

OPINION

OUR VIEW

The proof is in the ammo

It's hard to change a habit. Ask smokers, speeders, and hunters. As deer season approaches, many hunters will purchase lead ammunition without thinking much about it. They bought the same bullets last year, as did their family and friends for the last several generations.

What would prompt a change in this habit?

How about a bullet that would reduce the potential to harm people and wildlife? Ammunition made of copper, would keep people from eating, along with their venison, lead pieces and fine powder sprayed in the muscle as a bullet fragments and disintegrates. The same would go for the bald eagle, and other wildlife, which benefit from the gut piles and carcasses left behind by hunters.

What if copper bullets were as accurate or even more accurate than lead bullets? Some hunters have reported finding copper bullets to be just that.

Where's the proof copper bullets may be a better alternative to lead for a variety of reasons? At a demonstration Oct. 19 that will allow hunters to compare for themselves the performance of copper versus lead bullets.

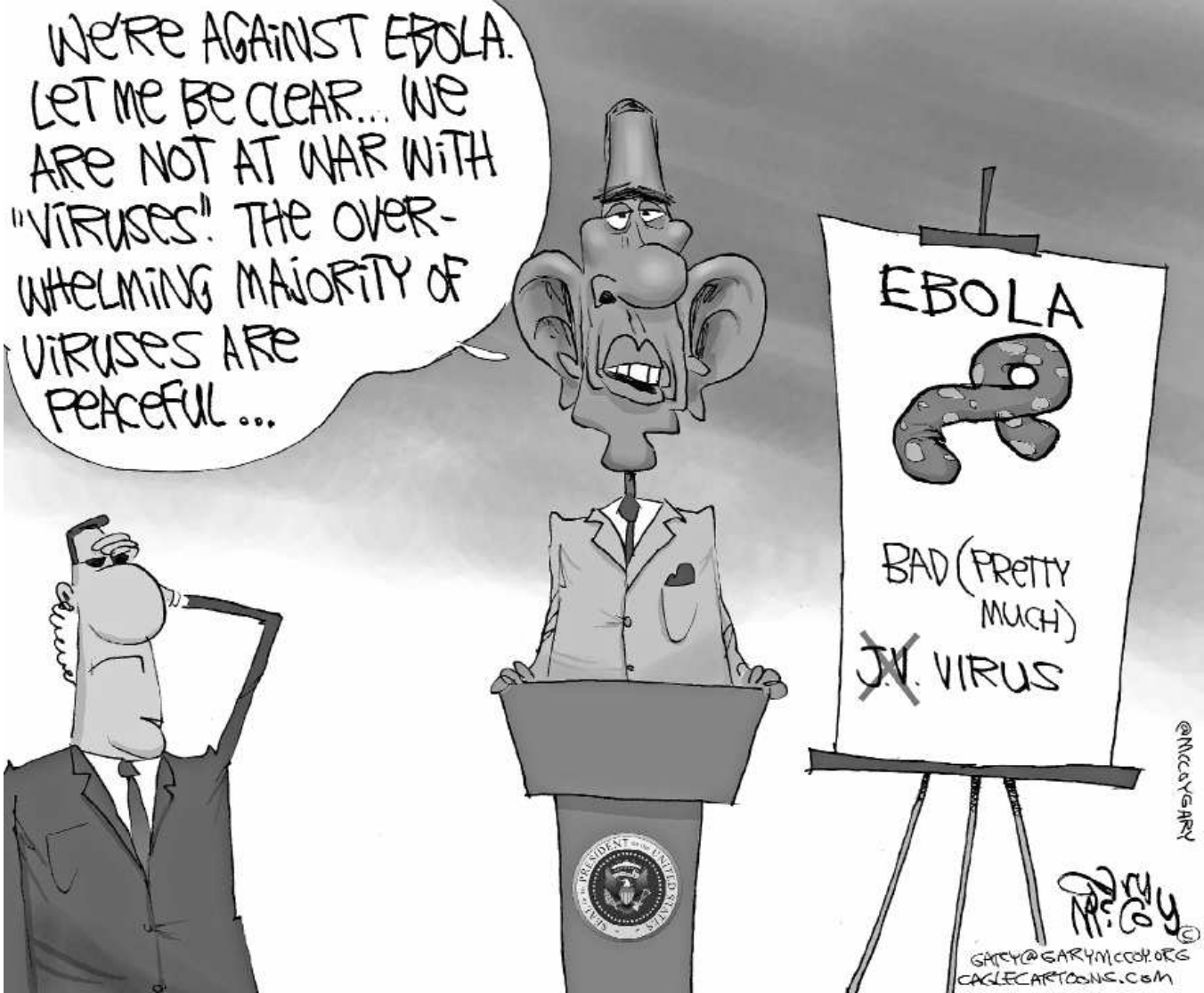
The Minnesota Chapter of The Wildlife Society offers local hunters a

chance to see whether the assertions about copper bullets are true when at the Littlefork Gun Club they first shoot their traditional lead bullets and then are handed copper bullets of the same grain and caliber to shoot. Bullet traps will capture the fragments and pieces left, simulating what happens in a live animal, of each type of bullet for comparison.

Some states have and are considering laws prohibiting lead ammunition. But that's not the case in Minnesota. Instead, discussions about the risks of using lead ammo, and the benefits of alternative non-toxic ammunition are being discussed. As a result, the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources has given preliminary approval to a grant to allow the Department of Natural Resources to offer more demonstrations next year.

This voluntary effort to allow hunters to see for themselves whether the lead alternatives are a better choice for their guns, their venison-eating families and Minnesota's beloved wildlife is a great step.

We urge Borderland hunters to consider taking part in the Oct. 19 hands-on demonstration. They may be surprised by what they see and convinced to change their ammunition habit.



PAID ELECTION LETTER

Building business is focus of candidacy

To the editor,

Dear Center Ward constituents and fellow residents:

Thank you very much for the warm responses as I have been campaigning door to door. Throughout the campaigning process I have found that there have been misconceptions about who I am and why I am seeking the position of Center Ward councilor.

One of the misconceptions that has been brought up is that I am "anti-union." This is not true at all since my wife Aimee and I are both proud union members. As a department manager at Super One, I am an active member of the UFCW Local 1189. I have been a member since 2006 when it was the UFCW local

1116. My wife is a member of the Local 4798 working as a paraprofessional at Falls Elementary. The reason that I did not seek the union endorsement is because I wanted to run my campaign based on my ability to create jobs in our community.

Here in International Falls, I have already started two businesses. Though they have been transferred into capable hands, both of these businesses are still in operation. In 2007, I was a founding partner of Two Guys Coffee. This small coffee roasting operation is still producing quality coffee, employing three local workers. Again in 2012, I was an active partner in the creation of International House of

Bowling.

We were able to take a building that had been closed for a year and turn it around into a profitable venture. This last summer we transferred control over to Timber Pins and they currently employ six local employees. I don't want anyone to think that my choice to not seek the union endorsement meant that I am "anti-union." It's just that I have built business in this community and that is my focus for our future.

Secondly, I have had



Harley Droba

a few people ask if I was serious about running for the position. There is nothing I find more serious than the future of International Falls. I have been attending city council meetings. I have spoken on the behalf of local business to our council, and have asked many questions of our council so I will be knowledgeable when voted into the position. Becoming a representative of International Falls and building opportunity is my primary focus. We can build this community together one job at a time!

Please consider me Nov. 4,
Harley M. Droba
International Falls,
MN

PAID ELECTION LETTER

More water, sewer customers needed to lower rates

To the editor,

Dear city water and sewer customers:

I state what you well know – the water rates have increased 32 percent since 2011 and the sewer rates have increased by more than 200 percent, more than doubled.

But why? The city was running a deficit in the water and sewer fund and by 2011 owed the general fund, essentially the taxpayers of International Falls, over \$600,000. Although our operating costs increase at about 2 percent per year, we had not priced in the cost of setting up reserve funds for major capital outlays and that was the source of our deficit. In 2012, we raised the water rates 20 percent and reduced the amounts transferred to capital reserves and we immediately reduced the debt to the city significantly.

By the end of 2013, we should have had a substantial surplus in the water/sewer fund but that didn't happen. Instead, in 2013, we barely broke even. Why?

The North Koochiching Sewer District had to rebuild the sewer plant to comply with state and federal standards. The city's share of the North Kooch Sewer district's costs to rebuild the sewer plant is based on flowage to the sewer district. The costs are divided between three customers: Ranier, East Kooch Sewer District and the city of International Falls. Since our flow is about 90 percent of the total flow to the sewer district, we get billed for 90 percent of all the costs.

Therefore, city rate payers are paying nearly \$1,000,000 per year for the loan and interest payments on the debt to reconstruct the sewer plant.

Those billings started in 2013 and also included a rate increase for sewage. The city's North Kooch sewer bill increased almost \$1.2 million dollars, almost tripling the amount of our 2012 bill. We had no choice but to double the sewer rates in 2013 to have the funds to write the \$1.7 million in checks to the North Kooch Sewer District.

So how do we lower rates?

1) Best solution is to increase the number of water and sewer customers. The more gallons we bill, the lower rate we can charge. The opposite is true as well. With fewer customers and less gallons sold, we have to raise rates. Our city's Economic Development Director Shawn Mason is working on finding businesses that use significant amounts of water to locate here as one way to substantially

increase water sales.

2) We can help homeowners change their drainage systems to stop diverting rain water into the sanitary sewer system. More than half of city homes have drainage systems that dump storm runoff into the sanitary sewer system. The gallons of storm water leaking into the sanitary sewer are huge and equal to the water we use from the plant, doubling our flowage and our share of North Kooch sewer district costs.

3) Speed up our work to fix leaks into the sanitary sewer lines under the streets that also add storm water to our flowage. We fix a few lines each year as resources allow.

Cynthia Jaksa
Budget and
Finance Chair
International Falls
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International Falls,
MN

How to contact your lawmakers

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Candidate letter policy

The beginning of 2014 brought a new policy to The Journal. A charge of \$30 will be required to publish letters to the editor from candidates or about candidates. The letters must be 500 words or less and the fee must be paid prior to the letter being published. The name and city of the author will be published with the letter.

Letters may be emailed to laurel@ifallsjournal.com. The Journal will publish a deadline for publication of paid election letters prior to the Aug. 12 primary and Nov. 4 general elections.

These letters will not be published the week prior to the Nov. 4 general election, so the editions of Oct. 25, Oct. 29 and Nov. 1 will not carry paid election letters.

PAID ELECTION LETTER

Hedlund brings honesty, integrity, leadership

To the editor,

I confidently recommend Perryn Hedlund for Koochiching County sheriff.

Perryn's honesty, integrity and his ability to lead and work well with others are his greatest assets. He knows it is imperative that a

leader lead not by words alone but by example.

As the elected sheriff, he will work hard to provide the residents of Koochiching County with the best law enforcement services possible.

Perryn brings excellent credentials to this position, with

a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice and 13 years of combined experience in both U.S. Customs and the International Falls Police Department.

His well known commitment to accountability and ethics in the workplace makes

him the number one candidate for the position of Koochiching County sheriff.

With proud enthusiasm, join me in supporting Perryn Hedlund on Nov. 4.

Maggie McBride
International Falls,
MN