

Opinion

— SPECIAL COLUMN —

So I was thinking ...

About Thanksgiving

By Jimmy Ingram
Special to The Baker County Press

The fourth Thursday in November is a special time for most Americans. A time to catch up with family and friends and reflect on the things we have to be thankful for.

Each year, it marks the beginning of the holiday season, and the end of civilized retail shopping. Being able to gather around a table filled with food with our loved ones is a luxury we need to appreciate. But that doesn't mean that sometimes the predictability of our family doesn't drive us nuts.

The phone addict. You've chosen to spend quality time with your loved ones doing what you do most of the time: staring at your phone. We love you and would like to interact but apparently that can only be done via text message, Facebook messenger, Snapchat, or one of the many social media outlets you refuse to give up for two hours.

We haven't seen you in a year so asking, "Does anyone have a cell phone charger?" seems like an odd initial greeting. It's nice to see you too. Just please don't send a group text asking to "pass the turkey" or someone at the dinner table may just choose to submerge your phone in gravy.

Grandpa's sweater. If that sweater looks familiar here's why: its same one grandpa wore last year, the year before, and the year before that. It has seen every presidential administration since Gerald Ford. It was in style in 1975, out of style in 1985, and in 2017 could win an award at an ugly sweater party.

It's also a dry-clean-only garment, which means the stain from the 1993 "gravy incident" remains. Grandpa likes to brag that the sweater was purchased from Bohn's years ago for \$16 (which he reminds you would be like \$80 today).

I would say he got his money's worth.

Your aunt's perfume. The smells of Thanksgiving are unmistakable: turkey, stuffing, fresh baked bread, pies in the oven—and perfume. Heavy, heavy perfume. The kind of heaviness that leaves a purple haze in the air and makes your eyes water. I'm sure in small doses it smells lovely. But your great aunt doesn't apply her perfume in small doses.

In fact, the cloud that fills the room makes everyone wonder if it was somehow applied from a fire hose. And though hugs from your aunt are always nice, the pungent flowery residue will be enough to permeate your clothes, every linen in your house and even make its way to your dog after you pet it.

Your cousin's politics. Your cousin never seems to resist turning things political at the dinner table.

Even a benign subject like din-



Submitted Photo

Jimmy Ingram is a local farmer and father of two who enjoys people watching within our wonderful community and beyond.

ner rolls somehow reminds him of what's wrong with this country.

The pleasant sounds of chattering silverware and laughter will soon be interrupted by a speech beginning with the phrase, "You know what the problem is?" and end with him mumbling, "But what do I know?" sarcastically under his breath.

Your cousin makes some good points.

He also makes some ridiculous statements. Unfortunately for you the only other subject your cousin likes to discuss is football and his team stinks this year so that subject best not be broached either.

Your only real hope to calm him down is that he becomes so nauseous from your aunt's perfume that he's rendered speechless.

The Black Friday prepper. At some stage many years ago you underwent a transformation from relaxed family member to some sort of bargain shopping superhero gone mad.

Your inquiry into things like work or school in the past have morphed into statements like, "Did you know Wal-Mart has 70" flatscreen TVs for \$350 at midnight!?" with a crazy look in your eye.

While other members of the family are conversing, you are like a war general stationed at a nearby countertop with blueprints planning out the logistics of tomorrows shopping mission.

The only thing more odd than your obsession with retail bargains is the fact that you've managed to incorporate the word "training" when describing your shopping preparedness.

Can I just give you my Christmas shopping list? Something tells me you could have it filled in less than seven minutes.

Mom's effort. No one can fault women on thanksgiving. They often work tirelessly so the men can watch bad football games and ask "when are we going to eat." Going over the top to make the meal special for everyone is what mothers are good at. But to all the hard working women there, please remember: it doesn't have to be perfect. The gravy had a lump? So what. The pie doesn't look as good as last year? Big deal. Short one napkin at the table? So. We all appreciate the effort that moms put into holiday meals. Now please relax, have a glass of wine, and demand that the men do the dishes. It's only fair.

I hope each and every one of you out there have a wonderful Thanksgiving and are surrounded by the people you love.

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— GUEST OPINION —

This is why we stand

By Wyn Lohner
Special to The Baker County Press

It has been almost three years now since five St. Louis Rams football players entered their stadium in uniform, with their hands up, in a show of protest for the police officer involved shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri.

Since that time we have watched football players from around the country disrespect the American Flag, our veterans and our police officers.

The unwillingness of the NFL to step in and correct this behavior that is occurring while these players are "at work" is, in my opinion, unconscionable.

The only professional football game I have watched since the hands up incident was last year's Super Bowl—and that was only for the opportunity to hopefully see Peyton Manning go out on top.

For someone who grew up watching football and looking forward to seeing the start of the season each fall, it has been difficult to avoid watching games.

However, I will continue to boycott football until the league decides to hold their players accountable.

The degeneration of major sports and the lack of role modeling, which used to be expected, have all but pushed me away from all professional sports.

But then this year during the World Series my faith was partially restored. I now believe that at least some of these sports, and the organizations operating within them, actually care about what they stand for and how they are perceived in our country.



Kerry McQuisten / The Baker County Press

Wyn Lohner serves as Police Chief for Baker City; however, this opinion piece is submitted in his individual, not professional, capacity.

I watched as families filled the stadiums in Houston and Los Angeles to watch their teams play.

I also watched as those organizations made a bold statement, bringing in police officers on several nights to sing the National Anthem. I didn't see a single player kneel as they all stood in unison with their fans.

Then this past week I got caught up watching recordings of the World Finals of the Professional Bull Riders' (PBR) Association.

Similar to Major League Baseball, the PBR had everyone standing for the National Anthem and during their tributes to the military, law enforcement and other first responders.

Prior to one of the event rounds, the PBR showed a video that left some riders and many fans with tears in their eyes.

The video, which is a tribute to first responders and military personnel who have lost their lives in the line of duty, can found at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQs8khhWsro>

The final words in the video, which I hope will echo through the sporting world, simply state: "They are why we stand."

— LETTERS TO THE EDITOR —

Public comments requested

To the Editor:

The Blue Mountain Translator District is reviewing proposed board policies related to the collection of service charges for properties outside the District. Currently, the District directly executes state law related to the collection of these policies, but the law, ORS 354.690, does not specify details for implementation. ORS 354.690 simply requires that the District "prepare a verified report" noting that a physical inspection of a property led to reasonable grounds to believe that a property can receive television signals before sending a service charge letter to a

property owner by mail to verify whether signals are used. The District has no obligation under ORS 354.690 to provide the date of the inspection, explain the reasonable grounds for sending a service charge letter, or conduct these inspections on a regular basis. Proposed policies may be viewed at <http://bmt.d.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Proposed-Board-Policies-Regarding-Service-Charge-Fees-for-Property-Entirely-Surrounded-by-the-District-.pdf>. Please contact the District at 541-963-0196 or bmt.d.org@gmail.com to provide comment.

Alex McHaddad, Secretary/Treasurer
Blue Mountain Translator District

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