

LETTERS

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Share the road

To the Editor:

Spring is here. Summer is not far behind. This means more bikers, runners and walkers from here and from far and wide enjoying our communities and the roads in between. These are people who love the biker-runner-walker-friendly atmosphere we offer here.

Unfortunately there are those in this county who do not like to share our roads with bikes or runners or walkers, or even just certain individuals. These people express their dislike by using their vehicle, whether a car or truck or truck with trailer, to physically threaten these people who, by Oregon law, have the same rights to use the roadways as vehicles do.

These vehicle threats to bikers, walkers and runners carry legal consequences as well as moral and ethical implications. These vehicle threats impact the reputation that Grant County has for welcoming these activities and these individuals.

Endangering the lives of others is not OK. Over the years I personally have been threatened by teenagers trying to play chicken and drivers of pickups, some with stock trailer attached, attempting to crowd me off the road.

This is not cool for Grant County. This is not cool for the lives of the people who live here. This is not cool for the people who look forward, year after year, to coming here to enjoy our friendly and welcoming communities.

I look forward to a year in which no individual experiences threats to their safety on our roadways. Please join me in accomplishing this goal.

Eva Harris
Canyon City

Prescription epidemic

To the Editor:

Why are people so good at pointing out problems in society and yet so bad when it comes to applying solutions? For instance, our country is experiencing an epidemic in the abuse of prescription painkillers. The U.S. consumes 80 percent of painkillers sold in the world. Powerful prescription drugs like Oxycontin are fueling a major heroin epidemic. Yet doctors continue to prescribe these powerful prescription opiates, apparently not taking into consideration the highly addictive nature of these drugs. Opiates made in the lab are six times more addictive than the natural opium they were made to copy. A recent study showed 50 percent of patients prescribed opiate pain killers for more than 30 days in a row had addiction problems three years after being prescribed the drug. That statistic alone should open the eyes of both doctors and patients to the dangers of over-prescribing opiates.

These drugs have to many side effects to list. The fact is over 16,000 people a year are dying from overdoses of prescription pain pills. Death can occur from the recommended dose of these medications. So, why won't doctors start with something that many doctors

have called the least toxic drug in the pharmacopia, placing it below aspirin? This drug has never in its 10,000 year history had a death recorded from overdose. This drug is prescribed for everything from chronic pain, seizures, insomnia, circulation, arthritis, appetite disorders, cancer and so on. The drug I'm talking about is marijuana.

I challenge any doctor to show me a lab-created drug that treats such a variety of conditions and has no danger of death from overdose. I strongly urge anyone who's currently taking any over-the-counter or prescription pills to ask their doctor if marijuana is an alternative to their current treatment, and if they say no, then demand an explanation in detail why marijuana is not a safer alternative. Don't accept the excuse that marijuana has no medicinal benefits. Keep in mind, there are other doctors all over Oregon with an open mind willing to try marijuana as an option. The choice is now yours.

Eva Kidd
John Day

Mediocre reporting

To the Editor:

Redundancy in reporting results in mediocrity. I recall the tale of the boy repeatedly crying "wolf" to garner the prescribed reaction and the town folks stopped believing him. I view this as a prime example of the continual and tiresome attack on one duly elected law enforcement official.

The wolf in the tale actually did appear, but in the case of mimicry and malicious reporting by local media, the wolf may have just limped off and died of starvation. Reasonably intelligent people will read the same rhetoric for just so long and then will no longer pay attention. People who follow the malicious intent of this reporting also get painted with the same brush and appear clown-like, jumping up and down with their "not my sheriff" signs. Better yet are the signs that tout following the laws when they have no idea what the laws really are. This is an overwhelming indication of ignorance. Let us clarify the definition of ignorance, which is not knowing a subject, and stupidity, which is knowing a subject but continuing down the road to idiocy anyway. Believing that the supremacy of thousands of conflicting federal laws which continually change or just pop up at the whim of some hired agency overpower the constitutional rights of the people borderlines ignorance/stupidity.

If they want to be ruled by thousands of conflicting and suppressing laws, then just stand there and let the feds take over their lives, herding them like sheep into the paths set forth by some Washington-based politicians. Reading or listening to the government-led news media will lead you to believe that the president knows better than you on how to raise your sheep. He will let his ten thousands of immigrants show you what sheep are really for. Try reading our history about proud heritage and "we the people." The government was to be led by the people, not the reverse.

Judy Kerr
Canyon City

First Amendment provides rights for all

To the Editor:

Much has been made of Sheriff (Glenn) Palmer's claim to be a champion of the United States Constitution. A recent letter to the editor complained that the dispatch supervisor "spoke to the media" while in uniform. The very same media on the very same day interviewed Glenn Palmer who spoke freely with them while on duty, so what is the problem?

The bigger issue here is our constitutional right to free speech as guaranteed under the First Amendment. Just because a person is a commissioner or an undersheriff or anyone else in public service, that does not negate their inherent right as United States citizens to speak freely and express their opinions. How often have you seen a respected senator or state representative publicly participate in a peaceful protest, without breaking the law or destroying public or private property? They are not violating your civil rights. They are exercising their First Amendment rights as provided under the U.S. Constitution.

Turn back the clock to 2011 and recall the suspension of then Undersheriff Todd McKinley by Sheriff Palmer for disagreeing with him concerning Palmer's refusal to work with the USFS. It seems freedom of speech only applies to those people who agree with Palmer, and if you work for him better watch your mouth (or your pen). On the other hand, it's perfectly fine for our sheriff to write a letter to the vice president of the country regarding his intention to disregard any federal law which he thinks might infringe on our right to keep and bear arms. I respect his right to do so, even though I disagree with his approach. However, he (Palmer) doesn't give the same respect or rights to those who disagree with him. It is too bad the "Ultimate Authority" in Grant County can't afford everyone equal billing under what he claims to be a staunch supporter of, the United States Constitution.

Dan E. Maynard Jr.
John Day

County commissioner did not serve citizens' best interests

To the Editor:

In regard to the letter from Kay Steele (in the March 30 Eagle) that Chris Labhart was "protesting for all of us," well he certainly wasn't protesting for me! And he isn't an "elected leader"; Chris Labhart was elected to "serve" the citizens of Grant County in their best interests. He has certainly failed to do that. And so has the rest of the County Court. As to the rest of Ms. Steele's letter, let me point out the obvious: "Constitutional patriot" and "anti-government" are a contradiction in terms.

Many people truly believe our government is "paternalistic," that the federal government really does own the land and the people are "tenants," at the mercy and whim of federal bureaucracies. That they believe this is sad, but what is even more sad is they like it that way. In her letter, Ms. Steele reflected: "What is it going to take to bring all these people together?" Using terms such as "self-declared 'patriot,'" armed "militiamen," derogatory personal attacks on Sheriff Palmer, these are only inflammatory and serve to alienate people. Some would label me a radical, armed, anti-government militia person. I feel I'm in pretty darn good company, Ms. Steele: "... I am committed against everything which, in my judgment, may weaken, endanger, or destroy (the Constitution) ... and especially against all extension of executive power; and I am committed against any attempt to rule the free people of this country by the power and the patronage of the government itself." — Daniel Webster, 1835.

Patti Yellow Hand Bull
Monument

Search and rescue volunteers do not need deputized

To the Editor:

Partial quote from Sheriff Palmer regarding his most recent deputization: "I deputized him for SAIF and Worker's Comp purposes..."

After making inquiries to verify that statement, I think it is important to note that volunteers are already covered if they are working on the county's behalf. The answer I was given was that Grant County Search and Rescue volunteers do not need to be deputized to have SAIF (workers' comp) coverage.

I also think it's important to know that in checking with Malheur, Baker, Harney and Crook counties, their search and rescue people are not deputized.

Judy Schuette
John Day

COPS & COURTS

Arrests and citations in the Blue Mountain Eagle are taken from the logs of law enforcement agencies. Every effort is made to report the court disposition of arrest cases.

Grant County Sheriff

CANYON CITY — The Grant County Sheriff's Office reported the following for the week of March 25-31:

- Concealed handgun licenses: 11
- Average inmates: 8.4
- Bookings: 5
- Releases: 10
- Arrests: 1
- Citations: 1
- Fingerprints: 10
- Civil papers: 20
- Warrants processed: 2
- Asst./welfare check: 3
- Cited Russell Moore Sr. 52, Mt. Vernon, on March 25, for driving while suspended-violation, driving under the influence of intoxicants and breath test refusal.

Justice Court

CANYON CITY — The Grant County Justice Court reported the following fines and judgments:

- Exceeding speed limit: Bhanu Prakash, 30, Kirkland, Wash., 79/55 zone, Feb. 5, fined \$160.
- Driving uninsured: Brad Lee Hartwick, 39, John Day, three times on Nov. 27, Feb. 24 and March 2, fined \$260 for each; Jeanne Marie Moles, 30, John Day, two times on March 5 and March 23, fined \$220 for each; Joseph Scott Hayzlett, 40, John Day, Jan. 29, fined \$260.
- Illegal display of plates: Brad Lee Hartwick, 39, John Day, Feb. 4, fined \$260.
- Illegal parking: Brad Lee Hartwick, 39, John Day, two times on Feb. 4, fined \$110 for each offense.
- Driving while suspended-violation: Brad Lee

Hartwick, 39, John Day, two times on Feb. 24 and March 2, fined \$435 for each; Jeanne Marie Moles, 30, John Day, two times on March 5 and March 23, fined \$370 for each; Joseph Scott Hayzlett, 40, John Day, Jan. 29, fined \$435.

• Failure to install an ignition interlock device: Brad Lee Hartwick, 39, John Day, two times on Feb. 24 and March 2, fined \$435 for each.

Dispatch

John Day dispatch worked 166 calls during the week of March 28-April 3. Along with the various traffic warnings, trespassing, injured animals, noise complaints and juvenile complaints, these calls included:

• John Day Police:

March 31: Responded to a reported theft on North Canyon Boulevard; arrested a man from Boring for failure to register as a sex offender.

April 1: Burglary reported at Riverside Mobile Home Park.

April 3: Cited a man from Ontario, Canada, for speeding.

• Grant County Sheriff:

March 31: Report of shots fired in Mt. Vernon.

• John Day ambulance:

March 28: Responded for a 61-year-old woman.

April 1: Dispatched for a man who fainted.

April 2: Responded for a 39-year-old woman with numbness and shortness of breath.

• Long Creek ambulance:

March 30: Responded for a 25-year-old man.

April 2: Responded to a rollover accident.

• Prairie City ambulance:

April 2: Dispatched for a man with a diabetic issue; dispatched for a woman with difficulty breathing.

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NATIONAL Sexual Assault AWARENESS & PREVENTION MONTH

Help is available for victims of sexual assault in Grant County. If you or someone you know has been a victim of sexual assault, please call:

Heart of Grant County
541-620-1342

Grant County Victim Assistance Program
541-575-4026

Remember: sex without consent = sexual assault



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