

Hood River News

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



Printed on recycled paper.

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

The spectrum

*Final weekend of Blossom Time
is fun, but more than that*

This weekend is the third of three for Blossom Time, which has evolved into a multi-faceted critical mass of activities and events by groups that are vital to the Hood River community.

It's conceivable to be out and about for the whole day Saturday, just to take in all that's available.

Procession of the Species, an Earth Day tradition that has ebbed and flowed in recent years, seems to be back in force this year, 11 a.m. at the waterfront. You could start your day by joining the 10 a.m. riverside cleanup on the Hood River, and then move to the Procession and other activities to follow, coordinated by the Climate Action Network and HRVHS Climate Action Club.

Or, enjoy wine tasting and lunch in the final week of Gorge wineries' Passport Month, and take in Art of the Gorge at Columbia Gorge Hotel or the "Luminous Yellow: A Color Show," in its last days at Columbia Center for the Arts, for multimedia celebrations of spring via painting, jewelry, photography, glass, digital art, and more.

You can end your day with dinner at Hood River Valley High School and the steak feed sponsored by the FFA chapter. FFA is a program that has developed a strong presence over the past few years, thanks to the efforts of advisors Nita Bozarth and Don Schmidt, and a succession of hard-working students.

FFA students are dedicated to continuing to uphold agricultural traditions while also developing business management public speaking and community service skills and interests. The work of the students reflects the spectrum of why it is people do the things they do in community: to serve, to learn, and to have fun.

WHERE TO WRITE

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2nd Congressional District Representative — Greg Walden, 14 N. Central Ave., Suite 112, Medford, OR 97504. Phone: 541-776-4646;
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Governor — Kate Brown, 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111;
E-mail: www.governor.state.or.us/email.htm

Our readers write

Gun control needed

Lance Beckman, in his recent letter to the editor, argues against gun control but seems to shoot himself in the foot with his statement: "I have stated publicly before that a gun is an inanimate object completely incapable of any action until the human element is introduced. It's like blaming vehicles for highway mortality."

Clear enough, Mr. Beckman, but motor vehicles are registered by the state to individuals who are required to be tested and licensed to operate them because they can be used improperly and often become, by human action, deadly weapons. It is a universally accepted part of the social contract we all agree to as members of this society.

Further, to use gang homicides as evidence against gun control is like saying we don't need laws governing motor vehicle use because some people are still going to drive drunk.

Second amendment notwithstanding, we are the only Western democracy living with 18th century gun control and we are paying the price in human lives. One can attempt arguments about "feeling safer" with guns but feelings aren't worth much in the highly charged emotional circumstances in which guns are used in homicide. The real world statistics are clear — the logic of the anti-gun control lobby is not so clear.

Michael Ballinger
The Dalles

Resource for all

I am shocked that ODFW (State Fish and Wildlife Agency) just approved the water rights swap in Cascade Locks. With water being one of our most precious resources, we can't allow Oregon water to be sold for the short-term benefit of a few. The long-term impacts are significant and unacceptable.

California is the example not to follow. In California, Nestle Corp is continuing to draw out huge amounts of water at ridiculously low prices while the state is in a drought emergency. There is no connection between the large corporation with profit as the driving motive and what makes sense for the long-term sustainability of the communities and natural environment.

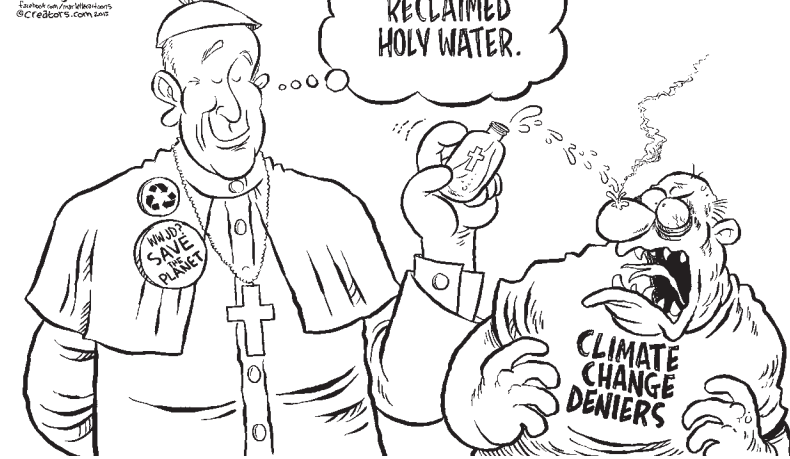
We need Governor Brown to step up and protect this natural resource now for the future of all Oregonians.

Jody Behr
Hood River

For Brostoff

I am writing to recommend Rob Brostoff for the position of School Board Member. I think a vote for him is a vote for someone that has the background, desire to make a difference and integrity that is needed in this position. He is/had been very involved with community development in the some of the following ways: past city council member, past planning committee member, current school board member and former corporate teacher.

He has been working hard on minimum wage and affordable housing in the Portland metro area and helped rebuild fire and ambulance services in Cascade Locks. This is the kind of ded-



ication needed to keep the school district going in the best direction possible with future planning and current issues. As a retired field engineer, he has the kind of insight and patience to see things through from the beginning to the end of any projects taken on.

A vote for Rob Brostoff is a vote for a better future for future generations.

Debbie Carr
Tillamook

'Eminent domain'

Historically, the concept of eminent domain has been widely used by governments to obtain property for, ostensibly, the greater public good, at a fair price paid by tax payers. Roads, libraries and schools are examples of projects resulting from eminent domain. Good things that benefit the public.

However, often we discover that there are agendas associated with the use of eminent domain that are more about personal or corporate power or monetary gain than the greater public good. It's a crap shoot where the dice are loaded. Put another way, heads I win, tails you lose.

It concerns me that We The People have become so used to these misappropriation that we have missed the sleight of hand that has created the corporate domain wherein the uber rich who are sheltered there have lost all doubt as to their inalienable right to operate unencumbered by concerns over the public trust. Issues like polluted air, water and food, failing public health and education, threatening weather patterns, wage stagnation (unlike their own), a faltering middle class and more are minor irritants easily shelved by the political prostitutes these plutocrats promote.

Follow the money and you reach the epicenter of the shakeup taking place in our democracy, blessed by a majority in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Quake-proofing our culture and economy will take a dedicated public that shouts the loud and clear message that we've had enough and we are going to install representatives in our towns, states, and country who have the courage to stand up to the oligarchs who think they own our country.

Rus Hurlbert
Mt. Hood Parkdale

'Keep it local'

My name is Dave Lipps and I am running for the Port of Cascade Locks Commission Position #3. As a resident and business owner in Cascade Locks, I see the Port as a major economic development driver that has the capacity to create and foster locally owned busi-

nesses and jobs to secure our future beyond the Bridge of the Gods.

Our town has so much potential, but we have faced a number of divisive issues that have left our community without the jobs and opportunities that we had hoped for. I want to move forward. Let's get locally owned businesses to start here and stay here — I am great example of this myself, and I see a bright future for our town and economy here in Cascade Locks.

As Governor Brown noted recently in her State of the State address, "Our own Oregon-grown businesses are key to the state's economic recovery: Seventy percent of new jobs in this state are created when existing Oregon companies grow and expand." Again, my own business has contributed to this equation here in town — I started my business here with 0 employees, and now we employ 17 and counting in less than 2 years.

Let's keep it local. I love living here and contributing to our growing Cascade Locks economy — from supporting other local businesses to spearheading the effort to bring 40 bike racks to town to creating job opportunities for locals. I am here and I am committed to the future of Cascade Locks, and I would like to help facilitate this as a Port Commissioner. If you have questions, please contact me at facebook.com/davelippscascadelocks or dave@thunderislandbrewing.com.

Dave Lipps
Cascade Locks

Pass SB478

As a middle school teacher, I can attest to the hard work many students face in overcoming learning, intellectual and behavioral disabilities in order to keep pace within the classroom. It's not easy for kids, families, or educators. Indeed, helping students cope with disability can more than double the cost of a student's education.

Meanwhile the percentage of students with special needs has grown steadily. If we're to control education costs and improve quality of life, it's time to start looking upstream for ways to reduce risk of these learning challenges.

We need to take a good, hard look at taking toxics out of children's products. In infancy and early childhood, when children's brains are developing with incredible speed, it just doesn't make sense to surround them with toys, clothing and lotions made with hazardous chemicals. That's why I sincerely hope our lawmakers will pass the Toxic Free Kids Act (SB478).

Adam Smith
Hood River

ANOTHER VOICE

Can we change the decline before it kills the college?

By Dr. RICHARD CHARLES read with great interest and sadness the two articles in the Hood River News of April 18, 2015, regarding our Columbia Gorge Community College. On page one, Mark Gibson discussed the new board proposed tuition increase and in a letter to the editor by Lynne Davidson, she talked about her recent retirement from the college.

I believe both are symptomatic of major issues with the college. After 22 years as a teacher and senior administrator in three community colleges in California, I retired to this, our dream area. I have taught for 20 years here in Hood River as a high school and

community college instructor of Spanish. I love the Gorge and the college.

When the college was first proposed, we were led to believe that this was going to be a place that would allow our young high school graduates and others the opportunity to receive their continuing academic pursuits in a more affordable and student-friendly environment. Many promises were made and many, such as the opening of the Hood River center, were kept.

However, over time, it has been clear that neither our chief administrator nor our board really understands the importance of seeing and actively working toward an environment of trust. The first

step that cemented my opinion came when it was stated that because of shortfalls, the Hood River center would be closed. Then because of student, staff and community outcry, the decision was canceled. The faculty, support staff and students have been uniformly unheeded. Every answer to a difficult decision is a reduction. It is important to always remember that students, staff and the community have long memories. At the current time, students seek academic answers regarding transfer, graduation and course content. They seek counselling and don't find it. The front desk of the Hood River center is not covered. Often they leave campus without questions being answered and services

undelivered. We need to ask ourselves now, is the product worth the money? If every class will have at least 20 students, will they be able to get that second or third critical class in a series for transfer? From a faculty perspective, is the senior administration and board now planning rapid decline? Ask yourselves the question — if a local food vendor told you they wouldn't be open on weekends or Friday, they were increasing their charges on the food and decreasing the product, would you continue going there?

I have found myself asking lately where are those community folks who pushed for the college in the beginning. People with vision and the long term commitment to

see things through. How could we have left such an important local resource in the hands of people who see the proposed \$174,000 increase in tuition as an answer to a \$2.4 million short fall? Obviously, we are facing a real need for an administrator/board reinvigoration. Do our chief administrator and board do anything positive to change our fiscal relationship with Salem? Do we have people on the board who realistically see the problem? Can we change the "decline" before it ultimately kills the college?

Dr. Richard Charles is Adjunct Spanish instructor at Columbia Gorge Community College.



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Founded in 1905

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