

# Opinion

BAKER CITY  
**Herald**  
Serving Baker County since 1870

Write a letter  
news@bakercityherald.com

## EDITORIAL

# Volatile episode handled properly

The incident at the Baker City Airport Tuesday had some of the elements common to episodes that end in tragedy.

This one, fortunately, ended only with an arrest. No one was hurt.

Police say Scott William Chase, a 46-year-old man whose background includes criminal charges as well as a diagnosis of mental issues, drove a converted school bus onto a runway at the Baker City Airport.

Chase refused to exit the bus when confronted by officers from the Baker City Police and Baker County Sheriff's Office. Police had reason to believe Chase had guns in the bus — and officers did find firearms in the vehicle after Chase was arrested.

The owner of Baker Aircraft, Troy Woydziak, radioed a flight instructor who was in the air with a student pilot. They landed safely, and Woydziak issued a notice to other pilots that the airport, which has relatively little traffic on cloudy winter days, would be temporarily closed.

Police had the area secured, and there was no reason to rush and, potentially, provoke a violent response from Chase.

Authorities called in the Northeast Oregon SWAT team about 2:30 p.m. Around 4:50 p.m. Chase walked out of the bus, and SWAT members arrested him without incident.

There is of course no way to predict how a potentially volatile situation will be resolved.

But ultimately the outcome is what matters, and the many agencies involved deserve credit for managing the incident in a responsible and, in the end successful, way.

—Jayson Jacoby, Baker City Herald editor



## Your views

### A different perspective on co-sleeping

About a year ago I drove to the hospital for my 3-month, 20-minute, \$150 check up to make sure the old ticker was still working. As I was leaving I noticed a large billboard that said something like “co-sleeping is dangerous.” That could mean more than one thing but this was in reference to babies that die while sleeping with their mothers. I am sure that most mothers are hopefully aware of this, but some people forget that when a mother gets pregnant, she sleeps with her baby for the next 9 months. Then

mother gets morning sickness for 3 months or so. Then it's off to the doctor for regular exams. Next is the diet, varicose veins, cooking, housework and all the fun things in life. Then labor pains while dad is watching football; anything to ruin a good game. Then comes the baby and the fun really starts. Mother has to feed the baby day and night. She has to get up at night and fix bottles, cuddle the baby in bed to stop the crying because dad probably has to work in the morning. Mother is worn to a frazzle but this only goes on for about 18 years... are men ever brought up in this nightmare?

Yes, sometimes. Occasionally a baby dies in a co-sleeping accident and no one will ever convince me that this is not an accident, especially when the government will pay for an abortion with no strings attached. I looked up some statistics. Co-sleeping causes 133 accidental deaths in the U.S.A. every year. 3,500 babies are lost to SIDS in the U.S.A. every year. A Johns Hopkins study shows that 250,000 people die each year from medical mistakes in the U.S.A. Very interesting. Check it out.

Grover Mann  
Baker City

## GUEST EDITORIALS

### Editorial from The (Bend) Bulletin:

U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, R-Hood River, broke ranks with his party on Jan. 3. He voted for the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2019.

It was an attempt by Democrats to open most government agencies. Funding for Homeland Security and President Donald Trump's proposal for a border wall were to be left with separate legislation. He was one of seven House Republicans to do so.

While Walden has supported better border security for more than a decade, he also correctly recognizes that the shutdown is creating problems in his home district:

In Klamath County, a meeting to

work on resolving water problems in the Klamath Basin, scheduled for next week, was canceled when the Department of Interior's top water adviser could not attend because of the shutdown.

Too, Eastern Oregon farmers who've taken out loans through the Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency have been unable to get work done on repaying those loans. FSA, which has offices across Oregon, also oversees things such as the Conservation Reserve Program, which helps farmers protect sensitive land by taking it out of production and provides emergency funds in the wake of disasters like the fires in north Central Oregon last

summer.

And, closer to home, any work planning forest management projects on the Deschutes National Forest is on hold until the government reopens.

In a statement, Walden said he couldn't see how the shutdown, which has idled thousands of government workers, has benefited taxpayers, who rely on those workers for a variety of services. He also said he empathizes with government workers who have missed paychecks as a result of the shutdown.

He's right. Walden did not vote against a wall. Rather, he voted for the residents of most of Oregon who rely on the federal government for a variety of services.

### Editorial from Bloomberg News:

Forty years ago, military veterans made up roughly three-quarters of Congress. By 2017, the proportion had dwindled to fewer than one in five. The number of veterans on Capitol Hill will dip slightly again next year, because of retirements — but the elections of 2018 were nonetheless a turning point of sorts. At least 170 veterans received major-party nominations for national office and at least 75 won office. (The figures are estimates: There's no official tally.) Of these, at least 18 are new to Congress — the most in nearly a decade.

Americans should care about this. Until an age of peace and harmony dawns — little sign of this yet — Congress needs the perspective and experience of former service members, particularly those who've served in the post-9/11 era. A shared background in

the armed forces might help check the excessive partisanship that hobbles America's system of government. And with polls showing Congress to be deeply unpopular, an influx of members from the institution Americans continue to respect the most certainly can't hurt.

So it's good news that increasing numbers of the 3.3 million veterans who joined up after the Sept. 11 attacks are opting to take on “second service” in politics. Good, too, that the tally of female veterans is going up. Also worth noting: More than one-third of the veterans elected were Democrats, and they played a key role in flipping the House.

Maybe the new influx can give veterans' issues a bit more of the attention they deserve. For instance, health records at the Department of Veterans Affairs need to be more quickly brought

into the digital age — an era that has in fact arrived, though not everywhere. Improving insurance coverage for reproductive health care and reforming the veterans' disability system would be welcome too. While campaigning, many of the veterans promised to improve the services' methods for dealing with sexual assaults. That's overdue.

Beyond veterans' particular interests, former service members would carry extra weight in pushing for a new legal authorization for America's sprawling conflicts against terrorism. The existing 2001 measure is badly out of date.

Veterans in larger numbers can't fix what ails the country — but one expects that, as a group, they'll bring discipline, duty and a commitment to country before politics. Congress has been lacking in those traits lately.

## Letters to the editor guidelines

• We welcome letters on any issue of public interest. Customer complaints about specific businesses will not be printed.

• The Baker City Herald will not knowingly print false or misleading claims. However, we cannot verify the accuracy of all statements in letters to the editor.

• Letters are limited to 350 words; longer letters will be edited for length. Writers are limited to one letter every 15 days.

• The writer must sign the letter and include an address and phone number (for verification only). Letters that do not include this information cannot be published.

• Letters will be edited for brevity, grammar, taste and legal reasons.

**Mail:** To the Editor, Baker City Herald, P.O. Box 807, Baker City, OR 97814  
**Email:** news@bakercityherald.com  
**Fax:** 541-523-6426

## CONTACT YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS

**President Donald Trump:** The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. 20500; 202-456-1414; fax 202-456-2461; to send comments, go to [www.whitehouse.gov/contact](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact).

**U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley:** D.C. office: 313 Hart Senate Office Building, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-3753; fax 202-228-3997. Portland office: One World Trade Center, 121 S.W. Salmon St. Suite 1250, Portland, OR 97204; 503-326-3386; fax 503-326-2900. Pendleton office: 310 S.E. Second St. Suite 105, Pendleton 97801; 541-278-1129; merkley.senate.gov.

**U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden:** D.C. office: 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510; 202-224-5244; fax 202-228-2717. La Grande office: 105 Fir St., No. 210, La Grande, OR 97850; 541-962-7691; fax, 541-963-0885; wyden.senate.gov.

**U.S. Rep. Greg Walden** (2nd District): D.C. office: 2182 Rayburn Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20515, 202-225-6730; fax 202-225-5774. La Grande office: 1211 Washington Ave., La Grande, OR 97850; 541-624-2400, fax, 541-624-2402; walden.house.gov.

**Oregon Gov. Kate Brown:** 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310; 503-378-3111; [www.governor.oregon.gov](http://www.governor.oregon.gov).

**Oregon State Treasurer Tobias Read:** [oregon.treasurer@ost.state.or.us](http://oregon.treasurer@ost.state.or.us); 350 Winter St. NE, Suite 100, Salem OR 97301-3896; 503-378-4000.

**Oregon Attorney General Ellen F. Rosenblum:** Justice Building, Salem, OR 97301-4096; 503-378-4400.

**Oregon Legislature:** Legislative documents and information are available online at [www.leg.state.or.us](http://www.leg.state.or.us).

**State Sen. Cliff Bentz** (R-Ontario): Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., S-301, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1730. District office: P.O. Box 1027, Ontario, OR 97914; 541-889-8866.

**State Rep. Lynn Findley** (R-Vale): Salem office: 900 Court St. N.E., H-475, Salem, OR 97301; 503-986-1460. Email: Rep. LynnFindley@oregonlegislature.gov

**Baker City Hall:** 1655 First Street, P.O. Box 650, Baker City, OR 97814; 541-523-6541; fax 541-524-2049. City Council meets the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers. Mike Downing, Loran Joseph, Randy Schiewe, Lynette Perry,

Arvid Andersen, Ken Gross and Doni Bruiland.

**Baker City administration:** 541-523-6541. Fred Warner Jr., city manager; Dustin Newman, police chief; John Clark, fire chief; Michelle Owen, public works director.

**Baker County Commission:** Baker County Courthouse 1995 3rd St., Baker City, OR 97814; 541-523-8200. Meets the first and third Wednesdays at 9 a.m.; Bill Harvey (chair), Mark Bennett, Bruce Nichols.

**Baker County departments:** 541-523-8200. Travis Ash, sheriff; Jeff Smith, roadmaster; Matt Shirtcliff, district attorney; Alice Durlinger, county treasurer; Cindy Carpenter, county clerk; Kerry Savage, county assessor.

**Baker School District:** 2090 4th Street, Baker City, OR 97814; 541-524-2260; fax 541-524-2564. Superintendent: Mark Witty. Board meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6 p.m., Baker School District 53 office boardroom; Andrew Bryan, Kevin Cassidy, Chris Hawkins, Katie Lamb and Julie Huntington.

