

CASCADE Observations

By PEGGY DILLS KELTER

Where charity begins

IN 1978, JUST AFTER GRADUATING from college, I began pounding the pavement in the city of Boston looking — or, better said, begging — for a job. Armed with my degree in Studio Art, and surrounded by thousands of other, more talented college graduates seeking employment in that hip city, I had little hope of landing anything more engaging than minimum wage employment in the service industry.

I persevered. After weeks of visiting a myriad of art institutions in quest of a job, I landed an “administrative assistant” position in the Development Office of the Boston Ballet. It paid worse than a minimum wage job in the service industry, and I wasn’t sure what a development office did, but it sounded classy and important.



No longer begging for a job, my assignment in the development office utilized

my new skills as a beggar. Instead of groveling for employment, though, now I groveled for contributions. The non-profit Boston Ballet needed cash, and my job was to help find it.

Fast-forward 36 years and 3,000 miles away from that first grown-up job, I’m now the target for all those development folks hoping I’ll contribute to their meaningful causes. This last year my husband and I contributed to 90 different charities, but I’m sure we received at least 300 solicitations.

On a daily basis we receive three to five requests in our mailbox, and we’ve stopped answering our telephone if we don’t recognize the phone number. While many of the charities that solicit us are gracious, there are two types of charitable organizations that are just annoying. The first are the ones to which I’ve never contributed. I don’t know where they get my name and address. They send me a “gift” and then expect me to be so delighted with the “Made in China” junk that I immediately send them back a check. Recently, I received the ultimate in this category — a huge desk set, including a giant calculator, notepad and pen — wrapped in a gold plastic envelope and mailed to us a few weeks before Christmas. Yesterday I got a follow-up “calculator and planner receipt verification form” from this organization. The letter began “I hope you enjoy the calculator and planner I sent you, honoring the heroes who defend America and keep us safe!” Are they kidding me? How does a plastic calculator honor America’s veterans?

The other annoying charities are the ones that receive a contribution from us, and then decide to solicit us monthly for additional contributions. The amount of postage, paper and labor used up in harassing us regularly must cancel out any funds we gave them initially. Several of these organizations have received my “cease and desist” letters. Most haven’t complied.

Those charities that raise my ire end up in the “Never Again” column of my Charities Table. I created this chart years ago when my memory started fading, and I found myself duplicating some contributions and neglecting others. It shows three years of giving history. Each time we make a contribution to a charity, I fill in the amount and the month in which we made the donation. When the charity sends me a note asking me to renew my support, I quickly glance at my chart to see if it indeed is the appropriate time to renew. If so, we do so willingly. If not, I set the request aside until the renewal is appropriate.

Recently, my school had the good fortune of being the recipient of an unsolicited fundraising project when Katie Scarborough, a former student of mine, approached me to ask if she could raise money for Mid Valley Elementary School’s art program.

Katie, an HRVHS junior and member of the National Art Honors Society, organized a benefit art auction as her EA Project. EA stands for “Extended Application.” It’s Oregon’s terminology for a senior project. Every high school student must create and complete an EA project before they can graduate. The project should be something that the student is interested in, and encourages critical thinking, planning, and evaluating.



Katie Scarborough

Weather interfered with her event when an ice storm cancelled all school activities. Katie, undiscouraged by this setback, persevered and rescheduled the event. On Dec. 12, she and her industrious friends and family transformed the school’s cafeteria into a beautiful art gallery. Soft music played and refreshments were offered. Katie was poised and mature, even when it appeared that her anticipation of a crowd was a bit of an over estimation. Nonetheless, the volunteer auctioneer arrived, the small group took our seats, and with all the enthusiasm we could muster began bidding in earnest. An hour later, Mid Valley’s coffers were over \$500 richer. The funds will be used to help pay for our school’s annual “Art Week” program, March 3-6.

A personal thank-you to all those generous souls who came out on a dark winter night to support a deserving program. Even more, they came out to support a young woman with a vision and a cause. At 17, Katie’s graciousness and passion show that she already understands more about fund raising than many seasoned development professionals.

‘INTO THE BEAUTIFUL NORTH’

Hear the Hood River County Reads book on Radio Tierra

Would you like to get a jump start on the Friends of the Hood River County Library’s 2015 Hood River County Reads book? Radio

Tierra will be broadcasting a reading of this year’s selection, “Into the Beautiful North” (Rumbo al Hermoso Norte) by Luis Urrea. The book will be read in both English and Spanish weekly on Fridays from 8-9 p.m. by DJs Alejandro Cano and Gale Arnold. The show will continue until the book has been finished.

Hood River County Reads is a community reading program where readers of all ages read and discuss books.

Hood River County Reads titles represent the diversity of the Hood River County community and are shared widely throughout the area.

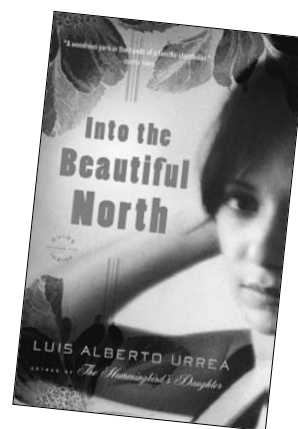
Some previous books include “Stubborn Twig” by Lauren Kessler, “The Circuit” by Francisco Jiménez, and “Ricochet River” by Robin Cody.

Hood River County Reads is sponsored and supported by the Friends of the Hood River County Library, with additional support from the Starseed Foundation, Hood River County Education Foundation, Hood River County Library Foundation, Hood River County Cultural

Trust, Gorge Community Foundation, and generous individuals.

Radio Tierra is a community radio station based out of Hood River. Its mission is to provide high quality, innovative programming to the Gorge area and the world, which will bring together diverse populations in order to promote mutual understanding, community support, and opportunities for community development. A significant amount of its programming is broadcast in Spanish.

For more information, contact Radio Tierra 541-387-3772, main@radiotierra.org, or visit their website at radiotierra.org. More information about Hood River County Reads will be available in the coming weeks on



Cover photo by Nicole Waite

2015 HOOD RIVER Reads selection starts with radio reading.

Hood River County Library District’s website, hoodriverlibrary.org.

Free discussion about cross-cultural ideas of life and death

Contemporary American culture is commonly portrayed as death-denying or death-defying. However, other cultural traditions understand our mortality as a teacher about living a purposeful life. Can acknowledging our mortality bring greater meaning to life?

This is the focus of “Grave matters: Cultural Diversity on Life and Death,” a free conversation with Courtney Campbell on Saturday, Jan. 17 at 2 p.m. at Hood River Library. This program is hosted by Hood River County Library District and sponsored by Oregon Humanities.

Campbell is the Hundere Chair in Religion and Culture and a professor in

the School of History, Philosophy, and Religion at Oregon State University. He has been on the faculty at OSU since 1990 and has received numerous awards for teaching and scholarship. Campbell serves on the board of directors for Benton Hospice, the ethics committee for Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center, and coordinates the program in medical humanities at OSU.

Through the Conversation Project, Oregon Humanities offers free programs that engage community members in thoughtful, challenging conversations about ideas critical to our daily lives and our state’s future. For more information about this free community discussion, please contact Hood

River County Library District at 541-386-2535, info@hoodriverlibrary.org, or hoodriverlibrary.org.

Oregon Humanities (813 SW Alder St, #702; Portland, OR 97205) connects Oregonians to ideas to change lives and transform communities. More information about Oregon Humanities’ programs and publications, which include the Conversation Project, Think & Drink, Humanity in Perspective, Idea Lab, Public Program Grants, and Oregon Humanities magazine, can be found at oregonhumanities.org. Oregon Humanities is an independent, nonprofit affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities and a partner of the Oregon Cultural Trust.

HOW TO HELP

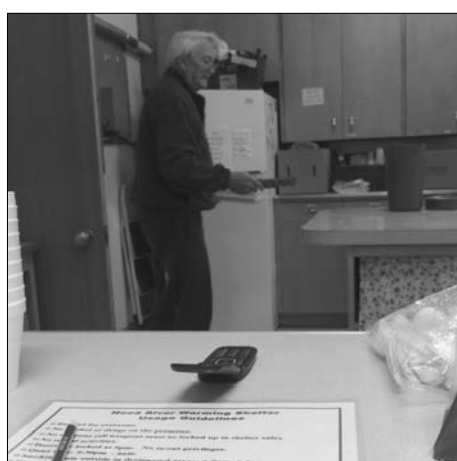


Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

WARMING SHELTER volunteers prepare for guests to sign in and spend the night at one of the rotating shelter locations.

■ **Warming Shelter** — A training session is planned Jan. 15 from 7-9 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Ninth and State streets. The training is open to anyone 18 or older. Visit hoodriver-cares.org for details.

Hood River Warming Shelter is open at Riverside Community Church, Third and State, this week until Jan. 18, and then for a week at Immanuel Lutheran Church.

From 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. nightly, homeless people can find a warm place to sleep, bedding, meals, and connection to community resources, all at no charge. The service is offered nightly at rotating locations.

■ **Volunteer drivers** from the Mid-Columbia area are needed to take vet-

erans to the Portland VA Medical Center. Oregon drivers must have a valid driver’s license and a good driving record. CDL is not needed. For more information, contact the DAV Coordinator at 1-800-949-1004, ext. 57804 or ext. 56957.

■ **HR Care Center** — The Family Council at the Hood River Care Center is seeking donations for wild bird-

seed, to be used in filing the residents’ birdfeeders. This is an activity which is enjoyed all year round. Donations may be dropped off at the Hood River Care Center, 729 Henderson Road. For delivery or pick-up, call Debbie Medina, 541-490-1575 or Carol Daniel, chairman, 541-490-6136 or hrc-cfc551@gmail.com.

WANT IN?
If your non-profit is looking for volunteers or has other needs, send brief information to hrnews@hoodrivernews.com

Community choir forms for MLK observance

Gorge area music lovers of all ages are invited to join in a community wide Gospel Choir that is forming to celebrate the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. on Jan. 19.

The choir, under the leadership of local musician Tim Mayer, will participate in a musical celebration of Dr. King that will take place in Hood River at Riverside Community Church on the evening of Jan. 19 — the MLK holiday. The celebration, which will be preceded by a potluck dinner, is sponsored by Gorge Ecumenical Ministries.

Those interested in singing with the choir for this event are invited to a rehearsal at Riverside Church on Thursday, Jan. 15 at 7 p.m.

To learn more, please contact Paul Thompson at paul@copperwest.com.

Birth Yohan Rodriguez

A son, Yohan Rodriguez Rodriguez, was born Nov. 1, 2014, at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital to Javier and Bianca Rodriguez, of Hood River.

He weighed 6 pounds, 13 ounces and measured 20-and-three-quarter-inches. He joins a brother, Eden Xavier Rodriguez, 5.

Grandparents are Juan Manuel Rodriguez and Martha Gonzalez, of El Grullo, Jalisco, Mexico, and Florencio Rodriguez and Imelda Guzman of Garcia de la Cadena, Zacatecas, Mexico.

life. planning

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