

# OPINION

## OUR VIEW

### First responders deserves pat on back for service

Cowboys and cowgirls may have taken home money, buckles and bragging rights, but the true heroes of the 2019 Omak Stampede and World-Famous Suicide Race were our first responders. These men and women deserve a big shout out for all their hard work and communication during last weekend's signature event.

As temperatures fluctuated and unsettled weather rolled in for several days, those in uniforms stood ready to assist in any way needed.

At 2 a.m., police were breaking up fights outside the beer garden. By 8 a.m., they were patrolling the grounds to make sure there was no mischief going on. When vehicles wouldn't start, officers were more than willing to lend a helping hand.

Medical professionals were also readily available to assist in the event of an injured cowboy or cowgirl.

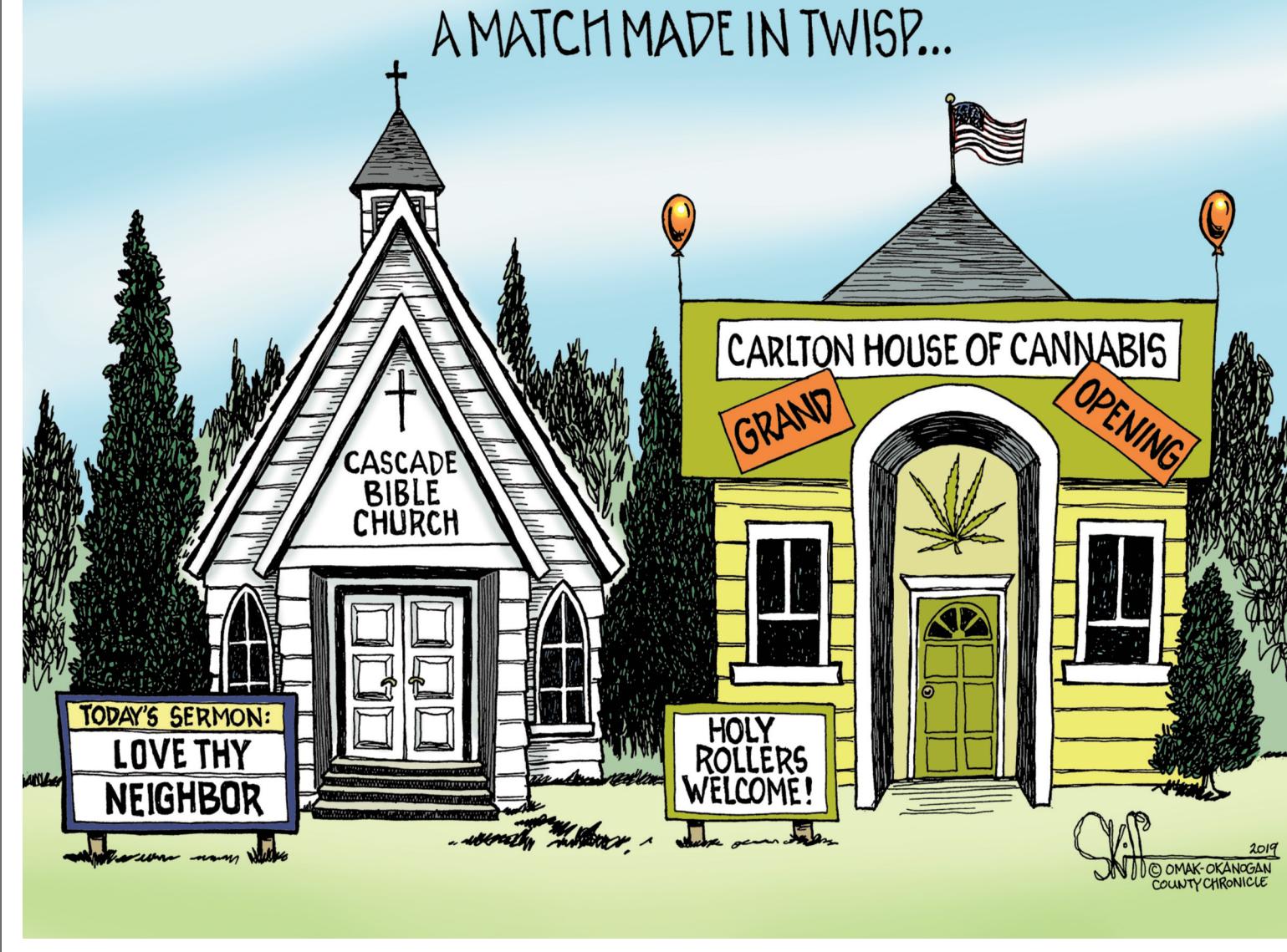
Meanwhile, officers and medical professionals were responding to regular calls, too.

With an event as large as Omak Stampede, there's a million way things could get out of hand. But, with law enforcement present, things went off without a glitch. We cannot thank our first responders enough for all they did, and continue to do.

And, of course, a special word of thanks is due to the countless number of Stampede volunteers who work throughout the year to fix fences, mend issues and provide a top-notch, high-quality show.

#### Corrections & Clarifications

The Chronicle staff strives to be accurate. If errors occur we want to correct them promptly. If you believe a correction is warranted, please call 509-826-1110 or 800-572-3446 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.



## GUEST OPINION

### Initiative 1000 essentially legalizes racism

As Washingtonians, we often get to vote on voter-sponsored initiatives. We've voted to limit taxes, cap car licensing fees and more.

Rarely, however, do we get to vote to overturn an initiative. But that's exactly what voters will be doing in the Nov. 5 general election.

Designed to reverse the Legislature's passage of Initiative 1000, Referendum 88 will be on the ballot this fall. The measure would reverse the Legislature's decision to inject race, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference and more into the educational and public hiring

processes. Last week, the Office of the Secretary of State certified the referendum for inclusion on the general election ballot. The referendum required 129,811 voter signatures to be certified. Sponsors turned in 213,268

Referendum sponsors collected 213,268 signatures of registered state voters; they only needed 129,811; at least 184,239 were validated.

Under I-1000, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference and more would be allowed to be considered as factors in hiring employees in state government offices. The measure would also allow those and other factors to be used in deciding who gets into our state colleges and universities.

Democrats in the Legislature and Gov. Jay Inslee unilaterally decided this past spring that

allowing such factors would improve diversity. In passing the measure without a vote of the public, they decided that diversity is more important than skill sets, abilities and academic performance.

At its heart, I-1000 legalizes racism, something Washingtonians long ago rejected.

In 1998, state voters tossed out affirmative action with the passage of Initiative 200. That measure prohibited preferential treatment based on race, gender, ethnicity and more in hiring for state jobs and for acceptance to state colleges and universities.

Our state was among the leaders in the nation to move to colorblind policies, thereby giving the most qualified job applicants the ability to compete and top academic performers a seat in a post-secondary classroom.

Had I-1000 become law already, our state would've been set back at least two decades.

Luckily, registered voters turned out en masse to sign onto R-88 and put I-1000 on hold and give voters a say in whether race, gender, ethnicity, etc. is appropriate.

Your choice is simple — approve or reject affirmative action (I-1000).

For more than 20 years, we've been making great strides in rejecting racism, gender-bias and preferential treatment in hiring and education.

Why would we ever want to go backwards?

*Roger Harnack is the editor and publisher of the Statesman-Examiner and Deer Park Tribune. Email him at publisher@statesmanexaminer.com.*

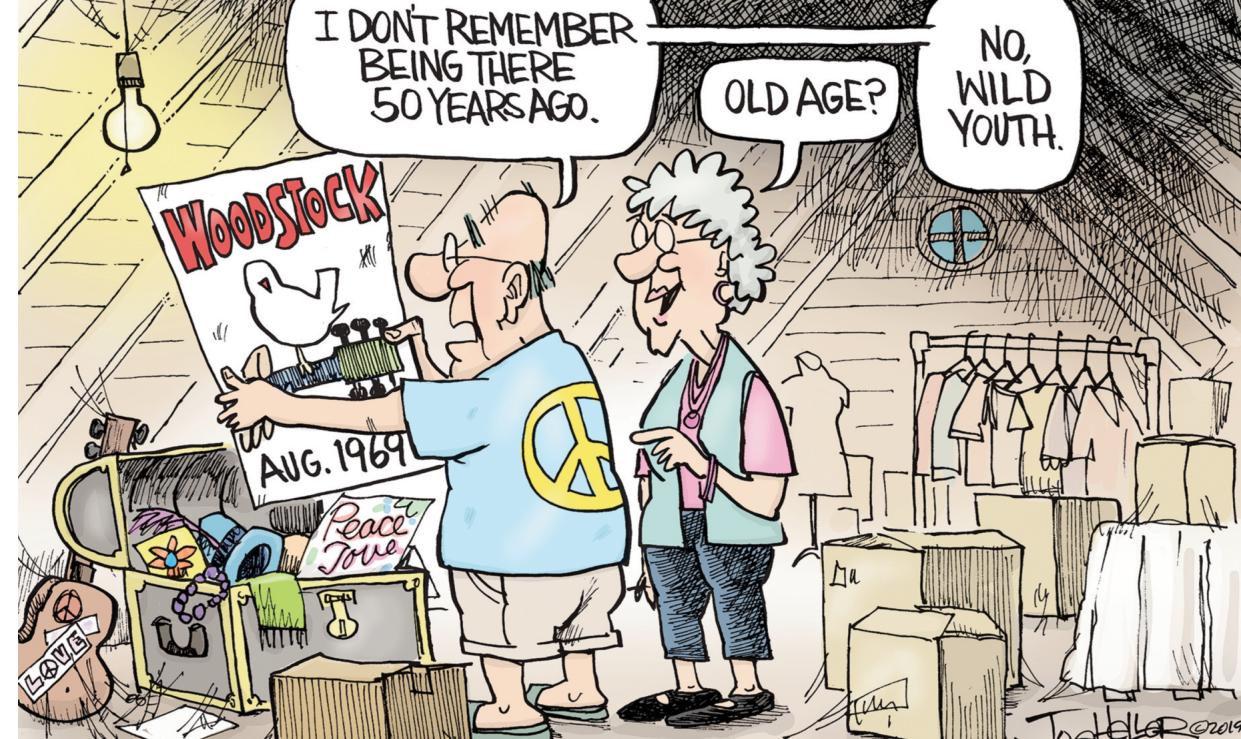
## From our readers

### American Legion supports veterans, community

The Tonasket American Legion Auxiliary executive officers met with two standing members Aug. 6 to make the public more aware of our organizations purpose and projects. Our unit No. 82 was established in 1927 in the spirit of service, not self. The mission of the auxiliary is to support the American Legion and all veterans. We honor the sacrifice of those who served by enhancing the lives of veterans, military and their families, both at home and abroad. For God and country, we advocate for veterans, educate our community, citizens, mentor youth, and promote patriotism, good citizenship, peace and security.

We have supported our veterans for more than 90 years in our local organization. When the Legion decided to purchase the current Post No. 82 building, the Auxiliary Unit 82 helped purchase the building by making half the payments. Poppy Days are held every year during Memorial Day and during our local Founders' Day, and Veterans Day. The donation for poppies goes directly to help Veterans and their families. We help our local veterans in many ways. Purchasing Christmas gifts for Veteran residents at the extended care; we provide items and volunteers for the VA Spokane Hospital Christmas gift shop; support Fisher House, Spokane VA Hospital, and Wounded Warrior Project; we have organized and held veteran's dinners and assisted active veterans on duty.

In our community, we sponsor a girl to Evergreen Girls state where they learn about government, two \$500 scholarships in the name of a past member Mildred Marchesseau, and helped college student apply for State Auxiliary scholarships. We also do the National Americanism Essay contest at Tonasket High School. We work with children and youth and one of those project is the community Easter egg hunt that has been held for 45 years with help from members and the community. Auxiliary members have participated in the International Gavel passing with Canada and local



parades on behalf of our Post Veterans.

Tonasket American Legion Auxiliary Unit 82 is an active group of women who are eligible to be members by having a service related family member who is a veteran serving during war time. We encourage you to join your local auxiliary, it is a wonderful service organization. Most of our projects are supported by our generous local community members and businesses which we are very thankful for. We have stood strong and have never wavered from our purpose and commitments to our veterans.

If wanting further information about being a member of the Auxiliary or volunteering to help with any of our projects please contact President Debbie Haven at 509-486-2620, Patti Hill, secretary 509-429-2983, or Julie Pratt, membership chairman at 509-486-4195.

**American Legion Auxiliary Unit No. 82 officers and standing members**  
Tonasket

### Why wait on Balanced Budget Amendment?

Politicians like Rep. Dan Newhouse often pay lip service to doing something about the federal government's continued deficit spending. Then it's back to collecting awards and having photo ops. Newhouse says we need a Balanced Budget Amendment. I say, why wait, show me a balanced budget. If he did, Americans would be aghast at the level of cuts that would need to be made to everything including "their" social security and Medicare.

The problem is that Americans have grown use to living high-on-the-hog without having to pay for it. Politicians have sold the public on "No new taxes!" The cost of everything including our wars is "paid for" with borrowed money.

Someday soon creditors are going to demand payment, and when we say we have no money, they are going to point to and demand our public lands, parks, fisheries, highway systems and anything else that is publicly owned.

The new courts will go along with this. Politicians have set us up for this. They have been bought by the power of the wealthy. They no longer represent the common people. You might think that people would see this and demand the government start living within its means. But, as long as Americans are getting something for nothing, that's not going to happen.

Politicians like Dan Newhouse can continue the lip service.

**Rob Thompson**  
Tonasket

### Climate change is serious issue

Climate change is no joke. Though all of us in the Okanogan are for now breathing a sigh of relief for being able to breathe clean air this summer, other Americans and citizens of the world continue to witness record climate disturbances with serious local and global consequences.

We are familiar with the vast

flooding of farm land in our Midwest this last spring. What is most shocking to me now, is to know while flood waters began to recede in June, vast areas above the arctic circle have been burning at historic levels.

Researchers call this year's events "unprecedented". According to meteorological organizations, June-July 2019 are the warmest on record. This additional heat has contributed to the drier conditions which are spawning our local and arctic fires, which because of their scale, are increasingly difficult to control. Of further concern are the health effects produced by the fires, and the megatons of carbon dioxide gas being released from the burning forests and tundra.

Our planet's natural cycles, including critical water and carbon cycles upon which life as we know it today has evolved, are now out of balance. We are told, with ample data to support it, that we have a short window of time to bring down greenhouse gas emissions before it's too late. For the sake of our children and future generations, notify and vote for local and federal representatives who will make addressing climate change a top priority.

Thanks for listening.

**Andy Jones**  
Tonasket

### Letters to the editor policy

The Chronicle encourages readers to write letters to the editor for a free and wide-ranging discussion of public issues. If possible, every letter is published, although publication does not imply agreement or endorsement by The Chronicle.

Letters may be mailed to The Editor, Omak-Okanogan County Chronicle, P.O. Box 553, Omak, WA 98841; dropped off at The Chronicle office, 618 Okoma Drive, Omak; faxed to 826-5819; or e-mailed to news@omakchronicle.com. All letters must be signed by the writer and include a daytime phone number.

Writers are encouraged to keep their letters as short as possible. The Chronicle reserves the right to edit for length; maximum length is 300 words.

The editor also will correct grammar and spelling. Writers are limited to two letters on the same subject within a six-month period.