

Opinions

Guest Editorial

Kamiah youth are our goal

By Angie Massey
Upper Clearwater Community Foundation President and Kamiah Community Partners Coalition Secretary

A coalition is a body of distinct parties, or persons for joint action. I have the privilege of being part of a coalition here in Kamiah. The Kamiah Community Partners Coalition is made up of 12 sectors and other concerned, motivated individuals of Kamiah who come together once a month with the main focus being our community's youth.

Two coalition members and myself are part of a three-week training in Pennsylvania. The CADCA training is offered to a couple individuals each year for five years, paid for by the new Drug Free Community grant. The main goals in this grant are building and sustaining a coalition, and help the community youth to be free of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. The training is helping us understand surveys and data, how to identify problems, build goals, use strategies, utilize grant money for a greater impact, and much more.

The coalition (KCPC) makes efforts to provide activities for our youth that are safe and substance free. These activities are supported by volunteers, donations and the DFC grant. You may be familiar with some of them like Midnight Basketball, Freedom Friday, Family Fun Night, Youthfest, and other various cultural activities. It warms my heart, and

I'm always impressed when there is an activity and so many people come, not just to enjoy the fun, but pitch in and help when asked.

My husband and I decided years ago that we wanted to raise a family here in this community for several reasons, and I'm glad of that decision. In Kamiah I can walk down Main Street, make eye contact and say hello. We as a family enjoy the wholesome, family friendly community where I have confidence that



if one of my children were to be doing something unsafe, my neighbors would not hesitate to give us a call. You've heard the saying "it takes a village to raise a child". I believe this, and that's why

we work so hard to keep Kamiah a safe place for our children.

Another local volunteer organization is the Upper Clearwater Community Foundation. Through grants, fundraising activities, volunteer actions, and town meetings, UCCF works to develop and achieve the goals and visions of the communities of the upper Clearwater region. Many worthwhile projects have been supported, such as the Kamiah swimming pool, rehabilitation of Tommy Robinson Pond, improvements in parks, repair and remodeling of the Kamiah Legion Hall. It also reaches the communities of Kooskia and Stites.

With a minimal budget, the dedicated executive board and members of UCCF also undertake events throughout the year, such as community planning and visioning events, town meetings, a fishing day at Tommy Robinson Pond, and an annual Victorian Tea. Most of UCCF's recognizable and rewarding activities have been for our youth. And it only works because of motivated volunteers in our community. I truly believe that the more fun, safe, family activities our kids enjoy, the less chance they will get involved with unsafe, unhealthy activities. This belief is what motivates me to keep volunteering my time to these worthwhile events.

If you want to have a part the coalition, or volunteer for activities, please give us a call, we would love to hear from you! KCPC meetings are every third Wednesday, from 12:30-1:30 p.m. UCCF meetings the third Thursday from 6-7 p.m. Both are held at the Kamiah Welcome Center. For more information call Sharlene Johnson, DFC Project coordinator, 935-2290 or Angie Massey, UCCF president, 935-0508.

Letters to the Editor

Not buying distractions

The President and the media have made a really big deal out of AIG's \$165 million bonuses. That represents two hundredths of one percent of the \$825 billion stimulus money. While they keep us focused on that bit of graft, what do you suppose is happening with the other \$824.835 billion (99.98%) of our great-grandchildren's money? Wisely used and not worthy of investigation, probably.

I see the White House is going to have a garden. Doesn't that just make you feel all warm and down-homey? I wonder how much a carrot from there will cost us. I'll bet I could eat for a year on that amount. Can't you just see the Obamas out there digging now? With all the BS in D.C. at least they'll have plenty of fertilizer!

Lucky Brandt
Kooskia

Parents: Talk to children about alcohol

Most sixth-grade children in our community are not using alcohol, but it is a decision many face. How wisely they choose is up to us. In the United States, more than 10 million youth aged 12 to 20 are underage drinkers. By the time they reach the eighth grade, 41 percent of adolescents have had at least one drink, and nearly 20 percent report having been drunk.

Children and teens in Kamiah need to know how to reject underage alcohol use and how potentially damaging underage drinking is to their health today and tomorrow. Kamiah Community Partners Coalition and KMO Officer Tom Remington have joined with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to raise public awareness about the dangers of underage drinking.

As part of a nationwide effort, we held a Reach Out Now Teach-In event for sixth-grade students at Kamiah Middle School on March 31. Officer Remington led the discussion about why young people should reject underage drinking and how they can resist peer pressure to use alcohol.

The discussion about the harmful effects of underage drinking cannot stop at the school door. Talk with your child about alcohol. A clear and consistent message at school and at home that underage alcohol use is dangerous and unacceptable will reinforce a child's ability to make healthy decisions. The benefits from talking to your child about underage drinking can last a lifetime and make a lifetime last.

Sincerely,
Sharlene Johnson, Program Coordinator
Drug Free Communities
Kamiah Community Partners Coalition

Land use planning costs more than it's worth

Leaving aside partisan politics in Leta Strauss's editorial (3-19-09), consider the negative aspects of centralized land use control.

1) It is expensive, requiring added bureaucracy at taxpayer cost, though partial funding would come from permit fees. Permits increase the cost of building projects and cause delays waiting for inspectors. It would require landowners to travel to hearings, losing work time, pay, and gas.

2) Property owners are already subjected to considerable "planning" through graduated property taxes that

are disincentives to development and improvement. Also their ability to burn, use water, put in septic facilities, power, etc. is already regulated.

3) People come to Idaho County to escape burdensome property regulations. Other counties with central planning are already available in Idaho if people want zoning. Idaho County offers people freedom of choice.

4) There is no proof that land control resolves property conflict; it merely creates different ones and destroys the possibility of other solutions being found locally, either between neighbors, within affected communities, or as a last resort, in court.

5) Central planning of private property simply increases government power. Government never voluntarily relinquishes power, and it cannot even manage its own growth. It does not have a superhuman ability to resolve conflict, for it consists of individuals with personal agendas often not in the public interest.

Mary Hohmann
Kamiah

Drinking and driving costs too much

I would like to discuss and possibly extend a concern that was mentioned at Alan Robinson's memorial. I am not accusing or even attempting to find fault because I believe we all understand and know that life does not have the simplest of all answers, especially when it comes to the death of a loved one.

I pray that my explanation and heartfelt letter doesn't offend anyone. There was a time in my life when I had been misusing drugs. No one said anything to me and possibly they weren't sure how to, but one very dear friend looked me straight in the eyes and said very firmly "you need to get off that stuff." I was awestruck, most people had ignored or pretended not to see or acknowledge what was destroying me. His care and love went beyond simple politeness.

I know the grief is still and will always weigh heavy on us over such a needless loss but my prayer is that hopefully many may be saved through such a heartache. As I have said before I don't intend to accuse or condemn anyone, I only desire to hopefully prevent a loss of any other precious individual like my cousin. I don't speak out against drinking, but I do speak out against drinking and driving. My hope in this protest is to save any unfortunate family or friends from this crushing heartache. Some lessons are best learned from experiences. This would not be one of them.

Michelle Stanton
Kamiah

Land planning empowers, not weakens, citizens

Planning is not a partisan issue but an important issue for all residents of Idaho County. We're a population of diverse opinions. I believe there's room for disagreement, but I don't find it necessary to launch personal attacks on people who do not agree with me. My hope is we can open a new dialog about property right protection using a reasoned and planned approach.

Just for clarification, I am a hunter and cherish the hunting rifle I inherited from my grandfather. I come from a family of gun owners and hunters. I grew up in a

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