

New pool would bring many benefits

To the Editor:

Pool bond. I am an old lady living on a fixed income. I am all for a new pool and I hope it is for an Olympic-size pool. A pool of such size could increase the usage of counties for miles around, increase visitors and city income. The ability to swim will last a lifetime.

“OK, you’re from John Day! Then you know how to swim. Welcome to the gang.”

I have lived in John Day for over 20 years and within walking distance of the now-current pool. Never been there. We need to have all our children learn to swim and maybe just do it.

Jennie Roller
John Day

Sutton Mountain worth protecting

To the Editor:

We have an opportunity to further protect part of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument with the Sutton Mountain and Painted Hills Area Wildfire Resiliency, Preservation, and Economic Enhancement Act.

Sutton Mountain — less than 10 miles from the Painted Hills in Mitchell — is the main target of the act. It’s an undeniably special place, but, apart from locals, it is little-known.

Hiking up to the 4,694-foot summit, you can see a wide range of Oregon’s natural gems, including the Painted Hills’ signature colorful rock-side and the Ochoco Mountains. You can even catch a glimpse of Mount Jefferson or Mount Adams of the Cascade Range.

Apart from the views, many plants and animals make their homes on Sutton Mountain. Soaring bald eagles, swooping hawks, bounding elk and prancing pronghorn antelope all roam the area. Vibrant wildflowers blanket the grassy hillside on Sutton Mountain’s eastern side; picture deep purple lupine, bright red Indian paintbrush and crisp white Peck’s milkvetch (a threatened plant species).

Passing the Sutton Mountain and Painted Hills Area Wildfire Resiliency, Preservation, and Economic Enhancement Act will protect this unique landmark — along with several surrounding recreation areas — from new mining claims. Created in consultation with Wheeler County community members, grazing would be allowed, preserving the heritage of Wheeler County. This type of collaboration blazes the trail for future federal conservation plans.

Locals and federal officials agree: It’s time to protect Sutton Mountain for current and future generations to appreciate.

Kristine Meader,
Environment America
Portland

Swimming is good for your health

To the Editor:

I am writing today to voice strong support of the John Day Canyon City Parks and Rec pool bond. As a health professional who grew up in John Day, I am acutely aware of the difference that a healthy lifestyle, including exercise, can make in people’s lives. It would be unfortunate for current residents of all ages not to have access to the same benefits that a community pool provides that I once did. Passage of the bond will provide critical funding to ensure this happens.

I wanted to highlight some of the health benefits that water-based fitness can have. Swimming has been associated with improved quality of life and less overall disability in older individuals, improved bone strength in women, and improved mood and less anxiety in others with chronic health conditions. It has been linked to improved mental health, cognition, and motor coordination in children with ADHD. Water-based exercise is a particularly good option for individuals with arthritis or other chronic musculoskeletal pain for which exercise on land may be difficult and can lead to reduced pain levels in those individuals.

A community pool may be the only or best option to engage in these activities for many, and a lack

of access for those who could benefit may very well contribute to preventable health decline in a friend, neighbor, or family member. The cost is relatively minor compared with the benefits that a community pool will bring for many years to come. Please invest in community health and vote yes!

Jason Cronin, MD
Eugene

Pool will benefit entire community

To the Editor:

We talk about attracting more young families to Grant County, putting their children in our schools, reversing population loss. Families want things for their kids to do. Not all kids are ballplayers or runners or horsemen. Some are swimmers.

Swim meets bring other families and their kids to compete. They spend their money in our motels, restaurants, and shops. During these events money is generated to support our economy. The pool gives children the opportunity to learn the life-saving skills of survival in water. This is not just a John Day benefit. It is a Grant County benefit. Swimming pools are used for physical therapy after injuries and for the elderly to maintain mobility. And some adults have never learned to swim and would like to in a safe place.

Please join me in supporting the levy for a new swimming complex. The pool will be part of our economic health as well as the health of our kids and adults of all ages.

Eva Harris
Canyon City

Pool would have therapeutic benefits

To the Editor:

I am writing in support of bond measure 12-80 to fund a new pool in John Day. A public pool is not just for children. In 2018, I was in a serious car accident and my back was broken in three places. For months, I wore a brace and the only type of exercise that my doctor allowed was swimming and exercising in a pool. Thankfully, due to hard work, skilled professionals, and many prayers, I’m doing well.

People of all ages can benefit from low-impact water exercise. I’ve learned that water increases mobility, so pool-based exercise helps fitness without joint damage. Many people use pool-based therapy after knee or hip replacement surgery. Nearly all muscles are used during swimming, so you can get a full-body workout.

I know that some people do not agree with every project the city has undertaken in the past few years. I hope those folks will consider their vote on the pool separately from opinions they may have on other city projects. Everyone, regardless of age, income, or background, can benefit from this new pool. Imagine a reliable, accessible pool that benefits our entire community!

Please join me and vote yes to the JDCC Parks and Rec pool bond. Thank you.

Chris Cronin
John Day

Excited about getting new pool

To the Editor:

First of all, I am very excited to be a new member of the community of John Day and am encouraging you to vote yes on ballot measure 12-80. Joy! My authentic self comes alive in a pool with peace and the feeling of belonging to a community of people who believe in being healthy by healing the physical and emotional part of ourselves.

I am in full support of a new pool because the 64-year-old Gleason is in rough shape and is not ADA-compliant for people with disabilities. I was paralyzed in 1992 with Guillain-Barre and still have severe residual numbness and pain in my extremities and once I splash into the pool, pain can be replaced with freedom!

At times my pain and inability to enter the pool using a ladder or steps keeps me from entering a pool without the access of a handicapped chair to enter the pool with ease. I am currently involved with a community that supports a year-round pool and sees the benefits, including swimming and water safety lessons for all third-graders because we are surrounded by rivers and lakes that take

children’s lives each year. A new pool could also offer aqua power sessions for all, including seniors, and there could also be master swim classes and swim team opportunities that bring other communities in for competitions. All these programs provide returns on investments.

This opportunity for a new pool invites a new and exciting presence and is vital for the thriving community of John Day. I sure hope you and others are thinking of the long-term benefits.

Please vote yes on bond measure 12-80.

Lorie Dix
Klamath Falls

Editor’s note: *The author is in the process of relocating to John Day.*

Benefits outweigh cost of pool bond

To the Editor:

I would like to draw our community’s attention to an important opportunity. On May 17 we have the opportunity to pass ballot measure No. 12-80; this measure will provide our children with a safe location to gather, learn survival skills, provide employment opportunities, as well as a location for unity and health for our whole community. According to the CDC, “More children ages 1-4 die from drowning than any other cause of death except birth defects.” “For children ages 1-14, drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death after motor vehicle crashes.” In some case studies they have found “Participation in formal swimming lessons was associated with an 88% reduction in the risk of drowning in the 1- to 4-year-old children.” This data is alarming; our county is covered in far too many bodies of water to ignore the facts, and the pivotal reason for voting yes on ballot measure No. 12-80.

I am a past lifeguard, swim lesson instructor, swim team member, and swim team coach. I lived my summers at the Gleason Pool from the time I was 9 years old until 22. I can attest to the positive attribution that the Gleason Pool had on my life and so many others. This bond does come at a cost, but I can promise the benefits that having a pool can provide to our community far outweigh this financial cost. This is the time that we can pull together, and make a difference and create an asset for our community now and for the future generations.

As a mother and fellow homeowner in the tax district, I implore you to please review the facts of this ballot measure. This is an opportunity for all of us to increase our safety and health of an entire community. We can bring back to this community a vital recreation entity. Please, vote yes on ballot measure No. 12-80!

Laci Wheeler
Canyon City

Please support measure 12-80

To the Editor:

I am a retiree living on a fixed income and will vote yes on bond 12-80. I’ve done the math and have determined the monthly financial impact personally will exceed the cost of a fancy cup of coffee and pastry. My reasoning breaks down to 2 factors: (1) The hospital bond is paid and no longer part of my property tax bill, and (2) I place a premium on quality of life — for me and my fellow citizens. As the former is self-explanatory, I will focus on the latter.

Being a patron of the Seventh Street Complex, I see kids, families, young adults, and retirees daily making positive use of excellent amenities. They’re bicycling, running, walking, hitting/kicking balls, assembling, throwing discs, dog training, picnicking, etc. While individually the activities are unique, collectively, those engaging in such are building community and strengthening critical bonds that support a higher quality of life for everyone. Swimming is a natural fit in this context and location. While not initially part of the complex, the Gleason Pool, as treasured as it was, no longer remains a viable alternative.

Back to quality of life ... I don’t have children currently enjoying ballgames, but my civic happiness meter raises every time I pass by a game/match in play and see the grit, determination and pure joy tied to such. Similarly, I won’t have children swimming, but I look forward to hear-

ing the rhythmic chants of “Go! Go! Go!” as youth are rallied by their friends and families during meets. Simply put, as a retiree, I realize satisfaction and an elevated quality of life by supporting my greater community’s safety, health, and well-being.

Having been raised under modest financial circumstances, I know well how to budget, sacrifice, and prioritize my spending; I naturally consider the bang-for-buck ratio of such. In this instance, I am confident my limited funds as a retiree would be well spent on the construction of Grant County’s only public pool. Please join me in casting your yes vote.

Elizabeth R. Aleman
John Day

Do your part by voting for pool bond

To the Editor:

As longtime residents of John Day, we are writing to encourage a yes vote on ballot measure 12-80. Beth had the privilege of growing up in John Day; she was there to swim the first day Gleason Pool opened, we met there, our children learned to swim there as did many of our grandchildren. We have seen firsthand the many benefits to a community a swimming pool can offer.

After over a decade of researching and planning, we have been offered a plan to replace an antiquated, costly, and irreparable facility with a basic facility that can be enhanced in the future if growth and funding make it possible. This facility will be operable within the existing budget of the John Day/Canyon City Parks and Recreation District.

We are more than happy to spend the \$8.83 a month for the construction bond to ensure that the children and families in our community have a place to learn to swim, in addition to all the added recreational and rehabilitation opportunities that this facility will provide to the entire community. This cost will be much less than what we were paying on the recently retired hospital bond.

To have a viable, attractive community, we must all do our part. Vote yes for a safer, healthier community. Vote yes on ballot measure 12-80.

Jim and Beth Spell
John Day

New pool for a new generation

To the Editor:

As one of the tour guides for Kam Wah Chung, I am excited to see what the excavation of the Gleason Pool site will find. The area of the pool and the surrounding area was China Town from around 1862 until the early 1900s. Several residents have found relics from that day in their own flowerbeds and donated them to the interpretive center for everyone to enjoy. Did you know that the land that the pool was built on was donated to the city by the Wah family, who are Dr. Ing Hay’s family? And, of course, the museum itself was donated to the city with the intent that it be used as a tribute to the Chinese history of the area.

This being said, how do I feel about the pool? Well, I have always been afraid of water, but my siblings and I learned to swim there and spent the majority of our summers at the pool, even into high school. My daughters learned to swim there and spent a lot of time there. My brother was on the swim team. I loved Gleason Pool and want to see other kids have the same opportunities we did.

I am sure my parents did not want to see their taxes go up in the ‘50s and I do not enjoy seeing my taxes go up, but I am willing to pay my share so our community can have the benefits of such a beneficial facility. I am now retired and, as they say, on a fixed income. I would probably not use the pool — being caught in a swimsuit is a no-no for me. This will be for your kids and grandkids now, and I will gladly help foot the bill.

Leslie Traylor
John Day

Thankful for ‘no’ vote on city budget

To the Editor:

My hat’s off to Sherrie Rininger for reading the current John Day city budget so carefully and deciding to vote against it.

We must live within our means! I’m sure Sherrie will be as care-

ful next year and vote correctly as she was this year. Thank goodness for such volunteers!

Ron Phillips
John Day

Cast an informed vote on pool bond

To the Editor:

Let’s make sure we are informed before voting on the pool bond on the May ballot. To that purpose, I’d like to address some inaccuracies in last week’s letters to the editor.

A writer suggested renting the pool at the Best Western. This is no longer an option — they stopped renting their pool last year, and it’s unlikely it will be rentable anytime soon. There are no other pools in this county available to rent.

Unlike other Oregon towns that have closed their public pools to save costs — Nyssa or Sandy — we are not 10 or 20 miles from public pools in Vale or Gresham. Bussing children three hours round-trip to the nearest pools in Burns or Baker for frequent swim lessons is unlikely at best.

Some would prefer an indoor pool or a more scaled-down design. The city found that operation and maintenance of any indoor pool would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, an ongoing expense that is not feasible given the current tax base. The new pool design is modernized and efficient but not extravagant. Operation and maintenance would be similar to that for Gleason, well within the current budget of the parks and recreation district. The pool design we are voting on is a thoroughly researched and reasonable compromise.

Costs are going up for everything and, like you, I am concerned about continuing to afford food, fuel, and housing for my family. But I know I can find \$10 for the pool bond in my monthly budget because, until this year, I paid almost \$30 a month for the hospital bond. The average property owner will pay even less at \$6 a month. If our community could finance our hospital at three times the tax rate of the pool, especially during the great recession, I am certain we can do it now for the pool.

Our grandparents came together to pay for Gleason Pool 60 years ago. We can come together again to invest in each other and our children’s future. Please vote yes with me on measure 12-80.

Jessi Brunson
Canyon City

We are what we choose to defend

To the Editor:

In the Blue Mountain Eagle of April 27 there was an interesting article submitted by Richard F. LaMountain concerning the namesake of our county, the commanding Union general during the American Civil War and former President Ulysses S. Grant.

Grant is quoted as saying: “There are but two parties now: traitors and patriots, and I want hereafter to be ranked with the latter and, I trust, the stronger party.”

We can hope that Grant was right, but ultimately it is up to our free choice. What we choose to defend distinguishes who we are. According to our Constitution, we still have that option. One patriot is quoted as saying, “Force used tyrannically is our common enemy. Why align ourselves with it in whatever shape or fashion?” — Audie Murphy

Mike Christensen
John Day

Rowell will represent all of Grant County

To the Editor:

Cast your vote for John Rowell for Grant County commissioner. He has honesty, ethics, and a strong belief in doing what’s right for Grant County. He will represent all of the county from east to west. And north to south. Vote John Rowell.

Jim Jerome
John Day



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EditorBennett Hall, bhall@bmeagle.com
Reporters.....Steven Mitchell, steven@bmeagle.com
Justin Davis, jdavis@bluemountaineagle.com
Sports.....sports@bmeagle.com
Page Designer.....Randy Wright, rwright@eomediagroup.com
Marketing Rep.....Kim Kell, ads@bmeagle.com
Office Assistant.....Alexandra Hand, office@bmeagle.com

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