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SleevesUp

*A new way to support the vital
need for blood donations*

Plenty of people let their hair down or let a seam out as they celebrated over the holidays.

Now, on behalf of the American Red Cross, we can roll our sleeves up.

The next bloodmobile visit to Hood River will be Jan. 28 (details on page B2).

January is a challenging time for blood donations, between the effects of inclement weather and cold and flu season. This comes along with National Blood Donor Month, celebrated in January since 1970, to raise awareness of the need for blood during the winter and throughout the year, while honoring those who roll up a sleeve to help patients in need.

Donors of all blood types are needed, especially those with O negative, A negative and B negative. Type O negative is the universal blood type and can be transfused to patients with any blood type. Types A and B negative can be transfused to Rh positive or negative patients.

To learn more, or to schedule a donation, download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Speaking of sleeves, American Red Cross supporters have a new way to help save lives through blood and platelet donation with "SleevesUp" virtual blood drives. The drive lets those who feel passionate about blood donation create a virtual blood drive and encourage colleagues, friends and family members to give blood or platelets, or make a financial donation to support their campaign. SleevesUp campaigns allow people to honor someone's life, celebrate a special occasion or simply bring others together to help save lives — any time of the year — regardless of location.

Learn more at redcrossblood.org.

A SleevesUp virtual blood drive can be created online at redcrossblood.org/SleevesUp in just a few minutes. Once a campaign is created, others can pledge their support immediately by making an appointment to donate blood or platelets at a blood drive or donation center convenient for them. Those who are not eligible to give blood, do not have a Red Cross blood donation opportunity near them or simply want to do more can also support a SleevesUp campaign by making a financial donation to the Red Cross Blood Services.

Late in making a resolution? Already broken one made in December? Resolving to roll up your sleeves to help Red Cross in 2015 is a healthy response to a common experience.

Why kill hawks?

I'm 11 years old and live on Fairview Drive. This morning my mom found an injured Red-Tailed Hawk in our yard. We brought it inside and discovered it had been shot in the chest. And then this lovely big bird died. It's sad to think that someone feels the need to kill such a magnificent creature. How much longer will it take before people respect the animals living around them?

Teddy Parkinson
Hood River

Stop name-calling

Another example of the cloudy thinking so prevalent in America is exemplified by "The Bray of Pigs" in the Dec. 27 Hood River News.

This "cartoon" seems to indicate any continuing belief Cuba holds anti-American ideals, should not be discussed or publicized.

We must stop the name calling and listen to rational arguments on each side of important issues.

Robert Manning
Mosier

(Editor's note: This is a corrected version of a letter published Dec. 31.)

Not impressed

So, Obama says that Sony should have consulted him before caving to the terrorists? What was Obama going to tell them? "Don't worry, we got your back?" Like he had Ambassador Steven's back in Benghazi? I'm sure Ambassador Stevens and the brave men defending him would agree that Obama "having your back" is less than useless. Sony did what they felt they needed to do after your President has made America a third rate power. Go back to your golfing and vacations, Obama. The world is not impressed.

Cliff Mansfield
Odell

What is government?

"The regulation, restraint, supervision, or control which is exercised upon the individual members of an organized rural society by those invested with the supreme political authority, for the good and welfare of the body politic." — Black's Law Dictionary. This legal concept of the public trust was embodied in the Magna Carta and The Public Trust Doctrine, defined as "an affirmation of the duty of the state to protect the people's common heritage," became part of American Common Law in 1892 and has since been upheld in numerous court cases. In the early days of our country, this same construct (now ignored) was included in the charters of incorporation as companies seeking the protection of the "corporate veil" were required to conduct business in the public interest. Clearly, therefore, under the law, our elected government officials are the trustees of the Public Trust, and have been successfully

Our readers write



sued in court for failure to protect the public interest.

Take the current issues of public health, safety, global warming, free speech, and others facing the United States and the world as examples.

Governments, including our own, repeatedly act in favor of financial interests with a purely selfish and visionless interest in blocking measures that would protect the public interest in order to continue the extraction of the earth's resources and endanger communities for their own short-term gain. Hood River's statement against transportation of hazardous materials through our city is a step in the right direction, but we must strongly support the legal struggles being waged in communities across the country. By the way, replacing the "Trustees" at the voting booth is viable, but is unlikely if we fail to inform ourselves about the issues and vote. Congratulations, Hood River County, for your turn out in this last election.

Russ Hurlbert
Parkdale

Sheath the knives

Your Jan. 3 editorial page cartoon is highly inflammatory. To depict the parting year 2014 with knives in his back labeled "domestic violence,"

"ebola," and "terrorists" and include "Obamacare" among those horrors is shocking and disrespectful of our president and the Affordable Care Act.

You may not like his policy, but it is not even remotely accurate to equate it with the other problems.

Susan Turner, HRVHS grad
Portland

Call for an edge in playoff

The referees weren't trying to give Dallas the win when they reversed the proper pass interference call Sunday. No one can predict the effect of a call on the final score. What they did do was increase the probability of a desired outcome. Gamblers don't expect to win every game bet, just most of them. To accomplish this they need an edge. NFL referees for years have given them that edge.

CBS wanted a Green Bay/Dallas matchup to ensure a large audience. The cost of the broadcast remains the same no matter how many people are watching. The more people, the more they charge advertisers and the more they profit.

Jerry Giarraputo
Hood River

Windmaster Cell Tower

Nay

Hearing about the proposed plan for a new cell tower over by Windmaster Corner, I can't help wondering about the feasibility of a plan like that. My main reason for this thought is that to my knowledge there is a height restriction for man-made objects around the airport. Even if that is not the case, there are many other ways the tower could pose a danger to pilots even if it is lighted. Though other plans have not worked out, there are still places that would be far better than the current proposed plan.

Jonathan Harris
Hood River

Yea

I really hope the county approves the proposed Verizon tower at Windmaster Corner.

I live in the Dee/Upper Hood River Valley and as everyone knows that lives in the area the cell phone reception up here is very poor. I am a Verizon customer and I am lucky to get one bar at best on my phone.

I am sure there are those who do not like this idea but this would be a welcome site to our area.

Ron Dunn
Dee

(Letters may be sent to hrnews@hoodrivernews.com, or mailed to P.O. Box 390, Hood River, OR 97031)

ANOTHER VOICE

A step forward for Oregon: Common Core State Standards

By Dan Goldman

Imagine for a moment what our students would be learning if the expectations for them did not change with the times. Oregon first adopted educational standards in the early 1900s and since that time Oregonians have understood that our schools had to continually evolve to ensure our youth are prepared to compete and succeed in life after high school. Thankfully, as the knowledge and skills required for successful participation in society and the world economy have shifted, so have Oregon's targets for student learning.

Fast forward to the present and we see that Oregon has joined 43 other states in adopting the "Common Core State Standards." Many would have you believe that the federal government developed these standards, but that is simply false. The effort to develop the Common Core was a state-led effort launched by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governor's Association (NGA) toward a singular aim: to ensure students graduate high school prepared for college, career, and life — regardless of where they live. In the context of Oregon's history of evolving education standards, the adoption of the Common Core is just the next step in Oregon's century-long effort to move student learning forward, to prepare students for the rigors of post-secondary scholarship, and to connect K-12 education to the demands of the workplace.

So, how do the Common Core State Standards differ from the previous standards? The Common Core focuses on a more complex, and

more relevant, set of skills for students. No longer are students only expected to remember and recall discrete facts, mathematical operations, or pieces of historical information. Students must now apply new knowledge to real-world problems; they must evaluate various pieces of information and develop logical arguments for their findings; and they must create arguments and back them up with evidence. Similarly, the instruction in our schools must

now prepare students to reason strategically, to experiment and connect ideas, and to think critically and critique information. These attributes probably sound familiar to folks in many (if not most) family-wage occupations as the overarching aim of the Common Core is to develop the problem-solving and analytical skills required in the professions of today and the careers of tomorrow.

Although changing the standards, and the corresponding state assessments, poses great challenges for our students and our educators, the shift to this higher-level learning is ultimately good for our children and good for our collective future. I praise and support Oregon's involvement in the creation of the Common Core and the State Board of Education's decision to adopt these new learning targets. The new standards establish high expectations for all students in all content areas, and challenge our schools to help each and every student meet their full potential.

Along with the higher standards, Oregon has adopted a new assessment system to measure our students' mastery of the Common Core

Standards. With a wider range of question types (not just multiple choice or "fill in the bubble" testing) that require higher-level thinking and more elaborate answers, the new state assessment should be an improvement over prior measures. Our students will be exposed to the new, more rigorous state assessment for the first time this spring.

Most people I talk to about this new test are concerned that it will be too long, too hard, and disconnected from the reality of their child's classroom experience. As with any new endeavor, I expect the first time students take the assessment it will be bumpy and uncomfortable — and for some the results may be disturbing. As a parent, I'm ready and willing to learn about my own children's progress towards being prepared for college and career — even for my third grader — because I know that they will need my understanding, my advocacy and my support as a parent to succeed in school and in life. As an educator, I want to know how our students perform, what we can do in our school system to improve, and how to best align our resources and our collective efforts to help each of our students realize their greatest potential. As a parent and as your superintendent of schools, I am willing to be disturbed if it means I can help our children succeed later on.

Without question, these new standards and assessments are much

more demanding. Here in Hood River County, our teachers and administrators have been working hard to align instruction and materials to meet this new level of rigor: We've recently invested in the adoption of Common Core-aligned curricula and in providing professional development for teachers to best utilize the new materials. We are reinvesting in early intervention systems to identify and intervene with struggling students as soon as possible to get them back on track. And we're committed to providing our professional teaching staff time to collaborate in teams to review their students' progress toward the Common Core and to adjust their teaching to meet individual student's needs.

I assure you, in the Hood River County Schools we are doing our part to prepare our youth for these higher expectations. Along with raising the bar, however, our state must adequately invest in its future — our children. Oregon currently has the 49th highest class sizes in the nation and is near the bottom (46th) in terms of the percentage of available state resources directed to K-12 education. In 1991, Oregon was in the top 10 percent of states in terms of education funding. Fast forward to the present and we are stuck near the bottom. As a result of our state's disinvestment in public education, Oregon students receive nearly a full year less of instructional time across their K-12 experience

compared to the national average! And while Hood River County schools have stellar graduation rates compared to the rest of the state, compared to the rest of the country, the State of Oregon's graduation rates are near the bottom. These statistics are just unacceptable and are incongruent with the campaign promises of our elected officials. Raising the bar for students and teachers must be met with similar resolve from our legislators. I agree with my superintendent colleagues in the Eugene area schools who recently wrote in their area newspaper, "If our students are to compete in a global economy, and if our community is to prosper, the State of Oregon must focus on initiatives that add instructional time, reduce class size, close achievement gaps, invest in outstanding educators, support early literacy, and focus on assessment where it matters most — in the classroom."

The increased expectations within the Common Core State Standards challenge both our students and our educators to reach for new heights. Every single day in our schools you can find evidence of students engaging in the powerful learning experiences called for in the Common Core. Our Hood River County educators will not retreat from the challenges associated with these higher standards and we embrace the opportunity to raise the bar for our students. It's time our state leaders make good on their campaign promises and provide us the adequate resources to get the job done right.

Dan Goldman is the superintendent of the Hood River County School District.



Dan Goldman