

## EDITORIAL

# Council makes a statement

The proclamation that Baker City Mayor Loran Joseph read during the City Council's Tuesday meeting, and that he and the six other councilors approved, was a well-crafted and welcome statement supporting the Baker City Police Department and the Baker County Sheriff's Office. And as the proclamation cited "local law enforcement" we ought to, as a community, also include the Oregon State Police and law enforcement for the Forest Service and BLM.

The proclamation is no whitewash, no justification for police brutality.

"We are deeply concerned by the actions taken by some police officers and the corresponding violent protests and attacks on police officers," the proclamation reads.

That's a reasonable statement. It recognizes that police misconduct is not acceptable. And neither are "violent protests" — as distinguished from the peaceful protests that have happened in Baker City and in many other cities.

Most of the credit for the absence of violence and conflict goes to the people who participated, of course. They have proved that the American ideal of free expression — that we can disagree vehemently with one another without resorting to violence — is not a trite platitude.

But local police officials, including Baker City Police Chief Ray Duman and Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash, have contributed by endorsing these events so long as they remain peaceful. Police needn't be involved when people are expressing their constitutional rights.

The City Council's proclamation acknowledges that local police agencies have an obligation to regularly review their policies, particularly on the use of force, to see if they can be improved. And councilors pledge to help with that process through the city manager, which oversees the police department.

— Jayson Jacoby, Baker City Herald editor



## Your views

### Achieving equality requires votes as well as protests

Mr. Jacoby, in his June 5 editorial, states "the swiftness with which the justice system has moved against Chauvin and the other officers ..." isn't correct. It's disappointingly a reflection of systemic, problematic notions many people, not just whites, hold subconsciously: that our justice system moves quickly. Not so if the perpetrators are the police. Not so if the victims aren't white.

In Minneapolis, justice wasn't swift or true, but reactionary. From articles I've read, Minneapolis police regulations required the other officers to intervene and stop the murder. Did that happen? No. Did the city's police leadership immediately act when a citizen's rights were violated by rogue officers and he was murdered? No. It took the people taking to the streets demanding justice.

Thank you to those of you who joined the protest in Baker City.

Mr. Floyd's death is another of the many straws breaking our nation's back. It's an ugly thing when such realities come to light, as they all too often do.

Baker County doesn't escape a racist history; an example being pioneers senselessly murdering Chinese for

no reason other than their race. Our country is steeped in racism. Many tried — particularly Quakers — to point out the wrongness of slavery when our country was newly fledged. President Lincoln, acting on the very words upon which our country was founded, took on a segment of our country that built itself on the extremely un-Christian, inhumane mistreatment of other humans because of the color of their skin. Did it go away? No.

We had neighbors, avowed racists, who fled LA after the Watts riots in the 1960s. Many remember the mayhem of 1968. Ferguson, Missouri, less than 10 years ago. Has anything changed? No.

In an interview, a politician stated he supports the peaceful protests around the country, but remember to express that protest at the polls in November. We couldn't agree more. African Americans live daily what most of the rest of us cannot fathom.

Change won't come overnight or with one election. We all must work hard to keep the efforts to bring equality and justice to all Americans as promised us in the founding documents of our nation.

**Rick Meis**  
**Susan Bolgiano**  
*Halfway*

### Innocent human lives need to be protected

We have all been horrified by the images of George Floyd's death. Yes, his life matters, as all lives matter.

However, every day hundreds of human beings are killed by having sharp objects driven into the base of their skull and the contents sucked out, or having their limbs ripped from their body and being vacuumed from their mother's womb. The majority of these innocent human beings are black. Even in the midst of our justifiable anger and sorrow at the death of George Floyd, Planned Parenthood calls their butchery "essential" and demands that our tax dollars be used to fund the killings of defenseless human lives. We should all be outraged and let our political representatives know we do not want our tax dollars spent to destroy more lives. We also need to support families through crisis pregnancy centers.

Choose life.

**Karel Dyer**  
*Baker City*

### Hearts column well done

Regarding your "Changing hearts, minds" in the June 6 Herald ... Well done. Very well done.

**Dixie Sutton**  
*Baker City*

# Dreams can take us back to our childhood

I had a dream the other night and the setting was the home and neighborhood where I grew up — chronologically, at least — but where I haven't lived in 32 years.

The details of the dream started to dissipate, as they so often do, before I had even gotten out of bed.

I believe a skunk was involved but it's possible I transposed the elements of one dream into another.

(I have been menaced by skunks in many dreams. I have no idea what Freud might make of this and am glad he's not available to tell me.)

The places that figured prominently in this particular dream, however, remained vivid, and for the rest of the morning my mind's eye would occasionally stray back to those once-familiar rooms and sidewalks and street views of the pleasant residential district in Stayton, about 15 miles southeast of Salem.

I lived in the house from 1972, when my parents had it built (my grandpa, Edd Jacoby, was the contractor) until the fall of 1988, when I went off to the University of Oregon. I spent my college summers in Baker, working for the Forest Service, so I never again lived in Stayton. My parents sold the house in 1992.

I wasn't yet 2 when my family moved into the house on North Fern Avenue and so it is the only home I knew as a child.

At various times I claimed as



**JAYSON JACOBY**

my own three of its four bedrooms, although for many years I shared first one room, and then another, with my older brother, Michael.

It was in the bedroom at the southwest corner where, trying to outrun Michael in a race for a coveted toy — a rooster, as I recall — I tripped and dashed my head against an old-fashioned school desk (the kind with a folding wood top that weighs as much as a kitchen table).

This collision opened a bloody gash between my eyes that required several stitches to close and left a white scar that seems to lengthen as the years pass.

(This seems to me unfair, that the physical remnant of a wound should become more prominent even as its creation becomes increasingly fuzzy, but my features have never seemed to care a whit for what I think about them anyway.)

Our garage is where I climbed aboard my first real bicycle, a baby blue single-speed with a banana seat and a chain guard emblazoned with the slightly embarrassing, and curiously boastful, name "Big Deal."

I pedaled that bike in endless circuits of the neighborhood, roll-

ing west on Kathy Street, north to Shaff Road and south to Regis Street, over to Evergreen on the next block to the east or, if I was feeling especially adventurous, all the way to Douglas Avenue — familiar but, at a distance of two blocks, still different enough to seem a trifle disconcerting.

It's hardly surprising, of course, that I remember the details of the place where I came of age. I'm sure everybody does — especially if, as I did, you lived in the same house for the whole span of those formative years.

And yet, having lived somewhere else for considerably more than half of my life, weeks pass during which I don't spare a single thought for that house in Stayton, or for that neighborhood.

Which is why I find it passing strange that my subconscious, at irregular and utterly unpredictable intervals, chooses to take me back there while I'm deep within that mysterious mental cavern that is sleep.

The experience, in common with many dreams of places or people you don't often think of while awake, is not altogether unpleasant.

I have awakened from these nocturnal meanderings in my old neighborhood feeling all but overwhelmed by nostalgia. And I mean that variety of nostalgia in which the past isn't a discrete series of events, some of them embar-

assing or otherwise painful, but rather a period defined by placidity and happiness, when Halloween always yields a bounty of candy but no midnight trip to kneel before the toilet, when each Christmas bestows the gift you most cherished that year, when every summer evening features root beer-flavored popsoles and there are no mosquitoes.

But at the same time I feel a queer sense of displacement.

This isn't that gratifying relief of climbing out of sleep and realizing that whatever awful fate befell you during the dream wasn't real.

What I mean is the sudden and unexpected intersection of the present and the distant past — the peculiar meeting of the man and the boy he once was.

He is familiar, that boy, but he's also a stranger because although his life is of course my life it's also true that too many years have passed, so much time that although I know it was me crashing into that desk and riding that bicycle and ripping the paper off those presents I can't remember what it actually felt like to do any of those things, or a thousand other things.

This bothers me in a way I can't quite explain.

It seems to me that if I can still dream of that place, then my memories of it should be more distinct — more, well, real.

I have many times over the past couple decades detoured to Stayton

while I was visiting my parents, who moved first to Salem and, a few years ago, to Mill City.

I have driven past my old house. A few times I even walked the neighborhood.

This, of course, was a much more immersive experience than even the clearest dream. But it disoriented me in much the same way. I felt at once happy to consider my good fortune to have grown up in a stable, loving and supportive home where nothing too terrible ever happened, and yet saddened, nearly to the brink of tears, at the reality that those days, those experiences, can never be retrieved, are gone as completely as the blood I spilled in that bedroom.

(Although I suppose the forensic gurus, with their vials and test tubes, might yet be able to assemble a DNA profile.)

I hope, as all of us hope, to know, in my last hour, that I have lived a good life, been a good person.

But I can't resist the temptation, sometimes when I'm dreaming, and sometimes when I'm not, to wish that just one time more I might ride that bike on those same sidewalks, perhaps on an autumn evening with dusk coming on and the smell of woodsmoke in the air, and the soft crunch of maple leaves beneath my tires, heading home to a hot dinner.

*Jayson Jacoby is editor of the Baker City Herald.*