

## Hood River News

**JOE PETSHOW**  
Publisher/President,  
Eagle Newspapers, Inc.

**CHELSEA MARR**  
General Manager

**JODY THOMPSON**  
Advertising Manager

**DICK NAFSINGER**  
Publisher, Emeritus (1933-2011)

**TOM LANCTOT**  
Past President,  
Eagle Newspapers, Inc.

**KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**  
Editor

**TONY METHVIN**  
Columbia Gorge Press Manager

**DAVID MARVIN**  
Production Manager

Subscription \$42 per year in Hood River trade area. \$68 outside trade area.



NATIONAL NEWSPAPER  
ASSOCIATION



Printed on recycled paper.



OREGON NEWSPAPER  
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Official Newspaper, City of Hood River and Hood River County  
Published Every Wednesday & Saturday by Hood River News,  
P.O. Box 390, Hood River, Oregon 97031 • (541) 386-1234 • FAX 386-6796

## Stop Scree

*The slippery slope of school funding*

Any hiker knows the feeling of climbing on scree.

It's the loose rocks or dirt that shift underfoot and send boots slipping backward a few inches – or feet – for every step taken.

Progress is slow and arduous, falls or injuries happen, and the hiker tires as energy feels futilely expended.

Schools have been stuck on a funding scree for years. It is time for some stability.

Investing in schools makes sound economic sense. A well-educated workforce will be ever more critical in the next few years. Continued support of engineering and science programs in 2015 could have a positive support on the local and state economy within just a few years, based on rapid entry to the workforce by current high schoolers.

The letter-writing campaign by citizens, described on page A1, is a noble effort and it is not too late for anyone to get involved; four key addresses are provided below.

However, the time is long past for decision-makers to find some solution to school funding that does not feel like school administrators are sliding on slippery pebbles each year on a routine and frustrating incline.

At 37 percent each, property tax and personal income taxes total more than two-thirds of the revenue used for Oregon schools. Another 10 percent comes from taxes and gross receipts including timber, and 12 percent from "other". That leaves the interesting little figure of 3 percent: corporate income taxes.

If Oregon businesses and legislators are interested in elevating the economy, they should look at all investment options, including supporting schools financially now for greater gains in a few years.

Back to that 3 percent corporate tax figure (2010). According to the U.S. Census bureau, the national average in 2010 was 3.4 percent. What if Oregon business interests decided that agreeing to a phased-in increase until Oregon comes up to that national average, was a modest way to add education budget enhancements?

However you feel the state might scoop away the scree and give schools firm footing, here are those four addresses to let your legislators know:

Sen. Richard Devlin, co-chair, Ways and Means:  
sen.richarddevlin@state.or.us

Rep. Peter Buckley, co-chair, Ways and Means:  
rep.peterbuckley@state.or.us

Sen. Chuck Thomsen (Hood River):  
sen.chuckthomsen@state.or.us

Rep. Mark Johnson (Hood River):  
rep.markjohnson@state.or.us

## Question price on carbon

Where does the City Council go from here? There are countless places they can find pet projects to raise taxes, and don't make any mistake, this is a tax on citizens without their consent, voted into place by four people who say they represent us?

I had to read the whole story to find out what they were trying to do and it is finally spelled out at the end, "efficient way to discourage use of fossil fuels." They never give us how much per kilowatt, gallon or therm, etc., this will add to the cost to the citizens they represent, who will be the ones paying this tax when it passes, and it will pass in the halls of our state government.

A few answers on the tax money we are going to be paying. What will this cost the city, county and state for each of the fossil fuels they now use? How will this discourage their use of these fuels? What will be the service we are now receiving from our governments that they will eliminate as they are discouraged from the use of fossil fuels? Reduced employees, work hours, etc. should be expected, I would assume. Will these governments go for a double tax on us to replace the additional costs they will be paying when they use these fuels?

Now the individual citizen, how much will this cost for each of the fuels to discourage our use of said fuels? How does this help the problem of people having to commute to the city for their jobs by taxing them for using a fuel to access their jobs? Make sure to add on the additional taxes for all the governments we will be paying to replace that spent for their fuels.

Where will this money end up and who will benefit? Why was this part of the information not given in the newspaper story — surely that must be one of the main issues that was considered by the city council as they exercised their Bully Pulpit?

**Norman B. Holman**  
Hood River

## Carbon tax 'practical'

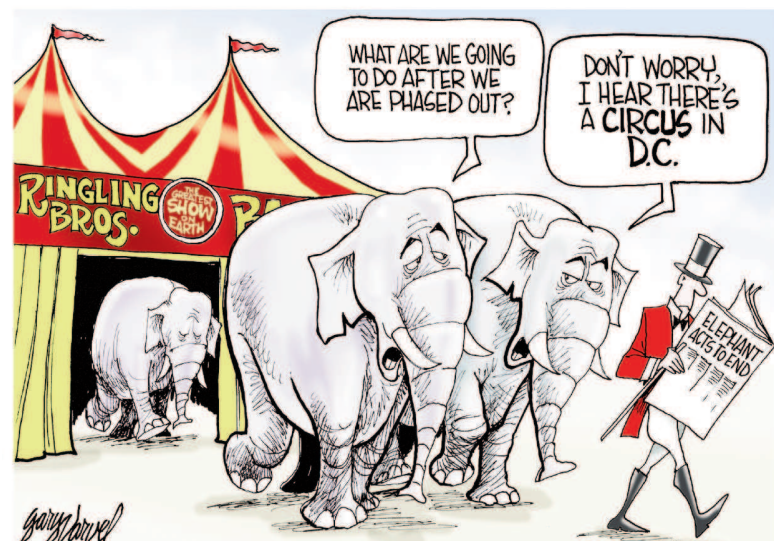
I appreciate Mike Teems, Jr.'s efforts to "encourage conversation" on the merits of a carbon tax ("Offer Incentives," March 4, 2015). The need to take action on global warming is urgent. As Republican former Secretary of State George Shultz said recently, "The climate is changing. If you don't like the science, use your eyes."

Also, at his MIT address he argued that a revenue-neutral carbon tax is a good insurance policy. (Google mit.edu, shultz-climate-change.) In this proposal, greenhouse gasses would be taxed from where they originate (wellhead, mine). The money raised would then be distributed to citizens. Meaning, the government would not take in added revenue.

It is also called Carbon Fee and Dividend (citizensclimatelobby.org).

The beauty of this proposal is that it is national, nonpartisan, and practical. Everyone can get behind it. A major study shows that it will gener-

## Our readers write



garyvarvel.com

ate thousands of good paying jobs. It is a way we can demonstrate America's leadership worldwide, and it will insure a good future for children.

Will Congressman Greg Walden stand up? As chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee, he is in a key position to make it happen, to co-sponsor this legislation. Surely he believes the science, that there's nothing more important than insuring our children's future.

**Lawrence Jones**  
Hood River

## Contact legislators

Hood River County school district is expecting yet another significant budget cut, about \$1 million. I am asking each of you to contact the listed state legislators to ask that no budget cut be made this year.

Legislators have found it easy to balance the state budget on the back of K-12 education. We have had a budget cut each of the last seven years and parents have come to expect this. K12 education has slipped to 39 percent of the state budget down from 45 percent in 2003. Other constituencies are demanding and receiving more funding and public education is paying for this.

Here are some appalling statistics for the proud Oregonian. We have the second highest class size, rank 46th in funding education and we rank 46th in the nation for on-time graduation rates (dead last in 2013).

All Oregonians have a stake in this. Parents and grandparents want a bright future for their students. Business needs a well-educated public and the general economy will slowly suffer as Oregonians can't compete with other states and businesses emigrate.

The irony of the current budget cut is the state is anticipating the income tax kicker rule to apply and will refund tax dollars. The cup runneth over, yet our district gets a \$1 million shortfall. The state has recently announced that it plans to have 100 percent of its students graduate in 2025. It is a nice goal but continued budget cutting won't get us there.

The current education budget is on the fast track to be approved at \$7.2 billion. To prevent the current budget cut, we need that number to be \$7.9 billion. Please contact the fol-

lowing and ask that they fund education at \$7.9 billion. Thank you.

Senator Richard Devlin Co-chair Ways and Means  
sen.richarddevlin@state.or.us, 503-986-1719

Representative Peter Buckley, Co-chair Ways and Means  
rep.peterbuckley@state.or.us, 541-488-9180

Tina Kotek, House Majority Leader, rep.tinakotek@state.or.us, 503-286-0558

Peter Courtney, Senate President, sen.petercourtney@state.or.us, 503-986-1600

Senator Chuck Thompsen, sen.chuckthomsen@state.or.us, 503-986-1726

Representative Mark Johnson  
rep.markjohnson@state.or.us, 503-986-1452

**Linda Gray**  
HRVHS Site Council Member  
Parkdale

## Help Oregon's K-12 Kids

The current 2015-17 K-12 budget proposed by Salem is \$7.2 billion, a continued 10-year slide in funding while requiring all-day kindergarten (a good thing but requires funding). Oregon K-12 ranks at the bottom nationally (46th or worse) for student instruction time per year, high school graduation rates, and dollar per pupil spending. The 2015-17 budget proposed by Salem will hit home again in Hood River (and all of Oregon) with continued reductions in teachers, programs, and services.

Are you satisfied with this state of affairs for Oregon K-12? Do you agree with faster growth of prison funding over K-12 funding? Apparently Salem is, as they are on a "fast track" to approval. Please email Senators Richard Devlin, Peter Courtney, Arnie Roblan, Rod Monroe, Chuck Thompsen, Tim Knopp, and Representatives Tina Kotek, Peter Buckley, Betty Komp, Mark Johnson; urge them to put K-12 Kids first, move more funds to K-12 with a "bare bones" minimum goal of \$7.5 billion. Your 5-minutes now will be noticed! You may receive a "can't do it" response, but your efforts will support a growing effort to reverse this Oregon K-12 10-year slide! Remember their responses at the next election!

**Rich Truax**  
Hood River

## YOUNG VOICES

### Julia Skwarczynski: Taking on the world, one language at a time

By AMI SANTILLAN

Every high school student has a talent, something interesting about them, or perhaps a little quirk to them. Some students are talented in math, some in science, but there are very few students who know and are learning more than four different languages. Whether she is up at the mountain skiing or in a classroom studying, sophomore Julia Skwarczynski is always trying her best to achieve the goals she has set for herself and have success in the future.

Julia is a very busy student, but enjoys what she does every day. She has a job at her parents' restaurant, she goes to ski up on the mountain whenever she can, and also does jazz and modern dance, all while keeping up with her studies. Julia fluently speaks Polish and English, and on top of that she also is learning how to speak German, Spanish and French.

"I find it very beneficial to know all these languages. I'm hoping I'll be able to use them in the future, like a profession

or just when I travel," Julia states.

Julia's parents, Kate and Greg Skwarczynski, immigrated to the United States from Poland in 1990 to find new opportunities here. Her parents lived in Chicago for 11 years before coming to Hood River. Now, they own two restaurants here in the gorge, The Mesquiteria and Egg River Cafe. Julia was taught how to speak Polish as her first language because her parents thought it would be fundamental for her to learn it — not to mention that her whole family speaks Polish.

She was recently named the World Language Student of the Month in November at HRVHS. She is studying both Spanish and French at the high school.

"Julia is a distinguished scholar of both the French and Spanish languages. She can be counted on in class to serve as a model to others and produce thoughtful work," French teacher Nicole Goode states.

At home, Julia speaks mostly Polish and she is taking German classes on her

own. People who know that Julia can speak so many languages are fascinated by the fact.

"I think it's awesome that she knows what she does and has good habits because it will definitely help her in the long run," sophomore Emma Ouzounian said.

It is quite impressive to have the ability to know the languages, but Julia just replied, "Once you learn the first few languages you start to notice a lot of similarities between them. It gets easier as you learn more." She will continue studying French, German and Spanish until she has fully mastered them and then she might move on to another language. "I really love learning different languages and I just want to be able to see where all those languages will take me."

*Ami Santillan is a sophomore at Hood River Valley High School. This article originally appeared last month in the HRVHS on-line newspaper, The Talon.*



Photo by Jesenia Guzman

**POLYGLOT** Julia Skwarczynski looks forward to seeing the places her language abilities will take her.



**Hood River News**  
Founded in 1905

419 State Street  
Hood River, OR 97031  
P.O. Box 390  
Phone: (541) 386-1234  
Fax: (541) 386-6796

### Operations:

**Joe Petshow**  
Publisher  
President, Eagle Newspapers  
(541) 386-1234  
JPetshow@hoodrivernews.com

**Chelsea Marr**  
General Manager  
CMarr@hoodrivernews.com

**Chris Stenberg**  
Bookkeeper  
CStenberg@hoodrivernews.com

### Front Office/ Classified Advertising:

**Stacey Methvin**  
Classifieds/Receptionist  
HRNClass@hoodrivernews.com  
SMethvin@hoodrivernews.com

### Circulation:

**Esther K. Smith**  
Circulation Manager  
(541) 386-1234 Ext. 205  
ESmith@hoodrivernews.com

### News:

**Kirby Neumann-Rea**  
Editor  
HRNews@hoodrivernews.com

**Ben Mitchell**  
News/Features  
BenMitchell@hoodrivernews.com

**Jim Drake**  
Entertainment  
JDrake@hoodrivernews.com

**Trisha Walker**  
News/Features  
TWalker@hoodrivernews.com

**Patrick Mulvihill**  
News/Features  
PMulvihill@hoodrivernews.com

**Ailene Hibbard**  
Archivist

**Advertising:**  
**Jody Thompson**  
Advertising Manager  
JThompson@hoodrivernews.com

**Liana Stegall**  
Advertising Sales  
LStegall@hoodrivernews.com

**Kirsten Lane**  
Advertising Sales  
KLane@hoodrivernews.com

### Production:

**David Marvin**  
Production Manager  
DMarvin@hoodrivernews.com

**Jim Drake**  
Production/Commercial Printing  
JDrake@hoodrivernews.com

**Andy Taylor**  
Production/Commercial Printing  
ATaylor@columbiagorgepress.com

**Allen Diers**  
Commercial Printing  
ADiers@hoodrivernews.com

### Columbia Gorge Press

419 State Street  
Hood River, OR 97031  
P.O. Box 390  
Phone: (541) 386-1234  
Fax: (541) 386-6796

**Tony Methvin**  
Plant Manager  
(541) 386-1234  
TMethvin@columbiagorgepress.com

**Andy Taylor**  
Commercial Printing/Production  
ATaylor@columbiagorgepress.com