

Hood River News

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Class of 2015

*Congratulations, graduates:
the education continues*

Congratulations, Class of 2015, as you prepare to step forth and accept your diplomas.

Be it for college, pursuing a trade, travel, the military, work, or other post-high school endeavors, this year's class deserves best wishes for whatever happens down the road. Between HRVHS and Horizon Christian, nearly 350 local youth are about to take that next big step. And let us not forget the accomplishments of college graduates from our area who have completed their degrees this spring.

The class song at HRVHS is "See You Again," a bit of a counterpoint to the winsome finality so often felt as friends prepare to go their separate ways.

"See You Again" suggests these no-longer-kids possess a healthy sense of connection to the greater Hood River community.

It is a reflection, perhaps, of the way the community is integrated with the breadth of educational experiences at all levels in K-12.

From agriculture to art, many community groups contribute in some way to programs in and around schools. Perhaps "See You Again" refers also to the upcoming students who will greet, and be greeted by, opportunities made possible by school district and community. Graduation is a testament not to the end of anything but to the cycle of learning and involvement that helps make growing up in Hood River so valuable.

Evidence of students grasping those opportunities is what you see in the Class of 2015.

You watch an underclassman organize a community event, rally for a cause, research and act as spokesman for a community-based school project, and you see what the graduates this year and in future are made of. They've grown and learned from these experiences and many are going to continue their education with the help and encouragement of the community that nurtured them — to wit, local scholarships. As ever, the community truly stepped up this year, channeling \$155,000 to local scholarships. These don't happen on their own. The funds that go to students are made possible by the community supporting the organizations that provide them.

So perhaps the best way to honor this year's graduates is to remember that future opportunities facing this year's juniors, or eighth graders, of kindergarteners, happen when we get behind ongoing programs that culminate in senior-year scholarships.

This summer and in the next school year, think of the advancement made possible by support of a fundraiser, dinner, or special community event. These are reminders of learning that has happened, and the community understanding that a diploma and a flower are not the only things our young people will carry forth when the cheering stops after graduation.

Positive leadership

Several local educators have risen above the turmoil surrounding our budget woes and the Common Core debate. I think all of these people deserve a great deal of credit for placing our kids high on their priority lists.

Larry Wyatt is the music teacher for both Westside and May St. Schools. He donated his own time and instruments every week to teach ukulele to any kid willing to learn. I have not seen him without a smile on his face in three years. Larry has consistently been a positive influence for our son and many others.

Rebecca Nederhiser is the music teacher at HR Middle School. In spite of her busy schedule with her own drama, choir, and band concerts, she managed to volunteer her time to play her oboe at the Westside concert on Thursday.

Superintendent Dan Goldman also donated his time and bass-playing skills despite the rather warm, jungle-like environment in the Westside gymnasium.

I spoke with a local teacher recently who admitted to voting for larger classes at their own higher grade level in order to permit more of the budget to provide additional teachers and smaller class sizes for the younger kids in the district.

I am grateful for these individuals who have been willing to put aside the personal challenges of their job to be the best teachers and role models possible.

Steve Kaplan
Hood River

No Arctic drilling

Every once in a while I imagine that the politics of climate change are beginning to shift. That more of us will get with a different program! More of us will get that extravagant use of fossil fuels is a fundamentally bad idea for the planet. That rising levels of carbon pollution in the atmosphere really is causing irreversible consequences for life all over the world. That extreme weather and all the drought in the Western U.S. really is related to our addictions with limited market choices.

I imagine that someday soon, before it is too late, there will be the po-

litical will to do what we already know how to do — regulate fossil fuel extraction (keep oil and coal in the ground) and develop and market alternative forms of sustainable energy.

In May, President Obama granted provisional approval for Shell Oil to drill in the Arctic. What is he thinking? Arctic oil drilling is the mother of bad ideas. Shell's plan is disastrous for our climate, for Arctic wilderness, and for our region. How could such a hopelessly bad and dangerous idea get this far? How could we move in such a few short years from burning oil and melting the Arctic ice to now drilling in its exposed waters in the hopes of extracting more oil for burning? This week President Obama ignored the risks to our world and gave away another slice of our future.

It is time for us to stop tolerating the political cowardice that makes it so hard to say NO to bad ideas. It is time to say NO to proposals like the one from Shell Oil that expands its already proven inept drilling expeditions.

It's time to demand a stronger political will. The Chukchi Sea, between Alaska and Siberia, is not a new oil supply for burning up the atmosphere. It's a place to take a stand and demand that politicians no longer grant social licenses that put our selfish addictions before our communal survival.

Rev. John Boonstra
Hood River

Poultry effort

All across this country, there are many chickenistically inclined hatcheries where you'll find amongst the "Rooster Roster" direct descendants of Foghorn Leghorn, who are licensed as Therapeutic Barnyard Counselors. They want to keep the morale high, as a weathervane's eye, and they recommend ways to not let spirits droop ... in the chicken coop. For instance, say you're at the annual Poultry in Motion dance party, converting beak to beak, why not go over and ask that bashful chick to "trip the light fantastic." The Foghorn Leghorn Counselors are going to always try ... to figure out why ... those hens in the crowd ... keep crying out loud. No matter what season, be it summer or fall, there must be a reason, we can hear the Fowl Bawl.

Bill Davis
Hood River

Rhona Klein
Portland

Marketing scam

Once water is taken out of a spring it is heavily processed for bottling and distribution. Processing starts with a large dose of chlorine. Then the water molecules are squeezed backwater through a micro membrane filter to remove the residual chlorine. After that it is hit with ultra violet radiation and/or ozone before bottling. This is not spring water anymore. I do not know the particulars of Nestle's processing procedures but I have seen what happens.

Spring water is an illusion in a bottle. It needs to come out of a spring so that the words "spring water" can be on the label. A marketing tool. Duping the consumer again. Any effluent stream can be treated this way to bring it to drinkable standards. Are we really going to give up a priceless natural resource for a marketing scam?

Ann Lameka, food scientist
Mt. Hood

To new CAST actors

Admit it. You've always been a little curious about acting. Yeah, I'm talking to you. Maybe you were in a high school or college play. Maybe not. But you've always wondered ... what if ... maybe I could ...

I'm here to tell you to stop wondering! Get off yer bum and give it a shot! A couple of acting classes was all it took to convince me to follow my bliss. I auditioned for CAST's recent production, "Good People," landed a role, and proceeded to have one of the most exhilarating, challenging and fun experiences imaginable: bringing the character Dottie to life on stage.

From the play's incomparable director, Judie Hanel, to each and every one of my fellow cast members and backstage crew, and to the good people of Hood River, I couldn't have asked for or received more love and support. And I couldn't be more grateful. Thank you, one and all.

So what are you doing still sitting there? Get on over to CAST (www.columbiaarts.org) and audition for your next (or first) great theater experience!



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Planks for the memories: 'Park Your Age' folly fills its last space

By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**
News editor

It's been 57 years since the creation of Velcro and I know of a 57-year-old man who defines sticking to it.

Here is this year's edition of the annual "Park Your Age" column, in which I mark the number of years I will turn upon June 5, and hence the parking space I will move to in the Hood River News lot. (This year it is 57, except I won't - can't - park there and this is likely the last such column — hurrah, right?)

For the uninitiated, I've written about this almost yearly since 2001 when the numbers 1-65 were inexplicably painted on Hood River News parking spaces. I had decided the reason was that everyone could Park Your Age (PYA). However many years are young, that is your space. The one for my age then, 43, was well away from the building and I liked giving myself the walk several times a day and leaving spaces nearer the building to our customers and those frail Twenty-Somethings I work with. Most years, PYA worked out, but some years the space was either too close (44-45) or the unavailable. So I would not actually do PYA but something close to it. The years 50-56 have been a kind of exile, as parking there is either impossible or un-

wise. In fact, 55 and 56 have, for several years, been occupied by our company's massive dumpster. And parking in the labeled 57 is a no-go because the forklift drives there.

Stay out of the way of a forklift — unless you're George Hood. This is a 57-year-old ex-Marine who just set the Guinness record for planking (an endurance exercise involving keeping the body stiff and propped only on toes and forearms). He held it for 5 hours and 15 minutes. I doubt I could last 15 seconds.

Any celebration of 57 has to start with Heinz, the condiment conglomerate that recently merged with Kraft, got its Heinz 57 brand in 1892 when its owner saw a sign for a footwear company with "22 kinds of shoes" and decided they needed something similar, so he chose "Heinz 57" for the sound of it.

And what can you say about '57 Chevy. I am, famously, not a Car Guy, but I'd have to say that other than the Ford Model A or T, the '57 Chevy is the only classic car type that everyone knows and can identify.

Meanwhile, I found the Velcro invention reference on line and I also kept running into references to a "Dude 57," who is apparently a regular in on-line forums surrounding Cummins truck manu-

facturer.

If parking space 57 was available I'd let Dude 57 take it.

To be clear: there are no assigned spaces for Hood River News or the other businesses in our building. The fun of each elapsing year is to look at other ways that number is meaningful, since I have attached a lifestyle purpose to a couple of foot-high digits painted on the asphalt 14 years ago. Getting older had the appeal of being linked to places of honor, the spaces at the top of the lot, farthest from the building.

But PYA, I am here now to accede, is defunct. I know of one other person who in all these years has adopted PYA, but they no longer work here. At this windmill I will no longer tilt. Since space 57 is unavailable, and 58-60 are spaces we rent out, PYA is retired as of June 5, 2015. There is no further point in it, especially since we have reached that number which, years ago, I knew would carry the biggest cache. Sure, it was fun to write about 45 with its vinyl-record reference, 49 with all its historical impacts, 50 for its half-century appeal, and 55 for its reputation and highway significance.

Spaces 58 and 59? They are the JV team, but 57 ... I am biased but I think it is the Coolest Number, and a good one to stop on.

The other great cultural "57"

emblem is, of course, Bruce Springsteen's song "57 Channels (And Nothin' On)" from his 1992 Human Touch album. ("I can see by your eyes, friend, you're just about gone/57 channels and nothin' on" ...)

It's funny to listen to it and even funnier in 2015, when 57 channels would be considered a meager cable package indeed. Heck, I got an E Street channel and 56 others on Sirius alone. The number was probably outdated before the album was released, but that just underscores the Boss's point about the slippery ease of excess.

As I stand at 57, it tells me that it can be cool to be obsolete.

And who knows, I might return to PYA some day, when I can own one of the furthest spaces (and one that is usually open), and one with the second-coolest number: 64.



TOO CLOSE to park: next to space 57, the Hood River News dumpster.

Photo credit News dumpster.

Talk to me in 2022.

Will it still need me? Will it still feed me?

For now, PYA is done and, to my mind, George "Plank man" Hood is the Real Dude 57.