

The changing response to the familiar question, 'What Do You Do?'

Imagine yourself at a gathering, surrounded by mostly unfamiliar people. You enter into a bit of polite conversation with someone close by. Inevitably, one of the first sentences out of your mouth, or theirs, is "What do you do?" The expected answer must be what you do for a job. Any other answer would most likely label you as someone eccentric, lazy, or unemployable.



These days, I answer the question with "I'm an elementary school teacher." Any further probing from the questioner leads to a more complicated answer, as I have an unorthodox job within the framework of "elementary school teacher." I'm a specialist, meaning I see every K-5th grade student, once a week, for enrichment activities that support literacy.

Come June, my employment in this capacity will come to an end, as I am retiring from my position.

I'm excited about what is forthcoming, but nervous about what I will answer when I'm asked the "What do you do?" question.

I have three months to figure out a good answer. I'm already laying the groundwork. What DO I do, right now, that defines me? Every Sunday I pick up donated bakery products from Safeway and deliver them to the FISH Food Bank. Every night, at 9 p.m., I call my 92-year old friend to check on her. I'm good at scrubbing toilets, and even better at preparing dinner. I like washing dishes. I enjoy long walks.

What would I like to do come June? All of the above, plus more. I haven't painted for 12 years, but hope to find the creative energy to work again in my studio. I'd like to help teachers integrate the arts into other subject areas in their classrooms. I plan to hone my skills as a writer, and maybe make a quilt or two.

I'm determined to stay involved in kids' lives, especially those students who are underserved. I'd

like to be on the Arts In Education of the Columbia Gorge roster of teaching artists, a job I did for many years before my career in the public schools. I hope to reconnect with my first classroom of kindergarteners, who will enter their senior year in high school come September, and will likely need help navigating the world of post-high school. I plan to volunteer for SMART reading, and spend more time aiding families at the food bank.

A former student of mine was recently released from prison. For the past four years he's been incarcerated, defined not by what he does, but by what he did, an act that many would suggest was justified. Until a few weeks ago, he was identi-

fied by an eight-digit number and a plea agreement. Luckily, some in the penal system saw beyond those definitions, offering him job training, counseling, and an early release for his exemplary behavior and a guaranteed job waiting for him. My friend no longer has to be identified by what he did, but rather by what he does (a job he loves), and what he will do. In that capacity, he hopes to counsel children with similar histories of growing up in violent homes.

Once a week I join a group of other like-aged folks for an hour and a half of yoga. My teacher has the spirit of a young person even though she's considered a "senior citizen" by the government. In her class, we do some "doing," what she calls

"Yan" yoga – poses that strengthen—and an even greater amount of "not doing," or Yin poses, when we shape and settle into non-moving poses for several minutes, breathing slowly and gradually letting go of all the "doing" we've done all week. The final pose, as in all yoga classes, is Savasana, also called "corpse pose." Regardless of the type of yoga one studies, every class ends with this pose, the ultimate moment in non-doing. Breathing slows, the brain quiets, and the body sinks into total relaxation. When I was younger, and more of a "do-er," I found Savasana to be difficult. Today, it's my favorite part of the whole class.

In addition to teaching us yoga, my teacher also loves to read to us, and we love to be read to. Recently, she shared excerpts from Pico Iyer's new book "The Art of Stillness—Adventures in Going Nowhere." The "About the Author" page in the book states "Pico Iyer has been traveling the world for more than forty years now,

from Easter Island to Bhutan and Ethiopia to Los Angeles Airport...For twenty years he's been a constant contributor to The New York Times, The New York Review of Books, Harper's, Time, and scores of other magazines and newspapers across the globe." In the closing paragraphs of the book, however, Iyer writes "In an age of speed...nothing could be more invigorating than going slow. In an age of distraction, nothing can feel more luxurious than paying attention. And in an age of constant movement, nothing is more urgent than sitting still." If Iyer found himself at a party with strangers, how would he answer the question "What do you do?"

In my job as a teacher in the public school arena, I often feel like a hamster in a cage, racing around the revolving ring, unproductive, but unable to jump off. In my new life, I hope to occasionally answer the question "What do you do?" with "I go slow, pay attention, and sit still."

PARKDALE NEWS

Health Fair comes to Parkdale on April 23

By TAMARA EMLER BALL
Parkdale community columnist

The new Parkdale Health and Wellness Committee is hosting a free Health Fair for the Upper Valley community on Thursday, April 23 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Parkdale Elementary School.

Residents of all ages are welcome to come get their blood pressure and vital signs checked, learn about healthy cooking with diet and nutrition information, sign up for reverse 911 emergency calls, learn about the importance of smoke detectors, and much more.



Tamara Emler Ball

Many agencies from around the Hood River Valley will be on hand to provide families with health related information.

Presenters are still being finalized, but will include A Kidz Dental Zone and The Hood River Health Department, providing information on immunizations, OHP and Wic, as well as Community Education opportunities for Parkdale.

The Health Fair was created to support the health and wellness of the entire Upper Valley Community.

If you are interested in presenting, or would like more information on the event, contact Alison Betzing at 541-370-5644.

Each year I write about the Lions Follies show in Hood River and the Upper Valley residents who help to make it a reality, but al-

though both of those reasons are great, neither are the real reason you should buy tickets for the show.

One night before a performance last year, Doug Thompson, Executive Director of the Oregon Lions Sight and Foundation, told the cast a story about a young girl who was, at that moment, in Providence Memorial Hospital in Hood River.

He said she had just that day received a new hearing implant provided by the Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation, the foundation we were there to raise money for, which would allow her to finally hear.

As I felt a lump in my throat, I looked around at the cast and noticed I wasn't the only one having a huge emotional response to the news.

Some of us wiped away a tear or two because in that moment, all of us understood that all our hard work and time put in for the show is worth it if we could help even just one little girl to hear again.

The Lions Follies show is the single largest fundraiser for the Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation in the state of Oregon, as the profit from performances is donated to the foundation.

We see that money at work in our community each year, when the Lions provide free vision testing to students at Parkdale Elementary, to spot any potential problems that may interfere with their ability to learn.

"(The Lions) state of the art work conducting vision screening is our primary method for identifying early vision needs for children," said Parkdale Principal Gus

Hedberg. "In addition to the screening, the Lions Club often provides support for doctor's exams and eye glasses."

The Lions also provide sight and hearing help to anyone, of any age, if they need it, so I encourage everyone reading this to buy a ticket, or many, even if you can't attend "Follies in the Ozarks," a Ma and Pa Kettle story.

Performances are Friday and Saturday, April 10, 11, 17 and 18 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 12 at 2 p.m., with advance tickets available at McIsaac's Market and Jim's Market in Parkdale, Mid Valley market in Odell, and other locations in Hood River.

Along with the usual corny jokes, there are amazing vocals from country to classic rock in the show, and of course just a lot of good family fun.



Bev Bridgewater, Follies director

My personal favorite is the 4-part "Seven Bridges Road," with Andy Streich, Dave Tallman, Odell grower Mike Oates, and Follies newcomer John Stipen, who blend their voices so well they sound like The Eagles' original.

We look forward to seeing you there!

The Parkdale Grange will serve their monthly breakfast open to the community this Sunday, April 12 from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Grange Hall on Clear Creek

Road in Parkdale.

The Grange will also hold its annual Chuck Wagon Dinner fundraiser dinner on Blossom Weekend, April 18 and 19, from 11 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on both days.

Dinner is your choice of ham or steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, wieners and sauerkraut, many different salads, homemade desserts, and coffee, tea or punch for just \$10 for adults, \$5 for ages 5 to 12, and free for children 4 and under.

The Parkdale Garden Club will hold their annual fundraiser sale on Saturday, April 18 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Parkdale Grange Hall.

Plants, crafts, and baked items will all be for sale at the event.

Parkdale Elementary School students will present their annual spring music program event on Thursday, April 30 at 7 p.m. and parents, families and the community are invited to attend.

The western-themed event will feature traditional standards such as "Home on the Range," "Five Little Cowboys," "Git Along Little Doggies" and "Trail to Mexico."

All students are required to attend and are asked to dress up as cowboys and cowgirls.

Send items to: uvupdate@yahoo.com.



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

WHERE ARE the bike lanes and crosswalks in your community? (Bicyclists cross Highway 35 at China Gorge, where crosswalks, though not bike routes, are in place.) Where are they not? ODOT "virtual open house" asks for citizens to register their input.

ODOT holds on-line open house on pedestrian and bicycling route inventory

ODOT has launched a virtual open house to enlist public help in preparing an inventory of "active transportation" (walking and biking) needs on ODOT highways in the Portland area. The virtual open house can be found at www.oregon.gov/ODOT/ATNI and will be accepting public comments until April 19.

The open house is part of the ODOT Region 1 Active Transportation Needs Inventory, a pilot project that will identify gaps in walking and biking facilities – including sidewalks, bike lanes and paths — on ODOT roadways and will identify areas where future investments may provide the greatest benefits. In the virtual open house

the public may:

- Learn more about the project.
- Let us know what locations need improvement.
- Give feedback on criteria to evaluate walking and biking needs.

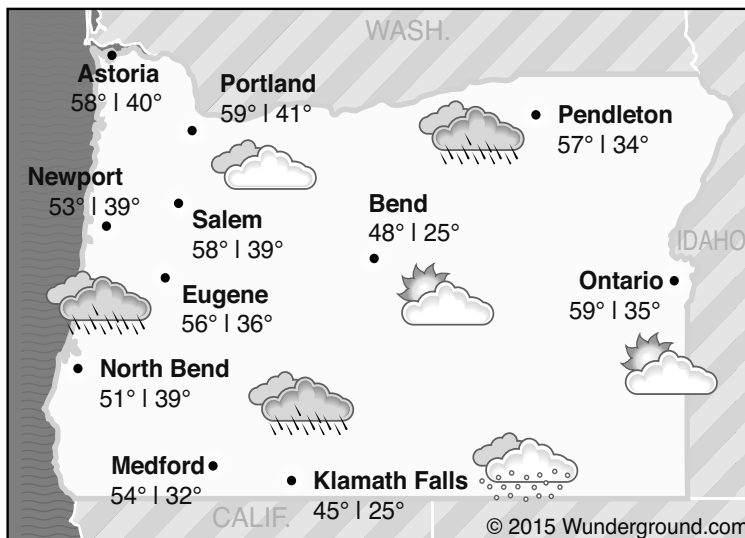
ODOT owns, operates and maintains more than 800 miles of state highway in Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas, and Hood River counties.

Its mission is to create a safe, efficient, transportation system that serves the needs of Oregonians whether they are walking, biking, driving, or taking transit. Less than half of ODOT's highways in urban areas now have sidewalks and bike lanes.

Hood River Weather Forecast

Date	Forecast	Daytime / Overnight High / Low (°F)
Today April 8	☀ Mostly Sunny	62° / 40°
Thurs. April 9	☀ Mostly Sunny	67° / 43°
Fri. April 10	☀ Mostly Sunny	69° / 47°
Sat. April 11	☁ AM Rain	56° / 42°
Sun. April 12	☁ Partly Cloudy	57° / 40°
Mon. April 13	☁ Partly Cloudy	62° / 42°
Tues. April 14	☁ AM Showers	57° / 40°

Oregon Weather Map



Today's Forecast

A 20 percent chance of showers before 11am. Partly sunny, with a high near 61. West wind 7 to 10 mph.

Humidity 88%
Wind Speed E 2 G 4 MPH
Barometer NA
Dewpoint 41°F (5°C)
Visibility NA
Last update on 06 Apr 9:00 am PDT

Actual High / Low

AGRIMET HOOD RIVER OR
Lat: 45.6842 Long: -121.5181 Elev: 510
<http://uspest.org>

Mar 29	- 67/41
Mar 30	- 70/38
Mar 31	- 55/42
Apr 1	- 55/38
Apr 2	- 57/39
Apr 3	- 56/32
Apr 4	- 57/34
Apr 5	- 57/35

Updated Monday, April 6 at 9:00 a.m. PST
Data from www.weather.com

WINTER CHECKLIST

Tires LES SCHWAR

- TRACTION TIRES
- TIRE STUDS
- SNOW WHEELS
- CHAINS
- BATTERIES
- SIPING

HOOD RIVER
3140 W. CASCADE • 541-386-1123