

MLK Day

Riverside Church hosts Monday celebration

Gorge residents are invited to participate in a musical celebration of the life, work and dreams of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Monday at 6:30 p.m.

The theme of this year's celebration, sponsored by Gorge Ecumenical Ministries (GEM) is "The Dreams of Martin Luther King Jr. Live On: Building a Community With Justice for All." The event will feature music from a community-wide Gospel Choir, directed by local musician Tim Mayer.

The musical event will be preceded by a potluck dinner for friends and members of GEM, which will begin at 5 p.m.

"On the MLK holiday we will gather to reflect upon and celebrate the spirit-filled, justice-oriented work of King," said Rev. Vicky Stifter. "We will also lift up the injustice and unfulfilled dreams that exist in the lives of many in our own community."

In addition to the music, several area youth will share words of inspiration and challenge and participants will have an opportunity to create and share their own "I Have a Dream" message.

The MLK events will take place at Riverside Community Church, located at 4th and State Streets in downtown Hood River. They are free of charge and open to the public. Donations will be accepted to support GEM's work with children and youth, including Peace Village, an interfaith program that introduces children and youth in our communities to the principles and experience of non-violent conflict resolution.

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Music Man



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

MARK STEIGHNER reviews music and words Thursday in a chorale work his singers are learning in the original German. Steighner in his teaching focuses not just on the sound and structure of music but its history and context – and correct pronunciation.

Mark Steighner honored today as Oregon Music Educator of the Year

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
News editor

A big award and official retirement.

Mark Steighner accepted congratulations from Hood River County School Board Wednesday for the Oregon Music Educators Association award as Oregon's Outstanding Music Educator of the Year.

Human Resources director Kevin Noreen also informed the board that Steighner would retire in June after nearly 40 years in education.

On Thursday afternoon, Steighner was teaching his senior chorale the finer details of German pronunciation and definitions as they prepared music by 19th century composer Josef Rheinberger. Steighner paused over one particular word he wanted his students to grasp.

"Gemutlichkeit – it's about

a kind of calm joy, but it's more than that – it's that sense of true happiness in the moment," Steighner said. "It's a wonderful feeling and one I hope you can experience."

Saturday night might be Steighner's own opportunity to experience the warm glow of the moment, when he is formally recognized at the Oregon Music Educator Association's annual conference at the Eugene Hilton.

The OMEA competitive award recognizes an individual whose commitment to students and quality teaching represents the highest standards of the music education profession, according to Rich Polkinghorn, HRVHS principal, who appeared with Steighner Wednesday night at the School Board meeting to

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CL City Council approves water rights transfer for Nestlé plant

City to file application, ODFW still on the fence

By BEN MITCHELL
News staff writer

Cascade Locks took another step forward this week to bring Nestlé to the city by approving an application for a transfer of water rights that will ultimately help supply spring water for a proposed water bottling plant.

With four members voting, a unanimous decision was made by the Cascade Locks City Council Monday night to move forward with a water rights cross transfer application that the city will submit to the Oregon Water Resources Department. The application would involve the permanent transfer of 0.5 cubic feet per second of the city's ground water right for 0.5 cfs of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's water right to Oxbow Spring, located just south of the Oxbow Hatchery on the east side of Cascade Locks. The spring water would then be sold by the city to Nestlé for bottling at the yet-to-be-built plant.

However, ODFW also has to submit their own application for the cross transfer along with the city and so far, have not fully committed to doing so.

"They've suggested this alternative, however, we're still thinking

about it. We're doing our due diligence on it," explained Rick Kepler, water quality/quantity manager for ODFW. "We haven't made any decisions on it. We have to have more internal discussions."

Cascade Locks has been trying to get the Nestlé plant up and running for several years — a project seen by city officials both past and present as a potential boon for the local economy by providing jobs and tax revenue. However, the proposal has been tied up for the past few years due to legal challenges from environmental groups such as BARK and Food and Water Watch who view the proposal as harmful to the Gorge.

Originally, the city and ODFW had planned to do a gallon-per-gallon "water exchange" without touching their respective water rights. However, due to the ongoing legal challenges, both the city and Nestlé began looking for a way to expedite the process.

Dave Palais, natural resource manager for Nestlé Waters North America, said the corporation has been working with Martha Pagel, a former director of both the Department of State Lands and the Oregon Water Resources Department who now specializes in water rights law as an attorney for the Portland firm Schwabe, Williamson and Wyatt. Palais said Pagel "identified the cross transfer as a potential alterna-

"They've suggested this alternative, however, we're still thinking about it. We're doing our due diligence on it."

RICK KEPLER, ODFW

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Spotlight

A weekly series about a day in the life ...

'Dependable' Ron Dunn is a familiar, friendly face in the Rosauers produce department

Saturday



Photos by Trisha Walker

RON DUNN has been with Rosauers for 18 years, the past eight of those as a produce clerk. Dunn is known for calling his customers by their first names and his cheerful, helpful attitude. Dunn frequently helps customers, answering questions or personally taking them to an item. Here, he talks to Julie Cantrell about the store's lettuce and herbs.

By TRISHA WALKER
News staff writer

Ron Dunn knows a lot of people.

That's not surprising. The 1989 Hood River Valley High School graduate has lived in the Hood River area all his life, now residing in Dee. Add to that his regular customers at Rosauers Supermarket, where he works as a produce clerk, and he might just know the whole town.

Those relationships are his favorite part of the job. "I love working with the public, interacting with people — that's why I love my job," Dunn said.

He likens Rosauers to "Cheers" — it's a place where everybody knows your name.

"I'm a big first name-basis person," he said. "I'm big on helping the customer, encouraging them, smiling and making my day better, for them as well as I can."

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Three To Go

Benton, Hamada named 'Hearts of Gold'

Don Benton and Dr. Paul Hamada are the 2014 recipients of the Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital annual Hearts of Gold awards.

Hearts of Gold happens at Best Western Hood River Inn and is open to the public. Guests will be treated to a cocktail reception with hors d'oeuvre, a dinner, live music and a short program from the foundation. A limited number of tickets (\$75 per person) are available and can be purchased by calling 541-387-6242.

All proceeds benefit the expansion of cancer services at Providence Hood River for patients and their families.

Warming Shelter moves to former Expo Center

Beginning Jan. 25, the Hood River Warming Shelter will move to the Expo Center (405 Portway Ave) thanks to a partnership with the Port Commission. The Shelter will be housed there through March 8, the final date of the shelter season. Currently, the shelter is housed at five locations around Hood River on a rotating basis.

Volunteers and the rest of the community are invited to an open house on Friday, Jan. 23, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Expo Center.

Questions about donations, volunteer opportunities, or the homeless in our community can be directed to Rev. Anna Carmichael (revanacarmichael@gmail.com) or Andy Wade (hrws@hoodrivercares.com).

Volunteer tax preparers needed

For over 35 years in the Gorge, the AARP Tax-Aide program has been operating with volunteers to prepare taxes for senior citizens and low to moderate income persons free of charge.

Volunteers are needed to join the program. There are six days of training in January over a two-week period in The Dalles. After that, passing a test is required for certification. Self-study or online training is also available. Tax-Aide services are provided in Hood River, White Salmon, The Dalles and Tygh Valley with a minimum four-hour per week commitment requested. There's lots of support and collaboration; returns are done using Tax-Wise on provided laptops. For details call Ronell Currie, 541-478-3461.



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