

# Opinion

## — LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

### Hoopes is my guy

To the Editor:  
The Sheriff's race has only one good candidate in my opinion, and that is John Hoopes. As I am fairly new to the area, I made a point to speak with both candidates in the race, to inform myself to the best of my ability.

John Hoopes is a Marine Veteran, a Constitutional supporter, as well as a Baker County Deputy with 14 years of experience.

Both candidates may have valuable and varied experience, but I support John. He is level-headed and very approachable.

Mr. Hoopes has not been "handed" anything in regards to his career.

John is not vindictive and will look at all sides of an issue. He is not a bully and has not used bully tactics to get votes or try to garner support. In fact he has gone door to door meeting the people of Baker City. John listens. Baker County needs his steady hand.

Join me in voting for John Hoopes, please!

**Sherri Chapple**  
*Baker City*

### Still supporting Ash

To the Editor:  
I have been watching the Sheriff's race very closely and I am amazed at one candidate who has mentioned the "previous administration" several times as being the reason he decided to run for Sheriff. I find that interesting for several reasons, one being

I have been retired for 18 months and I am surprised and perplexed that he would even bring that up or why he feels that criticizing someone else would make him look better. He also seems to be critical of the lack of training that he received over the years. If he had attended training in management I would still not be able to support him for sheriff. Besides training someone has to show the ability to be a leader and a manager, as well as the attributes to communicate with the people that he supervises and interact with citizens on a daily basis.

I also have read several letters in the paper that say Ash was my "protege" and others that say they want to stop the "cronism" at the Sheriff's Office.

To this I would just like to say that I am supporting Travis Ash, he has shown and continues to demonstrate the leadership and management abilities as well as other qualities that make him an excellent Sheriff and representative of our County. Why would I support someone who is not qualified and has never shown these attributes?

In closing I would like to express how much that I enjoyed my 10 years as the Sheriff of Baker County. It was one of the most rewarding experiences in my Law Enforcement career. When I was first elected in

2004 I stated several times that when I left one job for another I always wanted to leave it better than I found it. I know I accomplished that when Travis Ash was appointed Sheriff to fulfill the remainder of my term.

Travis Ash is the most qualified and experienced candidate who is looking to the future and not dwelling on the past. Join me in voting for him to continue to be your Baker County Sheriff.

**Mitch Southwick**  
*Baker City*

### 1-74 is supported by liberals to get them elected

To the Editor:  
Ballots are out, and I am asking everyone to vote no on Baker County Measure 1-74.

Baker County voters defeated this last year, yet here it is again. Have you wondered why some people are so interested in changing how we elect our Commissioners?

Electing our County Commissioners has worked fine for a lot of years. All of a sudden it's a problem. Well, I guess it's become a problem when Democrats or liberals cannot get elected. Maybe they need better candidates or a stronger county committee. To change a system that works well just seems silly.

Our Commissioners make County Laws, draft, and pass ordinances. Much like our federal and state representatives, which are partisan positions. Other nonpartisan offices in county government, carry out the laws, which is a huge difference in job descriptions.

Other counties throughout Oregon who have gone nonpartisan are not happy with it, there have been several letters to the editor from residents of those counties in the Baker papers. This grand experiment has not worked so well. As has been stated from other counties, there are so many candidates now running for their county commissioner it dilutes the vote and the one elected is usually only elected by a small percentage of the votes.

Many times the truly good candidate gets lost in the crowd.

Baker County has enough serious issues to deal with, like keeping our roads open on public lands. Join me in voting no on measure 1-74. Baker County is fine the way it is now.

**Patty Trost**  
*Unity*

### I support Hoopes

To the Editor:  
I am supporting John Hoopes for Sheriff. Having lived in rural Baker County, I've asked for the help of the Sheriff's Department on more than one occasion.

John was always the one that came out to help resolve those situations. He was always very polite and went out of his way to solve problems with communication so that they didn't get out of hand. I was very impressed with the professional way he handled things.

I have never seen John be arrogant or be a bully to anyone, or treat you like you were a five year old, but he has no problem keeping control of the situation.

One of the things I admire and respect about John is that he has served his country honorably in the U.S. Marines. Having been in the Marines myself, I know the discipline and character that it takes to serve your country in that way.

I urge people to vote for John Hoopes. With his personality, military experience, and 16 years of experience as a Baker County Sheriff Deputy, I believe he is the best qualified to be our next Sheriff.

**Jared Foster**  
*Baker City*

### Good ole boys fostered by nonpartisan agenda

To the Editor:  
Here it is back again, "take the politics out of local government." Our nation cannot even take the politics out of the Supreme Court. Look at the concern over the next appointments and the bias they will carry to the highest court in the land.

More now than ever, I want to know a candidate's affiliations and the platform they support, especially at our local level. Local is where our voice is reflected.

Historically the "non-partisan" agenda is pushed by the weaker of our two party system in Baker County, the party lines have become very foggy. Not everyone is what they claim.

We wish to retain the partisan vote and maybe maintain some of this transparency everyone likes to throw into the conversation.

Nonpartisan will foster more good ole boys appointments and the voter voice weakening. We have enough of this presently without opening the door wider.

**Wanda Ballard**  
*Baker City*

### 1-74 proponents don't understand County government

To the Editor:  
The yes on Baker County Measure 1-74 people just don't understand the county system of government. One recent letter, once again used the argument that they should be nonpartisan because other elected offices are already nonpartisan. Reminds me of the argument I used

as a kid, "all the other kids are doing it." And Mom would point out just because others are doing it, doesn't make it right.

Some people just don't understand our county commissioners are the legislative body of the county. They can make rules/ordinances that become the law in Baker County. The other nonpartisan positions, such as the Sheriff, DA, Clerk & Treasurer just carry out the laws. Consider it separation of powers. Look into the real duties of the Commissioners and you will see the difference.

Keep transparency in Baker County government, know for whom you are voting. Keep the replacement powers should there be a resignation with the most amount of people allowed by law.

It seems the only reason people want this to pass is because they want to hide their true identity from the voters.

If you want to see why non-partisan is wanted, take a look at how Bruce Nichols is listed in the voters' pamphlet.

He is a Republican, Democrat. What is that? A Democrat trying to hide? Vote no on measure 1-74.

**Jim Longwell**  
*Baker City*

### Abortion leading cause of death in Oregon

To the Editor:  
The Oregon Vital Statistics Annual Report for 2014 gave abortion as the leading cause of death among the following:

- Accidents: 1,796
- Stroke: 1,821
- Lung Disease: 1,958
- Heart Disease: 6,523
- Cancer: 7,862
- Abortions: 8,231

Did you know that abortion is legal through all nine months in Oregon? It is unbelievable that a baby can be aborted just before it has lived full-term in the womb, and that is where the slippery slope has taken our culture since the Roe v Wade decision in 1973. People may talk about a "woman's right"—but what about the baby's right to live?

As a culture we must respect the sanctity of human life and quit killing the most vulnerable in our society. It is important

that we consider our next generation when we vote.

**John and Susie Busch**  
*Baker City*

### Ash should separate self from anti-patriot movement

To the Editor:  
The anti-patriot militia gathering at the local library seemed to be geared mostly toward the democratic party agenda. The DNC platform 2012 was pro-abortion and homosexual marriage and this traveling ROP group and their local supporters with the All African People's Revolutionary Party cheering for them on Facebook and their security guards wearing New Black Panther logo T-shirts seems more like a traveling hate group to me than neighbors or some benefit to mankind.

If I was Travis Ash, I would certainly distance myself from these people and their endorsement. I might even join a militia, too—that's right; it was the patriot militias that freed this county from tyranny in the first place. They wrote the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, and countless men and women like them have given their very lives for these things. My own family was part of a militia in 1775, was part of the Hanover Associates and at least one relation took the oath of allegiance at Valley Forge under George Washington. After the Revolutionary War, we settled out on the wild frontier in eastern Tennessee at a place called Big Limestone Creek. Davy Crockett was born on this same creek. My family and close relations have served this country in just about every conflict since we helped establish it, including me, a combat medic, Vietnam.

Cheers to Bill Harvey and Sheriff Glenn Palmer.

**Chris Keefauver**  
*Baker City*

### Progressives defend the Rural Organizing Project security

To the Editor:  
Many folks attended the Rural Organizing Project (ROP) meeting at the Library on Oct. 8th, that Jake Brown referred to in his letter. It's important that the actual facts be present-

ed so our neighbors know what really happened.

First is the fact that many at the meeting were glad Jake and others sharing his beliefs came to the meeting. The problem is that they chose to leave right as the open discussion began. Not shortly before the end of the meeting.

The first point of discussion was the disappointment of most that these folks chose to leave instead of participating as everyone had hoped they would.

Second is the fact that it was Jake who called the police. The police log is public record. The police responded within minutes, spent 10 minutes investigating. It's disappointing, and hurts our community, that non-existent problems have to be trumped up.

Third, the "intimidating" security people were not intimidating. A few folks from the sponsoring groups met with them in advance to understand how they handle security. They are purposely visible to dispel disruption. This is because of the threats, vandalism and intimidation that the ROP people have faced in several places around our state.

These security people are trained in, and have the goal of conflict de-escalation. They simply do not intimidate or bully people. They are there primarily to make sure no harm comes to the ROP organizers and if the potential for physical harm were to arise, they would surround and safely escort the organizers out of the event.

The final fact is who the Panhandle Community Alliance is. PCA is made up of Republicans, Democrats and Independents. Progressive, yes. Living in a rosy image of the past does not move our communities and people forward in changing times. We need to progress. We can learn from the past, yes, but we must look forward. We have too much in common to continue to create unnecessary divisiveness.

**Rick Meis, Frances Vaughn, Wix Covey, Margaret Durner, Rob Crawford, Carla Inman, Spring Bartlett, and Betsy Crawford**  
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