

Opinion / Politics / Local

— EDITORIAL —

Sexes, genders and the great unknown

Oregon just became the first state in the U.S. to offer up a third sex option box that citizens can check on their driver's license applications. (And no, we don't mean "Never," "Often," or "Heck yeah.")

Now applicants can choose between "Male," "Female" and "Non-specific."

To say this decision was controversial is an understatement, and immediately those in favor of it stepped up to argue that there are a multitude of sexes possible, not just male and female, and so of course the third option makes sense.

Well, this was never our understanding from Biology class. So we hit the internet for some research, and sure enough, human beings are either genetically male or female roughly 99% of the time. This means that males are born with the XY genotype and display male characteristics as a result. Females are XX with female characteristics.

So what about that other 1%? Well, they're not so much considered technically belonging to other sexes, but rather having chromosomal abnormalities surrounding either the male or female sex. An extra X or Y chromosome attached to a male or female can produce issues like Turner's Syndrome, Klinefelter's Syndrome, and so on. Apparently there is an new argument out there that yes indeed,

this situation does mean there is a whole spectrum of different sexes. That seems like a stretch.

But what about babies born with both female and male genitalia? We used to call that hermaphroditism. According to about a hundred sites dedicated to political correctness, we could be lynched for using that word. "Intersex" is now the only way to describe this condition without offending a snowflake somewhere.

Doctors point out that those born with most of the chromosomal abnormalities mentioned above aren't boys who identify as girls or vice versa. These are serious medical conditions that come with features like severe learning disabilities, shortened necks, muscular impairment, etc. Do we really want to include a medical issue on a driver's license to define a person? And if one is "transgender" and/or "identifies as" the opposite sex, an animal or a piece of farm equipment, how then, scientifically, does it make sense to use a belief in one's head as a physical identifier either?

The World Health Organization explains: Gender and sex are no longer the same thing, but gender can still define a person. Sex is biology only. Gender is how a person "feels." Redefine the word, and you can take it outside the realm of science—and reality.

Think you've got the left's thought process figured out now? You don't if you don't know what words like boi, cisgender, butch, bottom surgery, deep stealth, F2M, FFS, gender dysphoria/euphoria, GG, gurl, omnisexual, non-op and so on mean.

We're waiting for the day we're listening to the police scanner or get a press release stating, "Law enforcement is seeking the public's help in locating a missing 5'9" non-specific dragon who outwardly appears to be a human female with blond hair and blue eyes ..." Sigh.

—The Baker County Press Editorial Board

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

Thank you for the pies!

To the Editor:

I would like to thank everyone who has volunteered to make pies for the Bike races this Saturday, June 24 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

We are still in need of more pies if there are bakers who want to help.

We could also use ice chests (borrowed of course) to keep the drinks cold.

Please drop items off at Random Resales this Friday or at the Orpheum Theatre on Main Street on Saturday morning around 10 a.m..

We're still looking for volunteers to help sale and serve the pies Sat. You don't have to be there all day. Shifts are 11 a.m.- 1:30 p.m., 1:30-3:30 p.m. and 3:30 - 6 p.m.

If you can help please give me a call at 541-554-5549.

This is a fundraiser for restoring the Baker Orpheum Theatre. We need all the help we can get!

Leanne Hinkle
President,
Eastern Oregon Regional Theater
Baker City

Greg Walden to lead panel combatting opioid epidemic

U.S. Rep. Greg Walden (R-Hood River), Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, today announced that he will lead a panel discussion Wednesday morning on efforts to combat opioid addiction in Oregon and nationwide.

The panel discussion, "Addiction in America," is hosted by The Washington Post and will feature policy makers, researchers, and health care experts to discuss solutions for combatting addiction in America. Walden's panel, "Addiction

Crisis: A Nation Responds," will focus on how the U.S. government and Congress are responding to the opioid epidemic.

"This is a vital conversation to have across the country and especially in Oregon, where more people die from drug overdoses every year than car accidents," said Walden. "Combatting the opioid epidemic is going to require a team effort from our elected officials, health care experts, and those on the front lines of this fight in our local communities. I

look forward to participating in this event and taking our discussion back to Oregon as I continue to work towards putting an end to this crisis in our state."

As Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, Walden is at the forefront of Congress' response to the national opioid epidemic. Details on the event are included below, and the event was streamed live to Facebook and online at www.wapo.st/postlive.

ODOT announces sign upgrades on U.S. 395, 26

An Oregon Department of Transportation project will replace highway signs along sections of U.S. 395 and U.S. 26 in Umatilla and Grant counties starting later this year.

The project will go to bid in August with some work possibly occurring in the fall.

All work will be completed by summer 2018.

The project will include sign upgrades/replacement along U.S. 395 between the junction of OR244 (near Ukiah) and Mt. Vernon, and along U.S. 26 between Mt. Vernon and the west city limits of John Day.

Travelers can expect lane and shoulder closures during the construction activities, plus flaggers

and delays of up to twenty minutes at times.

Traffic fines are double the amount in all highway work zones.

Drive with extra caution when you see those orange road construction signs.

For updated information on highway work and current travel information throughout Oregon, visit www.tripcheck.com.

City Council

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

She also noted that as in previous years, care would be taken to locate vehicle owners that were parked in restricted areas rather than immediately issuing violations as the event was intended to be enjoyed by all. Joseph moved to approve the resolution with a second by Councilor McQuisten. A unanimous vote was cast.

Third reading of Ordinance #3354 Public Safety Fee

Before City Manager Warner read the Ordinance for the third and final time, Downing opened the floor to public comment reminding everyone that the meeting was being broadcast and to keep language and comments appropriate for all ages that may be watching.

Citizens then began to come forward one by one. In all, nine spoke, none in favor of the fee.

Carl Myers voiced concern over the golf course and the fact that the City is still funding \$20,000 per year plus additional for maintenance.

Warner confirmed an additional \$10,000 had been budgeted for a total of \$30,000 for the year.

Myers cited other instances that he felt past City Councils had approved funding for at the expense of citizens such as City support of a "convention center" that never materialized and the Campbell Street project many years ago.

Myers said, "The City hired an engineering firm out of Portland to tell them what to do. Paid \$90,000 to tell them the best thing to do with that street and they didn't follow one recommendation. \$90,000 out the window."

Myers pointed out several other projects he felt the City had been wasting money on he also brought up the sidewalk fee that would be discontinued and replaced with the Public Safety Fee.

He said, "I argued against it in the first place, if people need to fix their sidewalks they set it up on a payment plan or you put a lien on their property."

Myers felt that the City employs more police than the population requires and

that the Public Safety Fee that is proposed to retain current staffing levels is unnecessary.

Valerie Oman spoke to Council stating she is on a fixed income and although \$3 didn't seem like much, to her it made a huge difference. She also thought that the fee would never truly go away, be renamed for something else and go up over time. She, as most others felt, something like this needed to be voted on by the people.

Rick Leggett, who also is on a fixed income told Council, "At the end of the month \$3 could mean whether or not I eat that night. I'm sure there are a lot of other seniors and disabled people that will be in the ship."

Sam Bass told Council that he was at the meeting to find out what this was all about. He told Council this was "going to be a hardship on a lot of people."

Kenneth Martin spoke, as he had in the last meeting still expressing anger and frustration over the proposed fee calling the City Council a bunch of "communists, mafia and dictators." He accused Council of "not listening to the poor people."

Joseph Martin stepped forward stating, "If this ordinance passes I intend to place Baker City Council under citizen's arrest for conspiracy to commit extortion, conspiracy to commit racketeering, conspiracy to overthrow the Constitution of the United States of America."

Anthony Constantine told Council he also disagreed with the safety fee.

He cited an article that ran in *The Baker City Herald* in 2015 regarding crime within the City, which stated FBI statistics reported 56 aggravated assaults in Baker City.

Constantine said the article quoted Police Chief Wyn Lohner as saying, "Those numbers are completely inaccurate."

According to Constantine in the article Lohner reported that number to be 11 aggravated assaults.

Constantine went on to say, "That's less than one assault per officer for an entire year. Baker City was also called 'Safest City in Oregon' and that was with the amount of officers standing on the force at

that time. I don't believe that calls for an increase in uniformed Police Officers."

Tom Muller again addressed Council as he has previously at Budget and Council meetings in opposition of the Public Safety Fee. He continued to state the passing of the fee was "taxation without representation."

Kevin Luckini voiced concern that once passed the fee would never go away. He added that to fund police and fire services the City was "holding our water hostage."

He felt the matter should go to the people for a vote but said, "You seven people think you know better than us. I think you're all good people but I think the way you're going about this is wrong. Give us a chance, be fair and let us vote on this."

Tommy Constantine was the last to address council. He questioned the numbers that City Finance Director Jeanie Dexter had estimated as revenue generated by the fee, fearing an inflated number could result in an even bigger shortfall in the future.

He also questioned if the City anticipated a budget shortfall for the next three years, while the fee was being collected. According to Dexter the answer was yes due to mandated increases to PERS, which the City elected to participate in during the 1950's and cannot withdraw from. Constantine, who has prior City budget experience, scolded Councilors and staff present saying that "a budget should never be based on anticipated revenue," as it had the previous year leading to this debacle.

After hearing all public comment Councilors discussed the fee among themselves. Councilor Joseph said, "It is not my intention to keep this fee."

Citing the three-year sunset clause, Joseph indicated he hoped the City would be in a financial position next year to eliminate the fee completely.

Nilsson said, "I have had concerns and questioned the fee all along, but time is of the essence."

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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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Black Lyon Publishing, LLC

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