

Hood River News

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Editor's notebook

Two bits on XLIX and 50

Who thinks about the football? Not "football" but "THE football" — as in the thing that the Super Bowl ought to be about: the oval pigskin of suspect interior pressure?

There's just so much focus this year, not on Sunday's Arizona contest, but on the oblong pigskin prize that burly men carry and pass, and sometimes kick, up and down a rectangular lawn that sometimes gets muddy.

Super Bowl, year 49, is upon us. (How disappointed must the San Francisco team have been to miss the playoffs this year, for the marketing department must have relished the prospect of "49ers in 49," though admittedly "49ers in XLIX" would not have the same ring to it.)

Talk about muddy, this whole run up to Super Bowl (fill-in-the Roman Numerals). If Super Bowl Fifty is played on artificial turf in Santa Clara they should import some natural stuff just for the joy of the landmark edition of America's Biggest Game getting all down and dirty — on the field, instead of off.

We know that in 2016 the NFL will dispense with the Roman numeral fussiness and the confusing "L" in favor of that good-old-meat-and-potatoes number "50."

I think they should just brand it Superbowlfifty, kind of like we run it all together and say Joemontana. (And meanwhile pay that guy a stipend to save him from those humiliating pizza commercials.)

While they're at this sea-change move, the dispensing of Roman digits, how about some other changes to the game:

Why call it football at all? Feet are rarely involved. Punts happen, but they're afterthoughts, really. Call them "ovalteams" and think of the product tie-ins.

And can anyone explain to me why the refs throw a flag and stop the action for two minutes — for delay of game? Makes no sense; just toss the yellow rag and sort it out after the play is over, like any other penalty.

Anyway, I might not even watch 49, even with our backyard friends the Seahawks involved. It all seems kind of pointless; game, what game?

Meanwhile I'm sure everyone at the NFL is already looking forward to Superbowlfifty; get 49 behind us and the whole rhubarb over who mighta-flattened-the-balls and when.

Enough of that, and all year the arguments and the off-field issues; how disturbingly fitting that the 2014-15 year ends with yet another slimy veneer, aka "Deflate-gate." But a lot can happen between now and Superbowl-fifty — maybe a controversy over the precise length of the chain, or whether the uniforms were manufactured in some east Asian sweat factory.

And the "Hate-riots" may win this year, and they could be back for Superbowlfifty. Will that mean in a year are we still going to be asking how Bill Belichick became Public Enemy Number 1?

— Kirby Neumann-Rea

WHERE TO WRITE

President — Barack Obama, White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington D.C., 20500
E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

U.S. Senators — Sen. Jeff Merkley, 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, phone 202-224-3753
Sen. Ron Wyden, Dirksen Senate Office Building 221, Washington, D.C., phone 202-224-5244

2nd Congressional District Representative — Greg Walden, 14 N. Central Ave., Suite 112, Medford, OR 97504. Phone: 541-776-4646; E-mail: www.walden.house.gov/contactgreg

Governor — John Kitzhaber, 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111;
E-mail: www.governor.state.or.us/email.htm

District 26 State Senator — Chuck Thomsen, 900 Court St. N.E., S-307, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1726; E-mail sen.chuckthomsen@state.or.us

District 52 State Representative — Mark Johnson, 900 Court St. N.E., Bldg. H-385, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1452; E-mail: rep.markjohnson@state.or.us

Hood River County Board of Commissioners — Chair Ron Rivers, Vice Chair Maui Meyer, members Les Perkins, Bob Benton and Karen Joplin, Hood River County Courthouse, Hood River, OR, 97031. Phone: 541-386-3970.

County Administrator — Dave Meriwether, Hood River County Courthouse, Hood River, OR, 97031. Phone: 541-386-3970.

Hood River City Council — Mayor Arthur Babitz, members Ed Weathers, Carrie Nelson, Laurent Picard, Mark Zanmiller, Kate McBride and Brian McNamara, Hood River City Hall, Hood River, OR, 97031. Phone: 541-386-1488. E-mail: coh@gorge.net

Hood River City Manager — Dan Otterman, interim, Hood River City Hall, Hood River, OR, 97031. Phone: 541-387-5252.

Cascade Locks City Council — Mayor Tom Cramblett, Glenda Groves, Jeff Helfrich, Richard Randall, Bobby Walker, Bruce Fitzgerald, Cascade Locks City Hall, 140 S.E. WaNaPa, Cascade Locks, OR, 97014. Phone: 541-374-8484.

Cascade Locks City Administrator — Gordon Zimmerman, Cascade Locks City Hall, 140 S.E. WaNaPa, Cascade Locks, OR, 97014 Phone: 541-374-8484.

Our readers write

Protect water rights

Last week, Cascade Locks' City Council approved a water transfer for Nestlé. As a native Oregonian and a resident of the Gorge, I'm concerned.

Nestlé is trying to eliminate the regulatory barriers and bypass the right of citizens to state their opinion about the water transfer.

Nestlé has an abominable track record, nationally and abroad, proving that they don't care about people, only profits.

Curt Melcher, at Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, needs to stay true to his original promise and not forfeit the water right for Oxbow Springs.

The larger issue is the concept of privatizing a public resource for corporate profits. Clearly put, the water Nestlé wants is currently owned by the State of Oregon.

As clean water becomes one of the most sought after resources on the planet, Oregonians should protect and profit from this natural resource, not a multinational corporation like Nestlé.

Pamela Larsen
Hood River

State Street concerns

Say it ain't so:
Reading the Hood River News recently, we are told that the State Street work is now complete except for some small details. Certainly we are all happy to see the construction end, traffic, dust, noise, parking woes. There are varying opinions on design, something we are not about to change. Now, one would just have to think there was a contract with just about everything spelled out, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping and such. Now about that hump on State Street where the old pavement meets the new, and the manhole. Please, don't tell me that was in the design, and that this is the finished product. The cold joint between the two is already holding moisture, and will become a pothole soon. Over all smoothness in the surface along the entire project leaves much to be desired. Has the City signed off on this, has the contractor been paid? Reminds me of the big puddle (small lake) at 28th and May. This was our money that paid for this work, we deserve better.

Editor's note: Steffen Lunding had forwarded his letter to city manager Steve Wheeler, who replied:

"It ain't so. There is a one year warranty period and the situation described is already on our punch list to be fixed this spring when the asphalt plants are again producing."
Steffen Lunding
Hood River

Punchbowl questions

The idea of the county owning some more land, especially with the call to "preserve it," is not something I can sign onto. The Punchbowl has been just fine so far, eh? Just what can county ownership do? A park you say. Been to Tucker Park lately? Gated and locked off to the taxpayer. Why?

Try to go up Middle Mountain lately? Locked. As if it was private property. And most importantly, where are they going to get the money? Maybe a little increase in property tax. So some rich folks buy the place and limit access. So what? There's easy access at Dee. When the Darwin award contestants do their thing at Punchbowl, who is liable? Who gets sued?

Arthur Chenoweth
Hood River



ON THE AGENDA

Hood River County School board meets at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the District Office meeting room.

These are the regular meeting times of governing bodies for these agencies:

Cascade Locks

Cascade Locks City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 140 W. WaNaPa St., second and fourth Mondays of the month.

Cascade Locks Planning Commission, 7 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 140 W. WaNaPa St., second Thursday of the month.

Cascade Locks Port Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, 140 W. WaNaPa St., first and third Thursdays of the month.

Hood River

City of Hood River Planning Commission meeting, 5:30 p.m., Hood River City Hall Council Chambers, 211 Second St., generally the first and third Mondays of the month. Place and dates subject to change.

Hood River Port Commission, 5 p.m., 100 E. Port Marina Drive, board room, first and third Tuesdays of the month.

Hood River City Council, 6 p.m., Hood River City Hall Council Chambers, 211 Second St., second and fourth Mondays of the month.

Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors meeting, 4 p.m., OSU Extension Service Building, 2990 Experiment Station Road, first Thursday of the month.

Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District, 6 p.m., Aquatic Center, 1601 May St., third Wednesday of the month. Place subject to change.

Hood River County

Hood River County Board of Commissioners regular session, 6 p.m., 601 State St., first floor conference room, third Tuesday of the month. Time subject to change.

Library District Board meeting, 7 p.m., 502 State St., conference room, third Tuesday of the month.

Hood River County Planning Commission meeting, 7 p.m., 601 State St., first floor; generally second and fourth Wednesdays of the month.

It all makes sense to me!

By CRAIG JOSEPH DANNER

First, a note of apology

I would like to extend an apology to Rep. Greg Walden and his wife, Mylene, for a tasteless joke I made at their expense in my last published column. It was printed just before last November's elections. For those with short memories, or who never can get to the end of one of my columns, I had implied that I could predict the political leanings of via the family dog. I can see, in retrospect, how this might have been an unwelcome message. I did not intend to offend anyone, and regret that that may have occurred. No hard feelings, eh?

And Now For Something Completely Different

This afternoon, while I was gassing up Stacey's Subaru at The Heights Pit Stop, I looked over at the pump and noticed the price per gallon. I called over the attendant, explaining that there must be some mistake, "I think your pump is set wrong. It says it's only \$2.09. Shouldn't that be a 4?"

Actually, I didn't say a thing, because I figured if I drove away really fast before he noticed, I'd save about \$40 on that fill.

Just kidding. Do you really think I'd be that dishonest?

No, really, actually, I have been aware of the new price of gasoline, which is why I've joined so many other Patriotic Americans and

started driving more and thinking about buying a new vehicle. I've always wanted a Hummer, and I figure what better time than now?

It makes sense, right?

I mean, the only reason I choose to walk to work and own a gas-sipping economy car is because I'm cheap. Why else would someone want to burn less fossil fuel?

And besides, buying a Hummer is an investment in the future. They're built like tanks! They'll last for years. Keep the oil changed regular and it could be the last car I ever buy. And with gas prices this low...

Ohhh ... Hang on a second! I'll bet you thought I was gonna fall for this one, didn't ya? What? Do you think I'm stupid?

I'm not, actually. I even have proof. I have a theory, and it's even named after me. It's about why certain men buy certain automobiles. I call it Craig Danner's Theory of Vehicular Compensation. You see a man driving a long, low-riding sports car, the hood extending well out in front of the steering wheel, and you can be pretty confident the driver is compensating for something. You see a guy in a big truck, jacked up high on tires the size of record-breaking pumpkins, and you can be fairly certain he is compensating for something else. And that's about as much of that theory as I can explain in a family newspaper.

But I can say that I, personally,

drive a VW Golf, which, if you aren't familiar with them, are quite short and have small tires. Enough said, I think.

So, now, where was I?

Oh, yeah. I was thinking about buying a Hummer. But not really, because I have another theory, which I call The Theory of Why Oil Prices Are Suddenly Immorally Low. Before I try to explain it, I want you to know that it is based on extensive research that consisted of catching the last part of a 30-second radio news report on NPR.

My theory about why gasoline is suddenly so cheap is based on the fact that the United States has become less dependent on foreign oil, and the foreign oil producers aren't keen about losing their market share. Domestically, we've been frackin' our brains out and drilling for shale oil like there's no tomorrow (and there might not be!), and the big foreign oil producers aren't happy. So they're maintaining high production levels even as the price of crude drops, anticipating that it will go down low enough to put the smaller oil producers out of business. Once that happens they can drop production, create a shortage, and jack the price back up again. And you thought I was gonna buy a Hummer?

What I am going to do is continue to walk to work, because it's good for me, good for the planet, and it's free. And I'm not gonna buy a Hummer, because, frankly, I don't have to.