

## Hood River News

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# Project Graduation

*It's 'only' February, but still the season to support an important program*

The unseasonably warm weather we've seen points us even earlier than usual toward spring.

This suggests turning attention all the sooner to an annual rite of spring that, no matter the weather in February, always needs help this time of year.

We refer to Project Graduation 2015, which is on now. Project Graduation is the parent-driven, community-supported effort to provide a safe and fun final party for the graduating class of Hood River Valley High School.

True, graduation isn't until June 5, but the folks behind the effort have been planning since last fall. Indeed, the planning is nearly year-round, as coordinators take over the to-do lists from their predecessors and start putting time and energy into it in the summer. It's a big project, and one that needs plenty of organization and, with it, plenty of support.

The Project Graduation committee is now collecting funds to pay for entertainment, food, prizes, and more. Any monetary donation makes a big difference in helping honor graduates for a job well done and giving them a safe place to celebrate with friends.

Many in-kind donations make the all-night party happen, including the donation of the facility — Hood River Elks is doing so in 2015 for the 50th year. Perhaps other groups will look at ways to celebrate that anniversary donation by rallying their own contribution, in-kind or monetary. (If your group or business comes up with a project or campaign to do this, we'd love to hear about it at the News.)

The drug- and alcohol-free party happens every year; the graduates walk away tired and happy. It's a program richly deserving of support.

If you can help, send your tax deductible donation to Project Graduation 2015, 1767 12th St., No. 178, Hood River, OR 97031.

# Panorama pix

*What's your 'Favorite Photo of the Gorge'?*

The Columbia River Gorge provides endless scenes of beauty, and the Hood River News' Panorama special section each April helps celebrate that.

Readers are hereby invited to help us do that, in "My Favorite Photo of the Gorge," an annual feature of Panorama.

Send us your scenic photo from the past year — any season is welcome — with a short description of the place and circumstances. If you have more than one "favorite," a couple extras are welcome; we'll pick and choose or use them all as space allows.

Photos should be 1MB, 6-10 inches wide, jpg attachments preferred; send them to hrnews@hoodrivernews.com by March 1.

## WHERE TO WRITE

**President** — Barack Obama, White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington D.C., 20500

E-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

**U.S. Senators** — Jeff Merkley, SDB-40B, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington D.C., 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753; E-mail: oregon@merkley.senate.gov; Ron Wyden, 717 Hart Office Building, Washington D.C., 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244.

Web address: www.senate.gov/member/or/wyden/general/

**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.

# Our readers write

## 'Pulpit props' in letters

The recent listing in this place of "Letters to the Editor" writers during 2014 set me to thinking about the variety in the letters I read there. Some have helpful information. Some are plain, concise statements of opinions. I value these.

Others are not so. They make me think of my favorite "preacher story." After 40 years as a "preacher/pastor," I think I am qualified to tell it. As the story goes, on a Monday morning the congregation's janitor was cleaning up the meeting place. He noticed some papers left on the pulpit. Thinking them discards, he picked them up and found they were the preacher's notes for the sermon the day before. In bold script on the margin at one place it said, "Argument weak. Pound pulpit!"

I think of that when I read a letter that uses exaggeration, leading questions, innuendo or name calling. It seems to me, then, that if the writer doesn't think the letter is strong enough without these "props" to hold it up, then I shouldn't consider it to be strong either.

Perhaps other readers will want to remember this story and be reminded that a plain, concise statement of the "whole truth, and nothing but the truth" can stand tall without other "support."

**John Ihle**  
Hood River

## Watch for pedestrians

I used to work downtown in Hood River. I was always proud of the politeness of drivers and felt respected when I would walk to work or walk to get lunch. I now work from an office on the Heights and sadly, I find that I've left the polite drivers downtown. What on earth happens to drivers in that half mile up the hill? I find that it doesn't matter which intersection you are (attempting) to cross, people often don't stop. I don't mind waiting a bit to cross the street, but watching local police and school buses fly by annoys me more than a little.

I have had people honk at me, flip me off and nearly hit me. One

lady waved me on and then, apparently, forgot about me and started inching forward right into me. I'm hoping she forgot, at any rate ... And, yes, in all these instances, I was in the marked crosswalk.

When I walk my dog, more than once I've had to jump into the ditch on the side of the road to avoid cars who "didn't see" me. Unless I am walking downtown, I wait for cars to go by, then I hope for the best and run across a street.

Hood River takes pride in their treatment of pedestrians and bicyclists, at least downtown. Maybe we could take the time to remember we are the same people where ever we drive.

Thank you for listening!

**Rheva Wren**  
Hood River

## 'I am schizophrenic'

I just read an article in the Washington Post from a schizophrenic man explaining some of his life's dilemmas. The replies from the readers shook me to the core. They were god-awful. Somewhere along my way, I came to believe that there is no longer prejudice and stigma (especially, hate-filled) attached to mental illness.

Recently, I had a book of poems and prose published. I have been elated with the idea of finally being a published poet. A business asked me to come do a signing. When I admitted that I was mentally ill, everything changed. No emails were returned. In fact, my emails were blocked.

Later, a journalist asked me for an interview and a bio. When I emailed the journalist and revealed I am schizophrenic and excited to finally be recognized and valued again, I was shut down. Instead of taking the opportunity to elucidate the public, only a few friends and family know of my book. I am broken-hearted.

I am schizophrenic, but I have never been violent. I aspire to being gentle, loving and hospitable. I despise violence at any level. "Normal" people love violence ... see movies and video games. Not me. And I am schizophrenic. "Normal" people go to ballgames and argue with the opposing teams. Do you? I don't. And

I'm schizophrenic. "Normal" people drive aggressively, being rude, vulgar, making dangerous moves. Do you? I don't. I'm schizophrenic. "Normal" people have tantrums that involve everyone around. Do you?

If I begin to feel unsettled, hallucinate, or perhaps feel an episode of confusion and voices, I excuse myself, go home and deal with it on my own. This takes strength, creativity, tenacity, patience and a strong will. Do you? I see it all around. Because it is me, I am schizophrenic, and that is a powerful force. It takes a powerful mind to deal with it.

My activities include writing, a walk to the post office, calling friends, playing with my dog and reading. See, I am a schizophrenic, well-read, well-travelled, well-spoken (or out-spoken).

I am busy being schizophrenic. The hardest part? Having to explain.

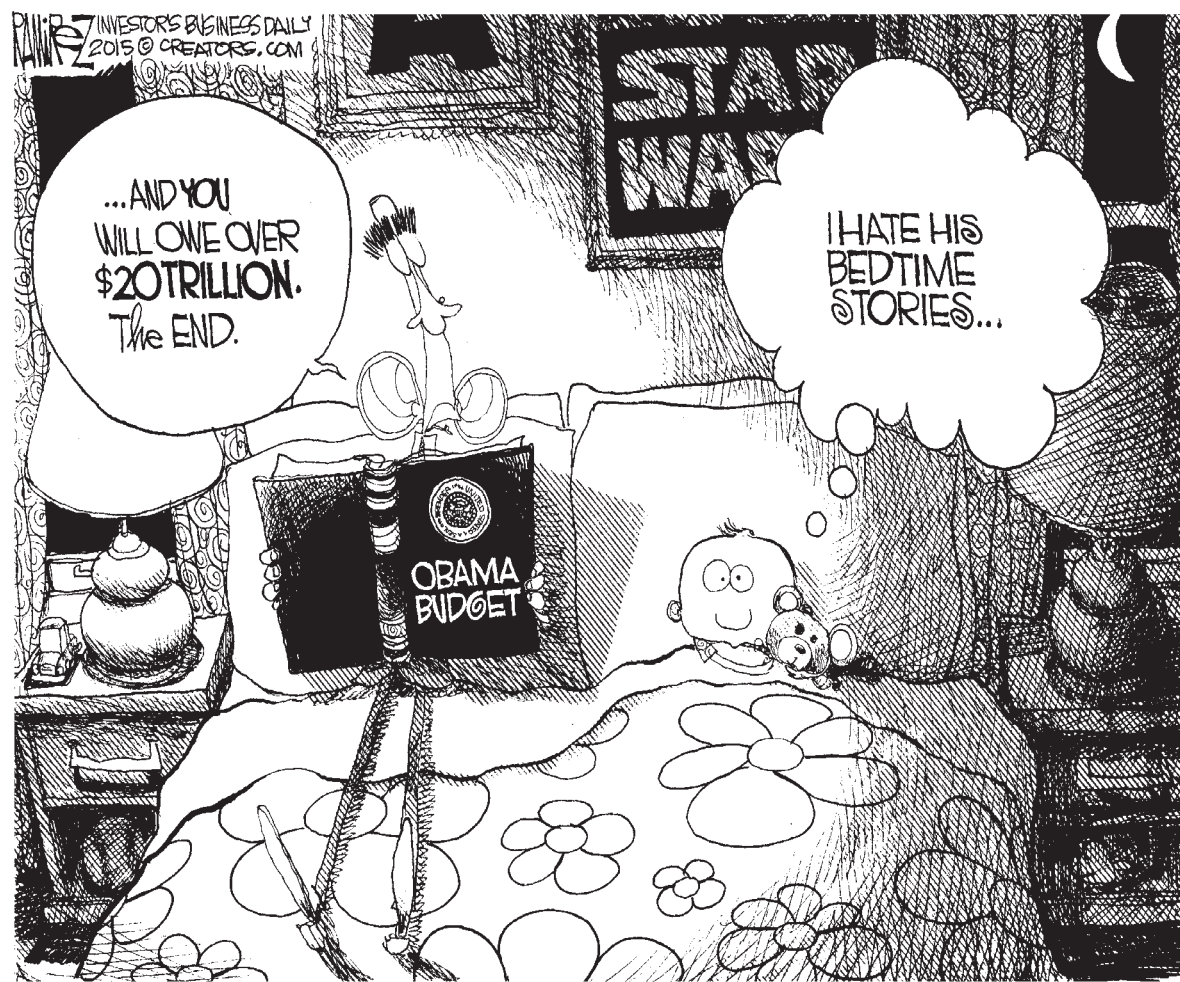
**Leatha Ann Martin**  
White Salmon

## Work with Republicans

I believe that Mr. Tauscher is missing the whole point.

President Obama is eroding the very foundation of our country and form of government. This sets a dangerous precedent where future presidents can flout any law they happen to disagree with and alter the law without going through Congress. Each branch of government is to act as a check against the others and not sit idly by as one exercises authority it does not have. The President has said 22 times that he doesn't have the authority to do what he has done. If it wasn't crooked he would have done it before the mid-term elections. Twenty-five states are now part of a lawsuit challenging Obama's lawless amnesty. Obama's first goal should be to work with Republicans to secure the border, then work on the immigration issue, all while coming up with a plan to come up with enough new jobs so that we are not adding a few million people to our welfare system. We are already playing "Musical Chairs" with the job market.

**Ron Morgan**  
Mount Hood Parkdale



www.investors.com/cartoons

## ON THE AGENDA

Hood River County School board meets at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 11, at Westside Elementary School.

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 Monday 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.

Hood River County Water Planning Group, 2 p.m., 601 State St., first floor conference room, generally first Wednesday of the month.

Hood River County Commission on Children and Families Board meeting, 5:15 p.m., Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital boardroom, generally first Tuesday of the month.

Hood River County School Board, 6:30 p.m., meets at schools and district facilities on a rotating schedule (visit hoodriver.k12.or.us for location), second and fourth Wednesdays of the month unless school vacations or other holidays interrupt the schedule.

Hood River County Transportation District, 9 a.m., Hood River County Transportation District Board Room, 224 Wasco Loop, second Wednesday of the month.