

YOUR VOICE CONTINUED

age for purchase of a semi-automatic weapon, he must enforce it. If there is a global pandemic and public health is threatened by large gatherings of unmasked people, he must enforce the limits and mask wearing.

Klickitat County is in need of a new sheriff who respects the law and protects the lives of all the people of the County.

Gigi Pomerantz
White Salmon

Road questions

Chip seal was the topic of an Opinion piece two weeks ago. I am a bicyclist, and a driver. I love the roads of our counties here: smooth road beds, well banked for turning, great vistas!

I was startled by the author's take on things, about the resurfacing of Eastside Road with chip seal. He sounded so angry. I decided to go drive on the new surface. Sure enough it was rough and noisy. I was surprised because Hood River County roads crews resurfaced part of Clear Creek Road in Parkdale, two years ago I think it was, and when they were done it was quite smooth. My bicycle found it a fine surface as well. So what was going on for Eastside Road? The answer: A day or two later it got a second coat of a finer size stone which turned the rough first coat smooth. Ah! My faith restored. Thank you Hood River County.

I'm sorry to say that another question remains. Why two and three years ago did another road agency, ODOT, resurface the Historic Highway from Mosier to the Dalles using a chip seal, single coat, with a stone size as rough as that first coat just used on Eastside Road? A second coat of a finer stone size like that used by Hood River County would have made a smooth resurfacing job. We are left, however, with a rough, coarse sandpaper-like surface that only the fattest bike tires make happy. Darn it!

One good thing I can report about ODOT locally, when I asked them that loose gravel left from winter, on the bridge from downtown Hood River over to Highway 35, be swept up, they did it within two weeks of my inquiry. That's great! Thank you guys. And they carried on up the hill, up the switchbacks, sweeping all the way to the Hatfield West Historic Highway trailhead.

It looks so much better, and feels nice and smooth under the tires.

Timothy Curry-Stevens
Hood River

Never enough

Is there ever "enough" for the rich? Why is it even legal for some to own so much at the expense of those less fortunate?

When will affordable single-family homes become a possibility for the families who need them instead of the already wealthy investors?

When you purchase an affordable home and turn it into a \$2000-per-month rental, do you feel good about yourself? To the people who buy all the homes to turn into rentals — does it make you feel good that you collect these high rents which prevent low-income families from ever being able to own a home of their own?

Perhaps you will never have "enough."

I am greatly saddened seeing people who have called the Gorge home their entire lives be unable to afford to live here any more thanks to the invasion of the filthy rich. I am saddened when I drive by the many vacation homes downtown sitting empty for nine months every year, when there is no housing to be found in the Gorge without a huge price tag.

The idea of building more affordable housing is a nice idea — one that is constantly talked about in the Gorge but never actually done. However, a lot of these issues could be solved by limiting the amount of properties one person can own.

There is someone in White Salmon who buys up the affordable homes and turns them into either vacation or overpriced rentals. These homes could house many local families, but no. This person apparently will never have "enough." It is time to change things.

Limiting the number of vacation rentals in favor of the people who actually live here would also be a good plan. Let the tourists stay in the many hotel options or camp. Let local families live in the homes. Why is this such a far-fetched idea?

Because the rich never have "enough." "That's capitalism!" They love to say. Perhaps it's time for the rich to try sharing.

We learned it in kindergarten but it didn't seem to stick.

A. D. Will
Hood River

Root of the Symptom

The recent claim was made in the June 23 letter titled "Misunderstood Symptom" that psychosocial and psycho-emotional issues were the root cause of most abortions. It was also said that no one sees abortion as a good thing and that efforts are not being made by pro-lifers to help women.

As far as never hearing or reading any pro-choice thought on abortion being something good, I would ask the author to look up #ShoutYourAbortion and you will see countless stories of abortion being painted as a good thing.

As for pro-lifers not helping women enough, there is always room for improvement. However, in my experience, far more support has been shown for women, pre and post abortion, by pro-lifers than those on the other side.

The pro-life movement actually gives women the opportunity to choose life and supports those women through pregnancy, motherhood and even post-abortion life. Hope Medical Clinic here in the Gorge is a perfect example of this.

But the root cause of abortion, psychological issues and abuse is sin. Sin has corrupted mankind since the fall in the garden of Eden. Since then, it is in man's nature to do evil, which includes abuse, rape, murder, etc. While we should always try and stop these things, the reality is that these sinful acts will continue to happen until Christ comes again. If any education is going to fix this, it is God's teaching on how to love your neighbor and how Christ has loved the world through his death on the cross. It is sin that causes people to abuse others, to rape women, and that brings people to tolerate and even celebrate the destruction of life in the womb.

The goal of the pro-lifer is not to disregard women and their hardships, but to love both the mother and the unborn child through any and all hardships. The pro-lifer who doesn't want to support women post-birth should repent. The pro-choice person who doesn't want to help women who chose life should also repent.

Zac Patterson
The Dalles

Abortion issues

The June 23 letter titled "Misunderstood Symptom, the author thinks that many abortions are performed in the U.S. as a result of deep psychosocial and psychoemotional issues. He maintained that the women have been abused in some way.

As a physician, who did abortions as a family practitioner, I observed the reason that an abortion was requested was the pregnancy was inconvenient for one or both of the parents of the baby. Certainly, alcohol, other drug use and promiscuity contribute to the number of unwanted pregnancies.

So what do we do about it? What I did was to completely stop doing them because perfectly formed arms and legs that I tore from the torso and held in my hand was a severe blow — I had just killed a baby! I confessed this sin and never did any more. I asked God for forgiveness, which he gave along with healing.

There are many women and men who have guilt about contributing to abortion. They, too, can have forgiveness and healing.

They need to confess to God the sin of self centeredness and sexual immorality and turn from them. Ask for his healing and forgiveness and he will provide them.

I think that abortion is an "option" because true Judeo-Christian values have been rejected in our society. One should remember that

unwanted babies can be given for adoption.

Donald Rose
Hood River

PAC problems

The June 23rd letter that revealed the existence of a Political Action Committee maintained by School Board member Chrissy Reitz, concerns me deeply as it should all parents of students in our county.

PACs have no place in a non-political environment. They are funded by individuals or organizations who want to see someone elected to office and with whom they want to have a working relationship.

The fact that Chrissy's PAC, left over from the state senate race that she lost, was funded by special interest groups and organizations from far outside of Hood River County should concern all who care about how our school district is managed.

A quick review of the contributions to Chrissy for Oregon finds tens of thousands of dollars from the very same education unions and other special interests who actively opposed allowing kids in Oregon to receive classroom instruction this past year. Did that influence Chrissy's role on the HR County School Board, and the decisions that were made locally that impacted our kids?

How about the generous contract the board just settled with our districts teachers — a 6% bump in pay after a year in which they missed no paychecks due to COVID, unlike our private sector that continues to struggle to recover? Did Chrissy's close financial ties to OEA, the state's teacher union play a role in the settlement?

Who knows, but the point is that the existence of this PAC creates the appearance of a conflict of interest that taints the image of the school board and creates an unfortunate distraction for the entire district.

PACs are for politics, not non-partisan representation like a school board position. Chrissy needs to decide: Is she going to be a political candidate, or be content to serve on the school board? Her constituents are watching.

Kathy Mussi
Hood River

Inappropriate rhetoric

Dear Sheriff Songer of Klickitat County Washington,

As citizen members of the Klickitat County Board of Health, we want to respond openly to your proclamation dated June 17, 2021.

During the past year and a half, we watched carefully as the Klickitat County Health Department rose to meet the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We can say without hesitation that we are impressed with the excellent

public health leadership and practice carried out by Director Erinn Quinn and health department staff. Right from the start, the Health Department worked with partners to coordinate county-wide COVID responses, including testing, provision of isolation units, distribution of vaccine, and much more. Director Quinn has met regularly with county school administrators to provide public health guidance and support in keeping our school children safe. Meanwhile, she and her staff continue with contact tracing, on and off-site vaccine clinics, public health education, and myriads of other pandemic related responsibilities. All that is in addition to the routine services and programs provided to safeguard the health of Klickitat County residents.

It is shocking to us that an elected county official would make a public statement that threatens arrest and detention of our health department employees for acting in the line of duty. Such posturing and rhetoric is intimidating and totally inappropriate — regardless of your personal beliefs and politics.

Our county public health workers are dedicated professionals whose goal is to protect and promote the health and well-being of the people who live here. They have done and are doing their best to provide services through a very unsettling pandemic. Their expertise is in the field of public health.

Clearly yours is not. Going forth, Mr. Sheriff, we suggest that you focus on the duties listed on the job description for the position you were elected to fulfill. And hopefully with a measure of appreciation for other public servants among us.

Sue Pennington RN, MPH
Paul Moyer PA, MPH
White Salmon

Thank you Commissioners

To Klickitat County Commissioners: Thank you for your recent letter to Sheriff Songer calling out his intimidating and erroneous statements especially with regard to local health officials who are doing their best to protect all of us. It was necessary and shows good leadership.

Your endorsement of new leadership in the sheriff's position would be a next good step.

To citizens of Klickitat County: A sheriff who regularly makes outlandish and legally questionable statements and clearly attempts to divide the populace of the county he has been elected to serve does not serve any of us well. I'm certain we can elect someone better.

Joe Zandt
White Salmon

LOCAL GORGE NEWS

Wyden, Merkley press federal land managers for 2021 wildfire season help

On June 16, U.S. Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley pressed federal land managers on Oregon's preparedness needs for the 2021 wildfire season as intense drought conditions persist and are expected to worsen in the state, according to a press release.

"As you are well aware, the 2020 Oregon wildfire season was one of the most destructive seasons on record, destroying thousands of

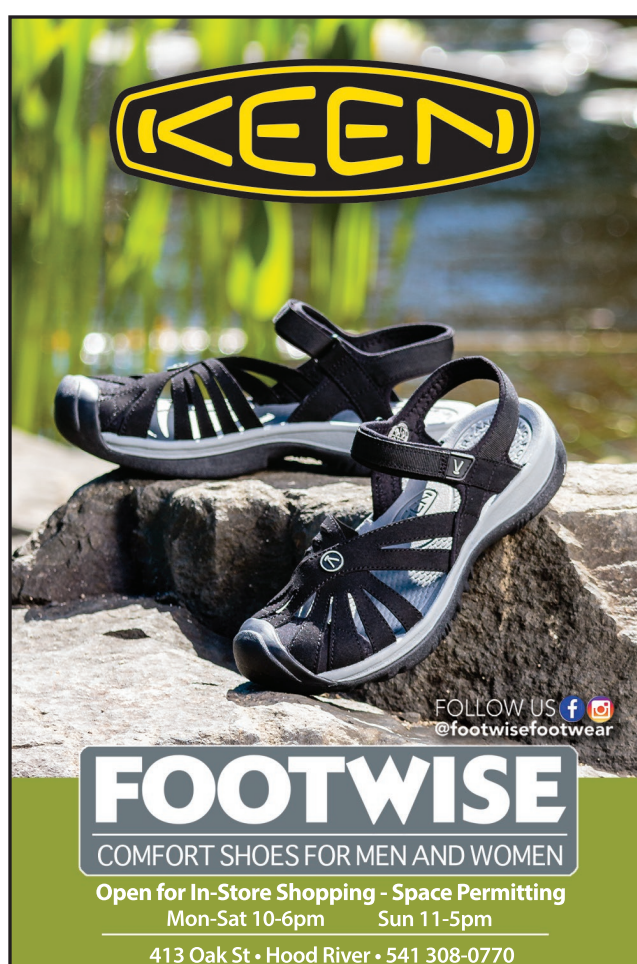
homes, burning over one million acres, and straining communities already battling a historic pandemic. Though many Oregonians are still recovering and rebuilding after last season's wildfires, the 2021 fire season in Oregon has already begun," Wyden and Merkley wrote in a letter to the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Wyden and Merkley asked the agencies to:



- Provide additional investments in aviation and other 21st century wildland firefighting technologies like drones and helicopters.
- Continue coordination with state and local fire response.
- Ensure a thorough assessment of firefighting capacity to align resource availability with resource needs.

"In 2020, there was increased investment in planes to put out fires from above, and it is imperative to continue prioritization of the deployment of aviation and other technologies to keep firefighters safe. We recognize the importance of a strategic and integrated approach to tackle wildfire, and urge your continued partnerships and coordination with state and local firefighting response units. We also

acknowledge the capacity challenge federal agencies face. As fire season lasts longer and longer and as fires become more severe, retaining qualified firefighting staff will be challenging. We urge a thoughtful and intentional analysis of existing wildland firefighting capacity, so that resources are prioritized accordingly," Wyden and Merkley concluded in a press release.



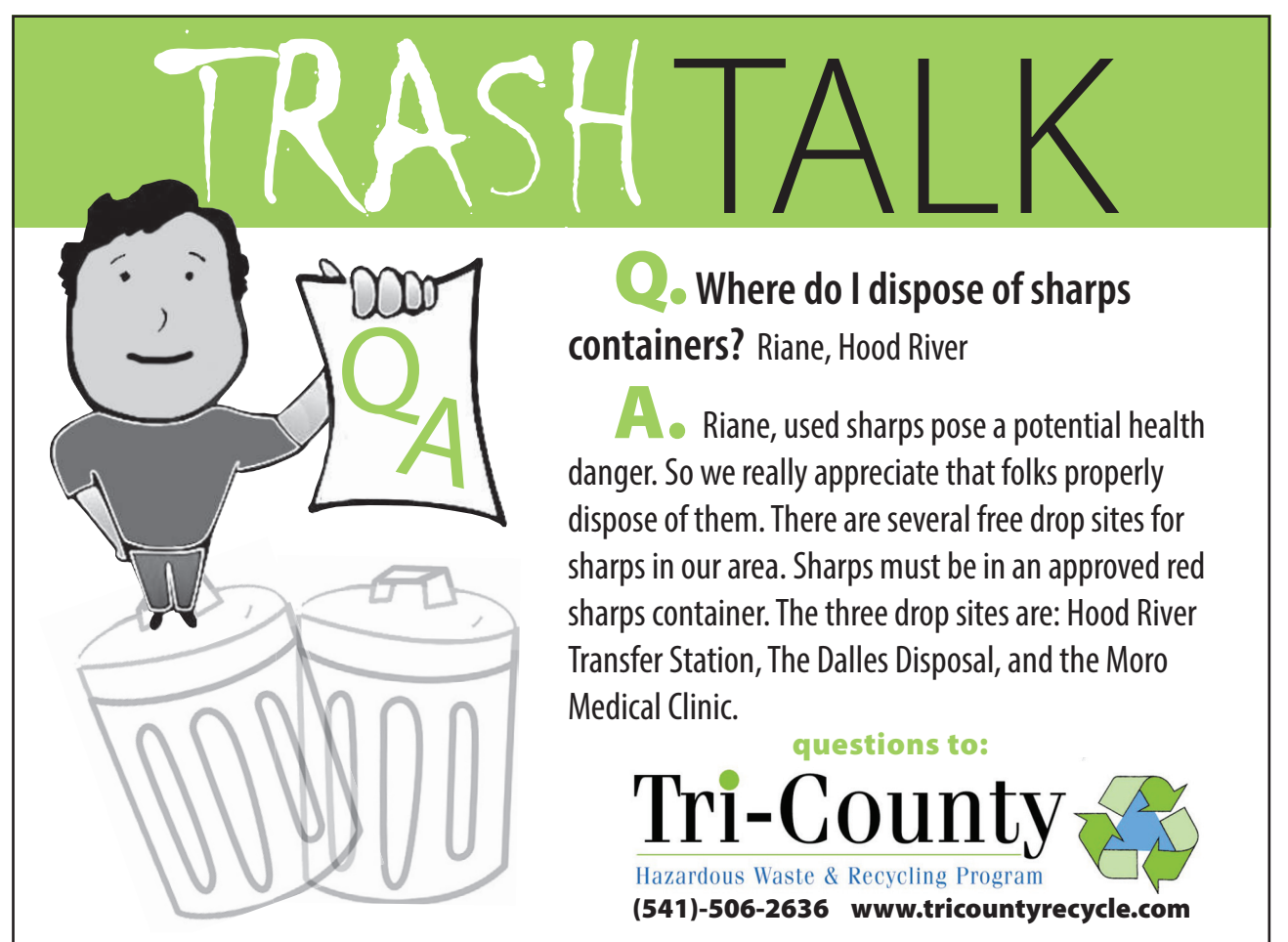
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TRASH TALK

Q. Where do I dispose of sharps containers? Riane, Hood River

A. Riane, used sharps pose a potential health danger. So we really appreciate that folks properly dispose of them. There are several free drop sites for sharps in our area. Sharps must be in an approved red sharps container. The three drop sites are: Hood River Transfer Station, The Dalles Disposal, and the Moro Medical Clinic.

questions to:
Tri-County
Hazardous Waste & Recycling Program
(541)-506-2636 www.tricountyrecycle.com