

# County should let voters decide marijuana issue

A lot of information has been tossed around at the public hearings about banning commercial marijuana operations in Grant County. A lot of that information, however, turns out to be inaccurate.

The County Court should be commended for maintaining an open and public process while considering the ordinance, but the court must also ensure it proceeds based on accurate information.

County Judge Scott Myers has said, if the county is to pass an ordinance prohibiting marijuana businesses it must do so by its Dec. 30 meeting. However, the deadline to do so is actually Dec. 27. Section 133 of House Bill 3300 clearly states a local government can prohibit commercial pot operations but not more than 180 days after the effective date of the bill, June 30, 2015. If the county waits until its Dec. 30 meeting to adopt the ordinance, it would be invalid.

Section 134 of the same bill states a local government can adopt an ordinance prohibiting marijuana businesses and refer the matter to local voters for final say at the next general election. This is an option the court has not mentioned.

Myers said no matter what the court's final decision on the ordinance is, somebody will be upset. However, some people arguing for the ban and some people arguing against it said the court should let the voters decide. Not only is it the easiest route politically for the county's elected leaders, it is also the most democratic.

Some might argue the public spoke loud and clear in the November 2014 election

when about 65 percent of Grant County's votes were against Measure 91 to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. But the situation is fundamentally different now because the measure passed at the state level.

Now that every residence in the state can legally grow up to four pot plants and people can legally possess and use the drug, the question voters would decide is whether their local government should allow commercial operations as well, which can generate tax revenue. And that is a question voters should decide.

However, another piece of false information has entered the debate of which voters should be aware. Although many of the people who argued they should be allowed to grow marijuana commercially claimed the county could implement a 3-percent tax on growers, this appears to be inaccurate.

Andrea Chiapella, a policy analyst for Oregon Sen. Ted Ferrioli and the Senate Republican Office, said taxes can only be collected on retail marijuana sales, not growing operations. Further, she said unless a local government allows all types of commercial marijuana operations — growers, processors, wholesalers and retailers — the city or county cannot receive any portion of the 17-percent state retail marijuana sales tax. These are important distinctions.

Given the amount and complexity of information regarding the new recreational marijuana laws — and the apparent lack of a county expert on the issue — the County Court should let the voters decide how to proceed.



GUEST COMMENT

## Maintaining the greatest country in the world

To the Editor:

The U.S.A. is the greatest country in the world. Hundreds of thousands of men and women have given their lives for this great nation (one nation under God) to give us the opportunity to experience life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Today, our great nation's life blood is being drained. Our industries are shut down — timber, oil, coal, steel, agriculture and manufacturing — while our economy flounders in the name of worldwide advancement giving billions of dollars to OPEC. (They don't love America or her values, and we don't need their oil; we have plenty at home.)

We give millions to United Nations countries, paying them to stay in this organization. We give China our aluminum market, because our regulations prohibit honest competition with a communistic country. They will even be allowed to burn our coal without our pollution standards. We should not accept any product from other countries that do not comply with the same fair-wage and work conditions and pollution standards that American businesses are required to follow.

We're told there is no shortage of jobs in the U.S. but fail to mention

that a very big percentage of these jobs don't provide a living wage. Over 40 percent of the work force is receiving some kind of government assistance. Our government continues to counterfeit money, devaluing our currency, turning it into Monopoly money.

We gladly accept billions of dollars from China to keep our economy rolling (America accepting money from communists? Huston, we have a problem). We are over \$19 trillion in the hole, and we pretend we have so much money to burn that our president wants to spend over \$60,000 per person to bring Muslims into the U.S., thousands and thousands of people. Even if we really had money to use, what about the security of the U.S.A.?

We have no business importing problems. If we felt it necessary to bring in some of these people, they would need a strict background check and, after passing, put into concentration camps until the terrorism problem is eradicated in the U.S. We did that in World War II. It worked well. Right now, we need to worry about self-preservation.

Today, ISIS receives millions of dollars per day for oil purchased by Turkey, and our military is not allowed

to use missiles or bombs to stop oil from being transferred. Even if the oil is allowed to be transferred, the money should not be allowed to transfer (We do have the technology and strength to stop this). We must stop the money from flowing to an evil entity called ISIS. ISIS, or Muslim extremists, are cowardice scum. They don't attack armed places or people. They like to attack defenseless people with illegal guns and bombs.

Our citizens that are not law breakers and pass a criminal background check should be given an incentive to purchase firearms and obtain a concealed weapons permit with a tax education for the cost of the firearm and permit. We, the people, need the ability to protect ourselves from cowardly terrorist scum when they sneak in and start killing innocent people.

We cannot allow communism, terrorism or treasonous acts outside or within our U.S. borders, or within our leadership, to destroy the greatest country in the world.

I am truly concerned with the well being of our nation and wanted to share some of my thoughts and concerns. I do not know the answers to my concerns, but I would like to.

**Warren Dunn**  
Long Creek

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Wolf kill punishment too extensive

To the Editor:

I am furious. In 2009 we had a 600-lb. yearling shot at least ten times by four fellows. We had a cop that worked on this for three years and caught them. He worked very hard. What did they do when it went to court? They changed it to \$400 and threw out abuse to an animal. They slapped their hands and turned them loose. That is our livelihood for the year.

I just got my Blue Mountain Eagle and read the article where the two fellows killed what they thought was a coyote. They came and admitted they had killed a wolf, and they are being charged \$6,250 each and a year in jail. I think that's BS; these two came and admitted what they had done.

We fought the wolves being brought into Oregon; now, I'd like to know why every time one of our livestock gets killed, you the game cops don't pay us \$6,000-plus and give a year in jail. I don't know either of these men, but I think they got a little much for one wolf. So you might think about this every time we ranchers have a wolf kill.

**Darlene Forrest**  
Dufur and Monument

### Seeing the future

To the Editor:

The edge of the pioneer and the edge of the plow.

The logger, the gold and the range cow.

Timber mills and forests of trees, that's not this valley now.

And all of the government know-how needs to see the future now.

**W. Toop**  
Canyon City

### Good Samaritan helps during parade

To the Editor:

I want to send out a big thank you to the gentleman in the newer white full-sized pickup who stopped to help me out during the light parade when my little tractor "Murphy" decided to die on me. I didn't get his name, and he was gone before I could truly say thank you to him and his family for stepping in to try to help.

This truly shows the big hearts that Grant County has.

After moving away for two years, this helped show me that moving "home" was the best thing we could have ever done.

Bless you for helping rescue me. Also a big thank you to the young police officer who also stepped in to

help. You helped turn a truly stressful and embarrassing event into a real blessing.

**Lisa Pereira and "Murphy"**  
John Day

### County road dept. maintaining roads well

To the Editor:

I would like to take a moment and thank the Grant County Road Department for the great job they are doing maintaining our roads.

I do a lot of traveling on county roads, especially in the Long Creek, Ritter and Monument area, and I am so pleased to see how well they are maintained. The trees, brush and debris have been cleared off and the roads opened up so you can see a long ways on both sides. It has made traveling a lot safer.

The crews are doing a great job maintaining these roads even when there's issues beyond their control, such as a very low water year with no moisture to speak of.

I am very thankful to have the shop in Long Creek operating again and a big thanks to the crews and supervisors.

Thanks again for doing a great job and keeping us safe while we drive the county roads.

**Dan Morrow**  
Long Creek

## WHERE TO WRITE

### GRANT COUNTY

• **Grant County Courthouse** — 201 S. Humbolt St., Suite 280, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0059. Fax: 541-575-2248.

• **Canyon City** — P.O. Box 276, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0509. Fax: 541-575-0515. Email: tocc1862@centurylink.net.

• **Dayville** — P.O. Box 321, Dayville 97825. Phone: 541-987-2188. Fax: 541-987-2187. Email: dville@ortelco.net

• **John Day** — 450 E. Main St, John Day, 97845. Phone: 541-575-0028. Fax: 541-575-1721. Email: cityjd@centurytel.net.

• **Long Creek** — P.O. Box 489, Long Creek 97856. Phone: 541-421-3601. Fax: 541-421-3075. Email: info@cityoflongcreek.com.

• **Monument** — P.O. Box 426, Monument 97864. Phone and fax: 541-934-2025. Email: monument@oregontrail.net.

• **Mt. Vernon** — P.O. Box 647, Mt. Vernon 97865. Phone: 541-932-4688. Fax: 541-932-4222. Email: cmv@ortelco.net.

• **Prairie City** — P.O. Box 370, Prairie City 97869. Phone: 541-820-3605. Fax: 820-3566. Email: pchall@ortelco.net.

• **Seneca** — P.O. Box 208, Seneca 97873. Phone and fax: 541-542-2161. Email: cityseneca@centurytel.net.

### SALEM

• **Gov. Kate Brown, D** — 254 State Capitol, Salem 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111. Fax: 503-378-6827. Website: www.governor.state.or.us/governor.html.

• **Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: (503) 986-1180. Website: www.leg.state.or.us (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).

• **State Rep. Cliff Bentz, R-Ontario** (District: 60), Room H-475, State Capitol, 900

Court St. N.E., Salem OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1460. Email: rep.cliffbentz@state.or.us. Website: www.leg.state.or.us/bentz/home.htm.

• **State Sen. Ted Ferrioli, R** — (District 30) Room S-223, State Capitol, Salem 97310. Phone: 503-986-1950. Email: sen.tedferrioli@state.or.us. Email: TFER2@aol.com. Phone: 541-490-6528. Website: www.leg.state.or.us/ferrioli.

• **Oregon Legislative Information** — (For updates on bills, services, capitol or messages for legislators) — 800-332-2313.

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

• **The White House**, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20500; Phone-comments: 202-456-1111; Switchboard: 202-456-1414.

• **U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D** — 516 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244. Email: wayne\_kinney@wyden.senate.gov Website: http://wyden.senate.gov Fax: 202-228-2717.

• **U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, D** — 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753. Email: senator@merkley.senate.gov. Fax: 202-228-3997. Oregon offices include One World Trade Center, 121 S.W. Salmon St., Suite 1250, Portland, OR 97204; and 310 S.E. Second St., Suite 105, Pendleton, OR 97801. Phone: 503-326-3386; 541-278-1129. Fax: 503-326-2990.

• **U.S. Rep. Greg Walden, R** — (Second District) 1404 Longworth Building, Washington D.C. 20515. Phone: 202-225-6730. No direct email because of spam. Website: www.walden.house.gov Fax: 202-225-5774. Medford office: 14 North Central, Suite 112, Medford, OR 97501. Phone: 541-776-4646. Fax: 541-779-0204.

• **Pending Bills:** For information on bills in Congress, Phone: 202-225-1772.

## Grant County's Weekly Newspaper

PUBLISHER..... MARISSA WILLIAMS, MARISSA@BMEAGLE.COM  
 EDITOR..... SEAN HART, EDITOR@BMEAGLE.COM  
 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT..... KRISTINA KREGER, KRISTINA@BMEAGLE.COM  
 EDITORIAL ASSISTANT..... CHERYL HOEFLE, CHERYL@BMEAGLE.COM  
 COMMUNITY NEWS..... ANGEL CARPENTER, ANGEL@BMEAGLE.COM  
 SPORTS..... ANGEL CARPENTER, ANGEL@BMEAGLE.COM  
 MARKETING REP..... KIM KELL, ADS@BMEAGLE.COM  
 OFFICE MANAGER..... LINDSAY BULLOCK, OFFICE@BMEAGLE.COM

1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION RATES  
 (including online access)  
 Grant County .....\$40  
 Everywhere else in U.S.....\$51  
 Outside Continental U.S.....\$60  
 Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER  
 send address changes to:  
 Blue Mountain Eagle  
 195 N. Canyon Blvd.  
 John Day, OR 97845-1187

USPS 226-340

Copyright © 2015 Blue Mountain Eagle  
 All rights reserved. No part of this publication covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means — graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping or information storage and retrieval systems — without written permission of the publisher.

