

# Opinion

— EDITORIAL —

## A little compassion goes a long way

With the amount of snow that has fallen in our area, tensions are high. From the viewpoint of the City Public Works employee, there's a lot of white stuff to move, not enough time to do it in, and nowhere to put it.

From the viewpoint of a handicapped person, the elderly, or single moms who have their hands full, seeing their car unexpectedly buried where it sits, or a two-foot deep ice berm packed across their just-shoveled driveway can be the last straw.

Citizens are repeatedly told not to shovel their driveway snow out into City streets. Likewise, we would hope that City snow-removal efforts would not result in snow from City streets being pushed up onto private property.

Common courtesy and common sense should run both ways.

Perhaps what prompted this editorial more than anything was a Facebook post on a public page

jokingly showing photos of cars buried up to their roofs by City snowplows as a reminder to move their vehicles off the streets.

The post garnered laughter from younger Facebook junkies, but horror from many others who commented privately in droves—but not on that page.

You see, compassion seemed to be lacking. What if, instead of posting those photos on Facebook, the post-er had instead opted to stop, get out a shovel instead of a camera, and actually help?

While the City puts out snow route maps, press releases and the like, there is no way to let everyone know when and where the plowing might occur.

Imagine having been elderly and ill, and waking to find your only mode of transportation buried beneath three feet of snow and ice. This was the circumstance in more than one case.

A public joke on Facebook just adds insult to injury. We rank it right up there with the truckload of able-bodied young men in their 20s we watched yesterday drive by laughing while a woman tried to balance her crying toddler in one arm while shoveling off her sidewalk with the other.

Citizens who can put themselves in the shoes of neighbors and strangers and lend a helping hand are a godsend. We'd like to see more of that.

—The Baker County Press Editorial Board

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

### More disagreement with marijuana letter

To the Editor:

In a second response to the letter submitted Friday, December 16, 2016 concerning marijuana, I think some additional facts need to be pointed out that may differ from his opinions. The author, Mr. Boyd stated:

"2. Marijuana is far more addictive than alcohol or cocaine."

According to this report the National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates 9% of people who use marijuana will become addicted to it. For comparison's sake, cocaine hooks about 20% of those who use it. (<http://www.cnn.com/2014/01/20/health/marijuana-versus-alcohol/>)

According to this report in The Atlantic: "Of all the people who smoke pot about 9 percent will become dependent. But of all the people who drink, about 16 percent will become alcoholics." (<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/09/is-marijuana-more-addictive-than-alcohol/380183/>)

"3. Its use reduces critical learning skills, memory, and the ability to focus."

Driving: "A large case-control study conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) found no significant increased crash risk attributable to cannabis after controlling for drivers' age, gender, race, and presence of alcohol. (<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/research-reports/marijuana/does-marijuana-use-affect-driving>)

However, use of marijuana during teen years, can have a significant impact on brain development, including decreased brain activity, fewer neural fibers in certain areas and a smaller than average hippocampus, which controls learning and memory functions.

According to a Northwestern Medicine study of teen marijuana users, memory-related structures in the brain appeared to shrink, a possible sign of a decrease in neurons.

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health reported in the Washington Post (12/16/2016) that teen marijuana use has dropped sharply in Colorado since legalization.

(<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/12/21/one-of-the-greatest-fears-about-legalizing-marijuana-has-so-far-failed-to-happen/>)

Those who started using marijuana after 21 generally do not experience the same type of brain abnormalities as those who started using the drug earlier.

Therefore, we can say that, at this time, it is unsafe for teenagers to use marijuana and there are laws in place that prohibit that use (the same as for alcohol and tobacco).

We need to be careful about the information that we pass on to others. If it is not factual it is just "opinion" and should be treated as such. There is a difference. People need to hear the truth about marijuana, not opinions.

Steve DeFord  
Sumpter

## Ferrioli speaks about Richardson inauguration

Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli, of John Day, congratulated Oregon Secretary of State Dennis Richardson on taking his oath of office:

"The Senate Republi-

cans welcome Secretary of State Dennis Richardson and congratulate him on taking his oath of office.

"He will be a great leader in our state and we look forward to working

with Secretary Richardson to accomplish our common goal of problem solving for urban and rural Oregonians."

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— GUEST OPINION —

## Looking at 2017 for 2A in Oregon

By Kevin Starrett  
Special to The Baker County Press



Submitted Photo

Kevin Starrett is the President and founder of Oregon Firearms Federation.

The 2017 legislative session will not likely be an exercise in civility. While the Oregon Legislature has remained comfortably in the hands of the left, most of the rest of the country has moved in a decidedly different direction. So, while most of American gun owners are probably safe from more attacks on their rights, Oregonians have been promised a frontal assault on the Second Amendment.

Governor Brown has made no secret of her intention to pass as many new firearms restrictions as possible. Before the session even started she drafted a bill that would allow for indefinite delays on firearms purchases should the State Police simply not complete a background check. While to some people this could be unnecessary aggravation, to a single woman facing a stalker it could mean the difference between life and death.

When the Democrats introduced this bill in the last session they admitted that over 90% of background check delays were unjustified. Currently when someone who the State Police identify as a felon attempts a firearm's purchase they are virtually never arrested, but under Brown's proposed legislation countless qualified buyers could be denied a firearm literally for years.

One wonders what other right Brown and the Democrats would deny the citizens of Oregon until the State Police approved them.

While we have not yet seen all proposed legislation, anti-gun Democrats have, in the past, attempted to ban most modern firearms and standard capacity magazines, severely limit your right to self defense, require liability insurance for every firearm you own, allow localities to create a patchwork of gun control measures and even force a person to lose his gun rights based on secret, anonymous accusations that are not even investigated. Under their proposal you would not even be allowed to know who made the accusation against you!

There is no reason to doubt they will attempt these (and more) attacks on rights again.

While we have been able to defeat most of these proposals in the past, in 2015 the Democrats, (lavishly funded by New York billionaire Mike

Bloomberg) were able to outlaw the private transfer of firearms. Under SB 941, you are a criminal if you safeguard a firearm for a friend or neighbor. Want to leave a gun in your friend's safe while you're out of town? That's a crime. Persons protected by Oregon's "Address Confidentiality Program," because of threats to their life, are now prohibited from buying guns even though they have never done anything wrong. Ironically, when an activist, anti-gun priest from Lake Oswego, bragged about violating that law, the anti-gun Chief of Police of the same town did nothing and the Oregon State Police refused to investigate.

Given the blind rage the left is experiencing over the outcome of the Presidential election there is plenty of reason to fear the plans of the ruling party in Oregon. However, as bad as things look for Oregon supporters of the 2nd Amendment, there is still much that can be done. The failure of Measure 97 has left the Democrats scrambling to find a way to fund their failed programs and policies. That means one thing; more taxes.

As powerful as the Democrats are in Salem, they lack the necessary super-majority to ram through more tax measures without some Republican buy-in. This means that if the Republicans in both houses stand firm, they have the potential to block all kinds of bad legislation by refusing to go along with the Democrats certain efforts to squeeze more money out of Oregon taxpayers. The question is, will they?

Will any Republican member fold in return for a promise of some special favor from Speaker Kotek and President Courtney? It's happened before.

Gun owners and supporters of the 2nd Amendment need to communicate with their legislators (if they are lucky enough to live in districts represented by Republicans) and remind them that they still hold some cards, and they'd better play them right.

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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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