

~ Letters to the Editor ~

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT 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 \$10. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Doherty responds to recall petition

To the editor;
I have been implored of recent, to address the potential recall petition, I have theretofore resisted for fear of lending it any credence for, "That which can be asserted without evidence, can be dismissed without evidence." ~ Hitchens. It is something though, of serious institutional consequence, to be reserved for only unthinkable malfeasance. I would never support such action against any civil servant in this county. And make no mistake, it is less about me and more about you-or who will fight for those, who for so long have had their voices and every spirit suppressed.

I will not be chastened on your behalf nor silenced by those who would have us continue forward under a paternalistic oligarchy of power brokers in this county. This isn't about some petty grievance; this is dastardly punishment for standing up for the constituency who duly elected me. And standing up for our marginalized public health staff. This is about the folks in the county for once having a conduit to governance through Commissioner Lindsay and I, and for those who seek to suppress the people's desires.

I will continue to fight for the sons and daughters of Irish immigrants quietly tending their cattle in the brushy draws of Little Butter Creek, all while unjustly being inundated with the massive intrusion of the B2H infrastructure. This they are told is in the name of, "progress" while receiving a pittance of recompense for their sacrifice. Éirinn go Brách

I will vehemently defend the rights and pursuit of a healthful life, of our more recent immigrants from around the world, who seek not only an elevated existence in this literal land of, "milk and honey," but are the currency of our successes. They, and the longstanding residents of the county, should never fear for their health as they seek sustenance from our springs. I continue to grieve with the multitude of mothers anguishing over their unborn, folks blessed with abundance and those scarcely surviving-that have lost kidneys and suffered unknowingly over the years to the toxic consumption of local waters.

When I pressed mightily for the recognition that we must declare an emergency to begin the healing and for the first time in thirty years focus on the community-the compassion of those with means hung in the balance. Some were less kind, preferring to look away or find fault with their own inaction, conveyed only as spite to those of us leaning in. In short order though the local titans of industry, such as Tillamook, Three Mile Canyon Farms, and others, along with my friends Wes Killian (Beef Northwest) and Jeff Wender (Three Mile Dairy) fast recognized that it is not feasible nor conscionable to move forward without a healthy workforce. I bless them for this introspection and assistance.

As a measure of my votes at the county I do so in an effort that allows me, in a room full of detractors, staff and history; to follow a path, to move forward with honor and look folks in the

eye. Of recent consequence is the culmination of a quest by our ethnic minority staff, and others of protected class, toiling for the county-who only ask that they be treated with respect and given equal treatment in fulfillment of their duties. My dereliction in not acting promptly to rectify their suffering, drove one from our midst and weighs heavy on my conscience. I sincerely apologize for their discrimination that went too far under my watch. In addition, I will see to it that those remaining will be certified and no longer exploited. I beg your forgiveness. Le pido perdón

Abraham Lincoln famously said, "Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the Government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it."

Will this petition come to fruition, will I withstand the effort, I cannot know? Would I change my votes knowing that it might, not on your literal life. What the formerly powerful fail to understand, is that the genie is out of the bottle. Everything, as we move into our unwritten future, will forever have to go through the scrutiny of the community, as it should. Remember, in the end Braveheart led one to many charges and died for the cause but the movement grew, as it will here too. I will continue to stand in front of you, beside you or behind you, rest assured I stand with you.

Si se puede
Jim Doherty
Morrow County
Commissioner

Shame on commissioners

To the editor;
Shame, shame, shame on the Morrow County Commissioners who voted to terminate Darrell Green. I've rarely met a man of such integrity, intelligence and gentle temperament. Darrell successfully headed a program at Blue Mountain Community College prior to his employment as Morrow County Administrator and was influential in helping many, many low-income residents in Morrow

and Umatilla Counties get a basic education leading to employment.

So, commissioners, what are you really hiding from the public? You won't release the tapes? Why? Afraid of a Heppner-Gate revelation of the truth? He wasn't approached at the time of the perceived issue, whatever it may be? Why? What corruption on your end are you trying to cover up? This situation reeks of spinelessness and personal

vendetta. For shame. Doherty and Lindsay should both be recalled from office as soon as possible so they can join Mr. Green in looking for a new job, which will now be more difficult for your actions. If I were Mr. Green, I'd hire a good lawyer and fight this to the end.

Thank you, citizens of Heppner. As Tammy Wyette said, "Stand by your man."
Matt Henry, Pendleton

Lindsay responds to recall effort

To the editor and voters of Morrow County;

Carol Mitchell has chosen to file a recall petition against me. She was not able to respond to the citizens she invited to a meeting last week to solely "discuss the details of a recall," offer details nor answer the questions. People are unaware of the amount of money a special election, their actions, will cost you just to take a few weeks from my service. No specifics were made available.

Chief Mike Hughes, in his uniform, acting as if he was in his official capacity gave a misleading speech. I wish to address his comments separately. Actual facts will come forward ultimately.

The petition states there is "County wide disapproval with other government and charitable organizations." I wish to address here the claims about the charitable organizations. When asked what agencies were being referenced in the recall petitions Ann Spicer Kuhn, who led the meeting and appeared to speak for both petitions, stated there were "just a few

agencies" we have talked to, "several-not a lot" than listed only; "The Neighborhood Center, Boardman Food Bank, Irrigon" center. She further stated as a recallable offense that we did not assist with "getting volunteers" to work and "did not respond."

First I say thank you to these organizations and apologize that your work is part of these conversations. These organizations are extremely important in Morrow County. I am very proud and thankful for the volunteer work that they do, tirelessly for our communities. I commend their efforts. The South Morrow Neighborhood Center, Boardman Food Bank and Irrigon Emergency Services boards and volunteers are a crucial resource to our communities.

I am consistently advocated to seek money; food delivery and services to support these organizations. To name just a few of my efforts; I am serving on the CAPECO (Community Action Program of Eastern Central Oregon) Board, I have chaired the Local Public Safety Coordinating Council for several years and participate on the state level Association of Counties Public Safety and Human Resources steering committees. In these roles I am able to actively advocate for resources. I have actively brought needed money at crucial times.

Commissioner Doherty responded to the Boardman Food Bank needs by bringing forth to the board of commissioners a request for \$100,000 toward purchasing a necessary building to house their work. I was pleased to support this with a yes vote. We further advocated together, under his lead, at the state level,

AOC and at CAPECO for assistance as this was the first food bank in Boardman. Proud work.

If people could investigate these claims, they would find that the only question to my service was my inability to attend all board meetings and not assisting with locating volunteers. When time allows I do attend these meetings of the board of directors as courtesy. Prior to COVID, my time was much freer. These are well run organizations with active boards, they don't need a commissioner's oversight. They need money and resources. I review their financials and minutes after every meeting and take away items that could lead to my being an asset in advocacy. I am not duty bound as a commissioner to locate volunteers for any organization which makes this completely astounding to me to be stated in a recall meeting as reason to try and shame my work.

I have located, advocated and delivered thousands of dollars to these organizations in my tenure as commissioner, above and beyond budget asks. This is where I believe my work is best served. Voters should decide if this is a fair reason for the additional expense and efforts for a recall, and if it is how they want the time resources of their county commissioners allocated. Knowing the demands of the job and the range of commitment an active commissioner can make, as I have been, I would not change the focus and the work I have done supporting these organizations. I am hopeful that my local volunteerism speaks for itself, and before you sign the petition, please ask more questions.

Melissa Lindsay

Quick response saved husband

To the Editor:
On the evening of July 6 (2021) my husband was on our roof trimming a branch off our tree. While doing so, he lost his balance and fell off our roof. Thank god I was home and found him right away, unresponsive. I immediately dialed 911 and shortly after our local Boardman fire fighters, police officers and ambulance arrived. Due to the fall Josh broke all his left ribs, punctured his left lung, was bleeding internally, hurt his neck, back, broke the bone under both eyes and his brain was bleeding on both sides and (he) had major wounds on his head and ear. Immediately the EMTs and fire department worked together to stabilize Josh, keep him breathing and transported him to the nearby soccer field to be life flighted. If it wasn't for all of them being present and working together to save

my husband's life, he would no longer be here.

Their quick response, knowledge and teamwork has a lot to do with Josh still being alive. If the fire department wasn't present on that day to help and assist and help transfer my husband in the ambulance, I don't think he would be alive. Boardman needs the fire department to be able to assist and be present when there is an EMS call. I am concerned that if that is no longer an option, we are going to lose many lives when there is an emergency like the one I had on July 6.

I can't even put into words how grateful and thankful I am for our local fire department and EMTs being present on that horrific day. Thanks to them I still have my husband and my children still have their father.

(s) Rocio Macias
(s) Josh Koertje

Heppner Market Fresh apologizes

To the editor;
I would like to address the situation that occurred at Heppner Market Fresh on Saturday, July 17, 2022. It was brought to my attention that a petition was being passed around that caused a lot of hardship and distress.

First, I want to express my heartfelt apology, and that the store had no political ties or opinions about the subject at hand. A long-time customer approached me and asked if they could set up a table. I allowed it with the understanding that neither I, nor the store,

would be affiliated with the subject and that it would not be disruptive to customers.

My decision to allow this petition on the store property was wrong. Heppner Market Fresh has always intended to keep the best interest of all our customers and we value each one. After this experience, we have made the choice to no longer allow situations like this to occur again.

I have addressed all parties and expressed how sorry I am and there was no ill will intended.

Amy Patterson

Country allows us freedom

To the editor;
Morrow County citizens, we are so fortunate to live in a country that allows us such freedom.

Recently residents of Morrow County exercised the freedom to challenge the actions of two of our county commissioners, by way of a recall petition. As one man said, "The firing of Administrator Green, was the last straw."

Recently I was allowed to collect signatures outside a local business. I was approached and asked if I had been given permission to do so, to which I said yes. Then I was informed that that they were going into the business and have

them make me leave. They did so and proceeded to cause trouble for the store with repeated phone calls and friends sent to intimidate me and then proceed into that store threatening to take negative actions against the store if they didn't make me leave. I was not allowed to come back with my signature sheets.

A similar situation happened to a circulator of our petitions in Boardman, by one phone call. Is this behavior what the people of Morrow County want representing us in the future? To take such disruptive actions seems to indicate that they don't trust the voters to make a decision of their liking.

My hope is that they will honor the right of the people to be heard and allow the democratic process to go on without disruption.
Carol Mitchell

Justice Court Report

Morrow County Justice of the Peace, Glen Diehl, has released the following Justice Court report:

-Frank R. Martineau, 34, Heppner was convicted of driving uninsured, fine \$265.

-Keith M. Hess, 32, Heppner, was convicted of violation of basic rule, fine \$265.

-Jose A. Zamudio, 43, Hermiston, was convicted of violation of basic rule, fine \$165.

-Juvenile, 17, Heppner, was convicted of violation of basic rule, fine \$165.

-Anthony J. Cook, 26, Heppner, was convicted of Trk speed, fine \$115.

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