

## A vote for pool is a vote for the future

### To the Editor:

I believe in the future of Grant County and John Day. For families. For kids. For everyone who works hard to make it an amazing community. I am writing to encourage votes for the pool bond.

Before moving to John Day I had heard about the pool. Our friends shared about amazing summers their children had at the pool and on swim team. As our three kids grew up they learned to swim at Gleason Pool (and Best Western) — they loved the pool. Summers on the swim team were a highlight — early morning workouts, friends, camping for swim meets. I loved watching the kids cheer on each other — older kids cheering young’uns who could barely finish one lap. I can still hear the cheering and see the smiles as I write this.

Small towns are about coming together, developing community, honoring the past while building a future. Gleason Pool was part of that. Now there is a chance to create that future. Yes, it costs money to build a new pool — less than \$5 per month for over half the property owners. A bond for \$4 million would bring \$2 million state Legislature funding — a huge win for Grant County. As a physician I daily encourage my patients to increase their physical activity — for emotional, spiritual and physical well-being. A pool is one important option for all of us, including our kids, especially during the warm summers.

As people visit Grant County they would see the community pride — new projects, a new pool, the improved Kam Wuh Chung site. Future families will look for a community that believes in itself, that invests in the future.

Even though I only get to return occasionally, I know the incredible value of a pool to this community. I encourage you to believe in the future, invest in the future, work together to create the future in Grant County. Vote yes for the pool bond.

**Andrew Janssen, MD**  
Hillsboro

**Editor’s note:** Dr. Janssen was a physician at Blue Mountain Hospital from 2005 to 2015 and continues to provide ER coverage at the hospital.

## Don’t be gullible, vote no on pool bond

### To the Editor:

Oh, joy ...

Now that we local peons no longer can afford a police department, or funds to repair main roads, and our local swimming pool was sold out from under us, we now can vote ourselves some new property taxes to provide a new pool, as well as the attached higher cost to maintain it. Property owners can enjoy significantly increased taxes, and renters can enjoy that cost passed on to them by their landlords. We have all been faced with rising costs, now we can all enjoy the addition of new tax-related costs of groceries and an endless flow of goods and services passed on to consumers. No, we can’t afford basic services, like a police department, local 911 call center, or a decent road up to the airport — but we can vote, pay for and enjoy that luxurious new pool. There’s a name for all that — gullible suckers.

**Gary Davidson**  
Canyon City

## Time to invest in new generation

### To the Editor:

We are writing in support of the bond for the swimming pool! My husband and I have both lived in Grant County our entire lives. We were swimmers when we were young. Our children spent thousands of hours at the pool, as did our grandchildren. Unfortunately, our great-grandchildren were just getting to the age where they were old enough to enjoy the pool and it was closed due to COVID and then because of maintenance issues and the sale of the pool.

Sadly, that means that our great-grandchildren and the other children in the community will not be confident in or near the water! It means that the hundreds of people that come to swim meets won’t spend money in our community. It also means kids don’t have many options for things to do in the summer. A pool can be used by the children for recreational swim, lessons and swim team and used by adults for recreational swim, exercise, and physical therapy and many other things.

We need people to move here who buy homes and pay taxes. People looking at areas to move are looking for access to good hospitals, schools, and community offerings. What community offerings do we have? We have art programs, walk-

ing trails, a beautiful parks and recreation area, and I don’t know what else. Don’t you think a pool is an important add to that? There are millions of reasons to vote yes for the pool.

To those of you who are nay-sayers, please put aside your feelings regarding the city or Parks and Rec or whatever it is you are disagreeing with and think about the kids. For those of you who are on a fixed income, I am too. But this is a small cost to pay for a great opportunity.

Our parents did this for us! We really need to invest in our younger generation! Please vote yes on the pool bond.

**Doug and Judy Hudson**  
Canyon City

## Change in ballots upsetting to voter

### To the Editor:

I was extremely disappointed to see our election ballots are no longer secret. I looked through the envelope twice looking for the secrecy envelope. Then of course I read the insert telling me there was no longer one included. I was assured that the signature envelope had a printed security weave on the inside that protected my privacy. What a joke.

I really never liked the mail in ballot system because there is no way to truly tell who filled out the ballot. But now the secretary of state has formally approved no secrecy envelope. In my mind, this leaves the door open even more to undermine the integrity of our elections.

My vote is my vote. It’s nobody’s business how I vote. But it doesn’t matter how many security weaves there are on the inside, the envelope has my name, signature and address on the outside and all you have to do is open it and see how I voted. I don’t like it.

**Calvin Clark**  
John Day

## Asking neighbors to vote for new pool

### To the Editor:

I am writing in support of the JDCC pool as a resident of Canyon City, as your neighbor, and as a father to a disabled child who loves the water and meeting anyone who will say hello.

In this community, there are few things that have the potential to bring so many of us together like a modern place to cool off and get some exercise, and in the case of my little family, to get a chance to see our child socialize and play, a child who has had and will continue to have trouble finding any sort of social experience outside of what his mother and I are able to generate.

A safe and well-designed aquatic space like the proposed pool allows people with low to no mobility to experience a much-needed place to get up and out that they simply cannot get otherwise and will greatly improve the quality of life of anyone who bothers to give it a go.

And hey, remember the crazy heat last year? When many of us were essentially forced into hiding while the old pool moldered? Now we have a chance to complain to each other about the hot, hot weather from the cool water of a good pool. Our own pool. Vote yes, and let’s gripe together the way good neighbors should.

**Jeremy Mothershead**  
Canyon City

## Cast your vote against pool bond

### To the Editor:

I hope that everyone gets out and votes. I am voting no on the swimming pool. My belief is the people voting should only be the people that are being forced to pay for it. The property owners are the ones paying for this issue. It’s coming from their property taxes. There are many senior citizens living on Social Security and cannot afford this pool. Vote no!

**Jon Meiling**  
John Day

## Knepper a champion for 2nd Amendment

### To the Editor:

Of all our constitutional rights, I consider the right to keep and bear arms the most important of all. That’s why, for county commissioner, I’m voting for a candidate with a proven record of Second Amendment advocacy: Scott Knepper.

Last year, Scott — a member of the National Rifle Association — was a leader of the Grant County team that worked to overturn the gun lockup bill passed by Kate Brown and the Democratic Legislature. At the county fair and elsewhere, Scott spoke with Grant County voters and helped collect hundreds of signatures on a “veto referen-

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

dum” petition that aimed to put the bill to a public vote. Statewide, in the short 90-day window they had to do so, referendum advocates failed to collect the required number of signatures. But the Grant County team collected the signatures of almost one in 10 county residents — a far higher percentage than that collected by referendum advocates in any of Oregon’s other 35 counties. In fact, had other counties’ teams collected the same percentage Grant County’s did, the veto referendum would have qualified for the statewide ballot with more than twice the number of signatures needed.

Without Scott Knepper’s time, energy and leadership, Grant County would not have led the way. So remember this when you cast your ballot: To protect your Second Amendment rights, Scott put his own “skin into the game” to fight Kate Brown and Salem’s gun-hating Democrats.

As your county commissioner, he’ll do the same. “One of my driving passions in this race is to protect county residents’ Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms,” Scott said at a recent campaign forum, “a right embedded in the very fiber of our rural area and central to the liberty of our nation as a whole. ... I applaud the Grant County Court, which passed a Second Amendment preservation resolution in 2019. And as your commissioner, I will explore ways and seek to establish networks that will protect and expand your Second Amendment rights even further.”

Join me in voting for Scott Knepper for county commissioner.

**Richard F. LaMountain**  
John Day

## Pool is a vital part of community

### To the Editor:

We would like to express our support for a community swimming pool. Our reasons are likely the same as most others have voiced but we would like to add our support to the project.

There are a number of reasons, none much more important than another, but on the whole they make the decision to have a pool and recreation center a no-brainer.

First, closing the existing pool without replacement would be another example of John Day losing recreational activities and one less reason for families to stay here. For a lot of families, summer days at the pool is the definition of summer. Parents and kids meet to socialize and play. It would be a huge hole to have that opportunity vanish. John Day has been losing population; losing the pool would certainly contribute to the continuance of this trend. We must invest in our own community if we want it to thrive.

Safety for our children is vital. Learning to be a confident swimmer early in life is a valuable gift to a child and could save their life or another’s someday.

Additionally, the opportunity for athletics cannot be overlooked. For some this might be the only competitive athletics they participate in. We cannot overlook the value in our ability to host swim meets in town, bringing in new faces and revenue to businesses.

The additional recreation space and activities will also be a welcome improvement for all ages. Our aging population will benefit greatly from low-impact water-based fitness activities.

John Day’s effort to be an attractive place for families hinges on economic and recreational opportunities. As a business owner I have seen little effort to improve in these areas before the idea of a pool and river-based park. This project would be a shining example of the residents’ commitment to a vital and lively community.

**Jim and Stacie Klusmier**  
John Day

## Grant County needs community pool

### To the Editor:

As a teenager I worked at Gleason Pool for four summers as a lifeguard and swim teacher. I witnessed kids from all over Grant County use the pool as it served as a safe and secure place for kids to be during the summer while their parents worked. Along with all of the health and safety benefits of a community pool, I see a community pool as a positive place for kids to hang out. As someone who works with at-risk youth, having a place for kids to spend their summer months is imperative in substance misuse prevention, physical health, social interactions, and staying out of trouble in general.

I also saw how inefficient, wasteful and repair-ridden the pool was — keep in mind, this was over 20 years ago! Not to mention the benefits to the community with the new Kam Wah Chung interpretive center. A new community swimming

pool will be a great addition to a community that needs amenities for people of all ages, from toddlers to seniors.

My grandmother, in her 80s, who has suffered with hip and back pain, began water aerobics more than a decade ago. It has been life-changing for her. She exercises to strengthen her body, and the social component is as important for her mental health.

Vote yes. Support a positive and safe community resource.

**Haley Hueckman**  
Baker City

## New pool is a healthy choice

### To the Editor:

Please join us in voting yes for the new pool facility. As members of the Grant County Community Health Improvement Coalition board, we believe in “working together for a healthy community.” We are elated at the possibility of a new facility that will improve community wellness!

Over the last month, we have witnessed people from all sectors come together to advocate for a new pool in Grant County. From the youngest of children who want the opportunity to learn to swim and recreate, to our retired adults who desire a low-impact exercise option or enjoy watching their great-grandchildren swim. No matter what the reason, we know that both physical and mental health can be improved by swimming.

We have spent many hours in and around Gleason Pool, watching our children learn to swim, competing on the swim team and participating in family swim nights. Each year, we were more aware that Gleason was at the end of usefulness due to imminent and costly repairs. A new pool would be required in order to continue to offer these much-loved activities. Even more beneficial, it will be located at the Seventh Street Complex, where so many other community events take place.

In addition to the new pool, we are excited about the sale of Gleason Pool to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The new Kam Wah Chung Interpretive Center will bring an economic boost to Grant County as visitors come to experience this unique, world-renowned heritage site.

We invite you to stand with us in working together for a healthy community by voting yes on the May 17 ballot measure 12-80.

**Katrina Randleas**  
Grant County Community Health Improvement Coalition board chair  
**Sheila Comer**  
Grant County Community Health Improvement Coalition board member

## Don’t let beliefs obscure reality

### To the Editor:

Yes, “You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.”

So, regardless of any personal position about our present administration, we all know which way the wind blows from Putin and his allies, both here and abroad. The question in these next elections, this year and in ’24, is, can we read the handwriting on the wall as to how Putin wants the U.S. to vote?

Do we vote for the continuation of the practice of this democracy, with all its stresses and freedoms, or do we vote for a new experimentation with oligarchy and its loaded and locked mentality against its own people by feeding them alternative facts and beliefs.

Yes, our emperors often have no clothes, and we are allowed to say so when we see that fact, without fear of 15-year prison terms. And when even our own democracy gets uppity and hurts its people, it also has the stop guards of protest and courts to attempt to make things right. Sometimes very successfully and sometimes not so well, but at least the wins are there.

So, facts and due diligence must also include which way the wind is blowing, and just what kind of tornado we might stir up if we are led to believe otherwise, when in our hearts we know better.

Remember, beliefs are only beliefs, not necessarily reality.

**Jim Bay**  
John Day

## Will a swimming pool benefit you?

### To the Editor:

I am writing to encourage all voters to consider the benefits to each and every one of us in having a swimming pool in our community. Literally, from infancy to seniors, I submit that we all benefit.

I learned to swim at a very young age

and throughout my life I have had the privilege of being involved in the instruction of water safety: swimming lessons, lifeguarding, swim team skills and a variety of exercise classes. I have experienced the happiness on young faces as they learned to navigate themselves with confidence in the water.

As a water safety instructor and the pool manager at Black Butte Ranch, I saw the danger of lack of water skills in assisting people who panicked in the water, and the calm assurance of lifeguards who were trained to help them. As a young mother, I instructed “mom/tot” classes, teaching parents how to introduce their infants to water.

I’ve witnessed so many health benefits to water exercise: aerobics and strength training classes, stretching, to name a few. Water buoyancy is very beneficial to many areas of rehabilitation, i.e. arthritis, joint replacement, post-surgical procedures for all ages, especially for older adults. I have taught many senior classes, and now as a senior myself I know that water exercise is one of the best therapies, as water reduces impact on joints, improves cardiovascular health, strength and balance.

The idea of eventually having year-round access to a pool facility greatly enhances these benefits long term. Being confident around water while fishing, boating, etc. brings even greater enjoyment to these activities. Not to mention being in the water greatly reduces tension and anxiety at any age!

I am happy to pay 70 cents per thousand as a homeowner knowing the potential benefits to everyone, especially our youth!

So again, I pose the question: Will a swimming pool benefit you? If you are on the infancy to senior spectrum, the resounding answer is a yes vote on May 17.

For you. Your family. Your neighbors. Your community!

**D.J. Bloom**  
Canyon City

## Pool bond process leaves public in dark

### To the Editor:

Most of the recent letters to the editor regarding the bond levy have focused on the benefits of a swimming pool and the emotional memories of Gleason Pool.

We are not against a swimming pool. We had or still do have a swimming pool. We are against the JDCCP&R meetings that have violated the public meetings law. We are against the lack of transparency. We are against the conspiracy look to the planning, plotting, scheming without any public involvement. We know that all the meetings are public, if you know when they are, but there is much that goes on behind the scenes that the citizens are not privy to. Did the John Day City Council ask the citizens if they wanted to sell the Gleason Park and Pool to the state? Why don’t the citizens have a say? Mostly because it happens without our knowledge unless you take the time to go to a meeting. Because we do not go to meetings, local authorities assume that everyone is OK with the planning.

We have supported the JDCCP&R District since its inception. This is different.

It is not our fiscal responsibility to provide anyone with a \$6 million swimming pool no matter what the usage would be. Take responsibility for yourself, teach your own children to swim. There are many everyday things that parents do to teach them safety. Hunting, fishing, using scissors or a knife, riding a bicycle, building a campfire, wearing a helmet. Do you spend your own money to teach your children to play baseball, soccer, ski, basketball, hockey or ride a horse, the list is endless? Purchase a pool and fill it with the same water as a public swimming pool would be and teach your child how to swim.

Public recreation in its entirety is not profitable. You can research any recreation budget, national, state or city, and you will find the resources do not equal the expenditures. Public recreation relies upon tax dollars to balance budgets.

Swimming pool advocates, where were you when the city was talking about selling and destroying Gleason Pool beginning in about 2019? Before COVID, before a bond was even being discussed, why weren’t you standing up and speaking out? We, the people, have become a citizenry of being disengaged and disinterested in the political principles of our community, county, state and federal governments. We do not have time, do not want to be involved, do not want the negativity that comes with speaking up.

Honesty, integrity and accountability has gone by the wayside.

**John and Charlene Morris**  
John Day



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### SUBSCRIPTION RATES (including online access)

One year .....	\$51
Monthly autopay .....	\$4.25

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

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