioner office on Baker County Measure 1-74. In the early 90s Josephine County switched to non-partisan and we have had nothing but trouble ever since.

Josephine County has made worldwide news due to the lack of funding of the O&C funds and other overall ramifications of having non-partisan Commissioners. It may seem like a great idea, but our County has been suffering ever since nonpartisan commissioner was adopted. We have lost almost all of our Sheriff's Department and many Union employees.

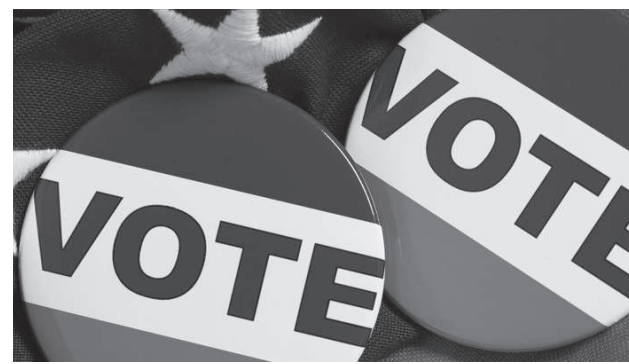
A better system is for each party (there is more than two) to put forth their best candidate, and hold them accountable. Non-Affiliated candidates can still run. The way our current system is set up we have on average eight people running for one position, so when two positions are open we could have a field of sixteen candidates, four or five which run every single time and only receive a small percentage of the votes.

With so many candidates running it often discourages good people from running and those that do have the votes scattered throughout all the candidates and have been known to take away from the good candidates.

With the lack of good candidates we have had two Commissioners recalled and our current board that has had over reaching power which has cost the County in a referendum vote to overturn some over reaching ordinances, because they would not listen to the people. Many residents in the County attempted to activate another Recall, which ended up costing the County even more money.

As you can see nonpartisan Commissioners causes discontent and Commissioners are not held accountable. I urge you to think twice and Vote NO for non-partisan Commissioners offices as you can see it is a bad idea. Please Vote NO on Baker County Measure 1-74 for the sake of your county.

Keith Trahern
Grants Pass



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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.

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