

Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: Letters to the Editor must be signed. The Gazette-Times will not publish unsigned letters. Please include your address and phone number on all letters for use by the G-T office. The G-T reserves the right to edit. The G-T is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. (Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$7.)

Ione community member voices support for Burns

To the Editor:
I am writing in support of Betty Burns for Morrow County Justice of the Peace.

As a member of the Ione Community Agri-Business Organization, I have worked with Betty on many community events, such as the Ione 4th of July Celebration.

Betty is very community oriented and works hard to get things done. She is very well organized and carries out her projects in the timely manner. Her experience in business, along with her attitude, will make her an excellent Justice of the Peace.

My recommendation for Morrow County Justice of the Peace is Betty Burns.
(s) Stacie J. Miller
ICABO Treasurer
Ione

Fellow council member supports VanCleave for mayor

To the Editor:

I am writing in support of Tim VanCleave for mayor of Heppner. I have known Tim for several years and as a fellow council member have worked closely with him on the city council. We are also both members of the City Police Commission. The Police Commission voted him chairperson of the Commission and the council members voted him President of the Council.

Tim has always proved that he cares for the people of Heppner and wants to preserve the quality of life of our town. He is very approachable and willing to listen to all viewpoints and work with them. As a ten-year member of the city council he has a broad knowledge of how city government works. He is at present actively working with meeting the long and short-range goals for the city as set by the city council.

The quality I most appreciate about Tim is his perseverance in asking questions until everyone understands exactly what the facts are.

Please join me in voting for Tim VanCleave for mayor of the City of Heppner.
(s) Merle Cowett
Heppner

Deputy shares concerns about Matlack

To the Editor:

In September, I attended a public forum hosted by Ken Matlack who is running for the office of Sheriff in Morrow County. Verlin Denton is the current Morrow County Sheriff and running for re-election. As a working deputy in Morrow County I had several questions and concerns to ask Mr. Matlack about, but by the end of the evening I had none of my questions answered and several new ones.

I commented during

the meeting that Mr. Matlack has never approached the Sheriff's Association to ask us about our feelings and what we had to say about law enforcement issues concerning the community. He asked me why I had taken so long to approach him. I pointed out to Mr. Matlack that I was not the one running for office, hence, I am not the one campaigning. I guess Mr. Matlack does not care about what the people who would be representing him have to say.

The meeting started with a local Irrigon church pastor asking the people in attendance for money to support Mr. Matlack's campaign. I was disturbed by this seeing how Mr. Matlack is a 25-year retired Oregon State Trooper and probably makes more in monthly retirement than I do in salary. Mr. Matlack also told the group that he has been employed by the state as well as being a private investigator since his retirement. Why then is he asking a hard working, primarily middle class community for money to finance a political campaign? This is not a campaign for Governor. Mr. Matlack says that he has experience managing small budgets and limited resources; however, he can not run for a rural political office without incurring what I can only imagine to be several thousand dollars in expenses and then ask Morrow County citizens to pay for it.

The fact that Mr. Matlack himself never asked for financial support, instead having a local pastor do it for him, added to my concern. I shudder to think what he will do to our Office's budget. Sheriff Denton has paid for his campaign costs from his own pocket, asking for only your vote, not your hard-earned money.

Mr. Matlack stated that he intended to make the deputies available to the public at our homes and during our off hours. Not only is the listing of residence and phone numbers a potential officer safety issue but also it is illegal per Oregon Revised Statute 192.445 and 192.502. This is one in a series of false promises that Mr. Matlack has made to the people of Morrow County. He has promised daily patrols to the most remote parts of the County, a logistical impossibility given our call load and number of personnel, neither of which Mr. Matlack would have the power to change as Sheriff. Mr. Matlack even promised a woman who lives near Cutsforth Park that we would deliver her mail. Again, a legal impossibility.

Mr. Matlack has promised to go on patrol and take calls as Sheriff. Again, he fails to understand that time and work that it takes to run a department of this size and responsibility. When asked during a recent candidate's forum in Heppner what he thought were the duties of the Sheriff's Office, Mr. Matlack's only comment was that we collected taxes. Anyone who knows anything about county law enforcement knows that we do not collect taxes. Even this surprised me, assuming that all those years working

in law enforcement, Mr. Matlack would have a good understanding of the position he is running for. I believe that if you desire to run for political office, you should know what that office is all about. Mr. Matlack does not know what it means to be Sheriff and that lack of understanding will result in a destabilization of agency personnel, finances and programs that will cost the people of Morrow County dearly.

Mr. Matlack says that there is a "gap" between the Sheriff's Office and the people of Morrow County. I strongly disagree. In April of this year, I was seriously injured along with a co-worker, Deputy Brian Snyder, in a shooting incident in Irrigon. I was on medical leave for three months and during that time I received hundreds of cards, letters and phone calls filled with love, support and prayers. I did not personally know a lot of the senders but I was moved by the community's strong show of support for Deputy Snyder and I. They know us, they know what we do and the struggles and dangers that we face and I am grateful for the strength that they provided. I fail to see that "gap."

Mr. Matlack is a pure politician; promising and saying anything that people want to hear to get votes.

I love my job and I am proud of the people that I work with and the Sheriff that I work for. I believe that community support is still there and I ask that you vote for Verlin Denton to continue on as your Sheriff.
(s) Jeff Lambier
Heppner

Choose leaders that will meet challenges

To the Editor:

Our forgotten America has our poor, our homeless and jobless and is growing fast. I recently found out in a survey that 43 percent of the people in California have no medical coverage. I can't imagine what it is like in many other states. Farmers are losing their land to corporate structures. In the U.S., moneyed interests are gradually superseding the will of the people, leaving power in the hands of corporations instead of voters.

Many of today's global problems- such as the destruction of the environment, unemployment, the growing gap between the rich and poor and overpopulation- are consequences of our competitive economic system. It would be naive to believe that we can create a secure future or build a stable society based on unfettered market forces, which take for granted that one small segment of humanity lives in abundance while the majority live in

abject poverty.

If we in the developed world continue our economic dominance over the developing world, conflicts, chaos and war will be the inevitable result. Humanity's most serious problems are global, and therefore demand global solutions. Justice, sharing and cooperation must be the keynotes of the political and economic systems of tomorrow, and it's obvious that achieving these will require a 'regime change' in this country.

Vote for leaders this coming election that will meet the challenges of these most difficult times.
(s) Nova Fuentes
San Rafael, CA

Estes shares qualifications for clerk position

To The Editor:

It is my pleasure and honor to run for the position of Morrow County Clerk. My slogan is "A History of Service" because it speaks to who I am as an individual.

I am currently the chairman for the Morrow County Unified Recreation District, the volunteer coordinator and a trainer for Pioneer Memorial Hospice and a vestry member for my church.

Formerly, I served on the BMCC Foundation Board, the City of Heppner Planning Commission, and other civic organizations. In my professional and my private life, it is important for me to have meaning, purpose and integrity. I believe service to others is how I achieve those goals.

As Morrow County Clerk I will represent you efficiently, effectively and cheerfully, providing the accountability that is critical to sustain trust in our local government. Our voter records must be accessible and accurate to guarantee confidence in our elections. I look forward to meeting the challenges of the Help America Vote Act, which ensures that the right to vote will be preserved for everyone. I will provide quality service and implementation of the Oregon Revised Statutes. I respect the intent of our laws and their purpose to preserve and protect our rights. I would also like to develop programs to engage our children in our election process. I have acquired a broad spectrum of skills and knowledge that will help me make these goals a reality.

I have been in public service for 18 years as an employee with Morrow County Assessment and Tax, serving 14 years as lead appraiser. I have worked at a statewide level with the Oregon Department of Revenue on special teams for appraisal standards and valuation projects, as well as on computer program design for legislative implementation. I have experience with deed records, legal descriptions,

maps, district boundaries and extensive experience in understanding and implementing the Oregon Revised Statutes.

All of these skills and experiences will help me represent you both locally and on a statewide level. I hope you will allow me the opportunity to serve you.

(s) Cyde Marie Estes
Heppner

Sheriff shares thoughts on his position

To the Editor:

As election time draws near, I want to take this opportunity to share with the voters a couple of my thoughts about what it means to be the Sheriff of Morrow County.

First of all, I personally do not believe that we can afford to have elected officials who are merely "figure heads." We must be productive, working members of the department.

Realizing there may be people who do not understand what that entails, I wanted to offer some examples of what the Sheriff does. I administer a budget of over \$2 million; supervise a staff of almost 30 employees (plus around 15 volunteer reserves and a few seasonal workers); and manage a wide variety of contracts for special services such as marine patrol, 9-1-1 communication, forest patrol, OHV Park patrol and Heppner City policing, as well as many inter-governmental agreements with surrounding agencies, such as the Oregon State Police and Umatilla County Sheriff's Office.

Being dedicated to professionalism, I oversee a wide variety of training and educational programs for staff from firearms qualification to civil service. Morrow County does not have a jail, but it legally responsible for lodging all prisoners, so I must negotiate and maintain a jail contract. I am responsible for any new programs this department may participate in, whether it is for bicycle safety, domestic violence or neighborhood watch, as well as programs that reach beyond the boundaries of our county, such as the Law Enforcement Torch Run and the Special Olympics fundraisers.

I participate on a number of boards and committees in order to represent Morrow County's public safety needs, including: the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council; Law Enforcement Administrators Council; the Blue Mountain Narcotics Task Force (which I was a founder of and am still active in as president of the board). Additionally, I am an officer in the Oregon State Sheriff's Association where I served on five committees last year in order to represent the public safety interests of Morrow County and Eastern Oregon.

On a personal level, I believe in the principle of service and have served many years on the Citizen Review Board (and been honored as their volunteer of the year) as well as serving as deacon in my local church. I encourage this kind of volunteerism for service in my staff and am very proud that most of them are actively involved in community service of their own.

Furthermore, as the head of the Sheriff's Office, it is my responsibility to represent this agency to citizens, civic groups and the communities at large and I have a long history of being responsive to the questions and concerns of every one of those. I have always maintained an open-door policy and no citizen has ever been turned away. As you might imagine, these and other duties demand all of my time, as well as some staff time, particularly the Undersheriff. The suggestion that our time would be better spent performing the duties of a patrol deputy demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding what it takes to manage the Morrow County Sheriff's Office.

It has been my privilege to serve Morrow County for 21 years, the last six as its Sheriff. I hope to continue in that service.
(s) Sheriff Verlin R. Denton
Heppner

New mayor needs vision to lead Heppner

To the Editor:

With the election close at hand, there is a deafening silence on the Heppner City Mayoral race. Thank goodness there are two excellent candidates running for the position- Keith Lewis and Tim VanCleave. Both are long-term members of our community.

In my judgment, it comes down to which man has the greatest vision to lead the City of Heppner through tough economic times. I believe that our city council needs to take a proactive role in making sure that our city provides the correct environment for small and large business to locate here.

VanCleave has filled the position of city councilman for 10 years. With this experience, I believe that he has earned his stripes to become our next mayor. His many civic activities bring him very close to a large segment of fellow Heppnerites and I believe gives him an edge over his opponent.

VanCleave has had training in community leadership, problem solving and city government. His vision is apparent. Kick the end out of the "box." These qualities entitle him to take on the job of the mayor.
(s) Louis Carlson,
Retired Morrow County Judge
Heppner



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