

## Hood River News

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## Summer's Here

*Celebrate, but with caution*

Today's compendium of summer events points to matters of both caution and celebration. Worth celebrating is the reminder that Families in the Park (Thursdays in August) and Movies in the Park (Saturdays starting July 11) are on the schedule once more. Gathering on summer nights in Jackson Park for music, movies and barbecue or bring-your-own picnic is one of Hood River's greatest pleasures, all seasons considered. Community Education and Parks and Recreation collaborate on these tried-and-true Hood River traditions.

Add to that the return of Hood River County Fair July 22-25. There is nothing like the fair, and this year's entertainment lineup will be a sure draw, along with the fun of the rides, checking out the animals and artwork, and all the rest.

But the fair is not just a spectator sport. Anyone can get involved, and this year more is being done to draw people in, with classes in preparing people in the ways and means of entering Open Class competition. From horticulture to collections, the fair is a prime avenue to sharing what you love with others in the community.

Fair books are scheduled for distribution this week to stores and other locations throughout Hood River, Parkdale, Odell and Cascade Locks.

Pick one up and peruse it, then delve into the fine print: that's where you find the scores of details about how to participate, be it as an entrant or observer.

The businesses supporting the Fair book, Community Ed/Parks and Rec events in the parks, are deserving of support; they are what sustain these truly local, ongoing annual programs that provide opportunities for education, entertainment, and community.

And now to the cautionary. More and more children are moving about on the sidewalks and streets, as well as people of all ages aboard bicycles and other two-wheel conveyances. Residents have experienced some close calls with people on non-motorized vehicles, and it can be tricky going for pedestrians, too, given unclear or even absent signage at busy intersections, and crosswalks and other surface markings that have faded. (The new bicycle lane indicators on State Street stand out well, but knowing that bicycles are present is one thing, having one silently approach at 25 miles an hour is another.)

Remember that bicycles can appear as if in an instant, with more of them on the roads and streets, it's healthy to take a second look when entering an intersection or backing out of a parking space.

Other cautions with hot weather present and July 4 weekend approaching: the waters can be cold, so be an informed swimmer and don't go solo. Also, use locations that are meant for public water recreation.

Finally, fireworks. The fire danger is officially at "High," and tinder-dry conditions combined with the prevalence of ignitable noisemakers create a recipe for trouble. Please use all due caution when handling any kind of fireworks. For starters, make sure you have a filled bucket and have a hose available.

This is bound to be a hot, dry summer. Emergency responders will be busy enough without accidents that, with simple common sense, are preventable.

### 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

## Our readers write

### Family investment

My husband John and I recently completed a wonderful parenting class at The Next Door with Karin Tauscher as our awesome teacher.

She used the tried and true "Incredible Years" curriculum that gave us so many tools to help with our two-year old twins. The relationships we made with other class parents in the trenches will be so valuable too. Plus the class included childcare and dinner for a crazy-low, grant-supported price. This is one of many wonderful ser-

vices provided to our community by The Next Door. Parents of kids ages 2-8 can sign up now for the next round of the class, starting June 23. Call Nancy Johanson Paul at 541-436-0319 for more info. It will be a wonderful investment in your family!

**Jessica Metta**  
Hood River



### EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## Overcoming, and understanding, the tourist's PTSQ Syndrome

By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**  
News editor

On Sunday I found myself crossing a busy street in Cannon Beach, though I was stopped short of a rash and dangerous act. "There's a crosswalk right over there," said Lorre, stopping me with that gentle pinch of the elbow that only a wife can quite pull off.

She was right. Just a few steps up, those diagonal stripes that signify civilization.

There I was, my sack of postcards freshly purchased, the post office in view just across the way next to the picturesque general store. And as I gawped around the pretty town square I came an ankle's width away from jaywalking. I hate it when people do that.

I realized in an instant: I had turned into a tourist.

And it was kind of a cool feeling.

But I admit that decades of living in a tourist town — yes, that is what Hood River is — seemed to melt away like that pistachio cone as, there in that lovely coast village, I did those classic tourist things: Meandering down the sidewalk, stepping out into traffic, and placing my tractor beam on the signs reading "ice cream" and "souvenirs" and "cold drinks."

Realizing what I had done, I began to mind my step (with Lorre's help), literally and figuratively, and to conduct my behavior a little more like a savvy local.

I get how someone visiting our fair city, with its beautiful shops and gorgeous views, can get

caught up in the moment. Cannon Beach, while far smaller overall and in the scope of its town core, shares with Hood River those delights both elegant and organic, with businesses and other town features that seem refined and ingrained at the same time: the well-heeled pubs and coffee shops in both towns, a set of stairs that lead you from a commercial district to an amazing natural feature (Indian Creek Trail or the Columbia River in our case, the Pacific Ocean in the case of Cannon Beach).

We were there while visiting friends in Gearhart and wanted to check out the broad beach in front of town. The sunny conditions, gentle surf and warm sands were a delight to the senses, and seeing Haystack Rock up close for the first time was a real pleasure.

It was just plain great to smell the salt air, which is the only thing Cannon Beach has on Hood River.

Like here, what it also has is visitors galore.

Once I snapped out of my PTSQS (Picturesque Town Square Syndrome) I thought of the Things That Tourists Do but I realized that my PTSQS should make me more understanding of:

■ **The Corner Gawkers:** stopping at a corner to have a look around or consult the map, then acting all irritated when a driver stops because they think you want to cross.

■ **The Five-Abreast Family Stroll:** our sidewalks are in places wide enough for mom, dad and the three kids to walk in a phalanx, at

one mile an hour, peering in all the shop windows, but the sidewalks are rarely wide enough to get around them.

■ **The Talking Loud Like It's the Living Room.** Tourists definitely do that, but sometimes not as loud as the locals.

■ Small touches I liked in Cannon Beach included the ample — and free — public parking lot located a block from the Picturesque Town Square. (But the paint on some of the 10 Minute Parking spaces are worn away to read "O Min Arking.")

I also liked the two benches in front of the downtown market: signs reading Democrats on one, Republicans on the other and an unlabeled one in the middle. Unaffiliated? Tea Party? Libertarians?

And finally the trash can lids at the beach stairs, with their plays on Beatles lyrics: "Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away/when I threw all my own trash away"—in script literally welded into the lids.

Not much trash on that broad, beautiful beach, something locals and visitors can keep in mind when they visit our beaches and parks, but I did see one blue bag: some dog owner who feels it is enough to put Rex's poop in a bag and okay to leave it for someone else to pick up. At first it rankled, but then I realized: after a mile-long walk, all I had seen was one blue bag.

Can we say the same on the far shorter strolls and strands we call Event Site, your local school grounds, or Nichols basin beach?

## Recent report shows outdoor education means big business

The Gray Family Foundation recently commissioned a comprehensive analysis of the economic impacts of traditional camp-based outdoor school programs.

The results of the study show that Outdoor School programs provide communities with significant numbers of interesting and high quality jobs in rural areas.

The study utilizes current information from two existing programs and scales those job functions statewide, providing an analysis of the impact if every Oregon fifth or sixth grader had the opportunity to attend a full week of Outdoor School. The potential economic impact is substantial; the program could reasonably expect to generate more than 1,000 FTE jobs and more than \$28 million in income in Oregon.

Many of the newly created jobs would be primarily located in rural areas where structural unemployment is particularly acute.

Outdoor school programs play a legacy role in many communities, providing multiple generations of families with deep connections to Oregon's natural areas. Programs take place outdoors, usually in rural camp settings: in forests, fields, mountains, deserts, rivers, streams, tide pools, and next to the

Pacific Ocean. Living and working in these spaces fosters health and wellbeing, but at the same time, many rural communities struggle to stay economically viable.

"Outdoor education is potentially a big business for Oregon's economy. Investing in the business of outdoor and environmental literacy allows multiple generations of Oregonians to participate in our landscapes in ways that encourage local economies to thrive. By investing in an outdoor education sector the state would also be investing in creating family wage jobs in the education, natural resources, and food services sectors, as well as the working lands sectors of agriculture, ranching, farming, fisheries, and forestry," said Lara Christensen, program director for the Gray Family Foundation.

In addition to the economic impacts, Outdoor School provides a high quality education program for students. The Gray Family Foundation regularly receives feedback from teachers who report that students who attend Outdoor School perform better on science, math, and reading tests than students who do not attend.

"The Gray Family Foundation was founded on the belief that fostering an understanding and appreciation for the natural world is

a crucial part of a child's education, so this is an ideal area of focus for us," said Nancy Bales, executive director of the Gray Family Foundation. "Now the hard work begins to fund this program and make week-long outdoor education experiences a reality in every Oregon middle school student's education."

The IMPLAN model for the Oregon economy was used to derive the relevant employment and income expenditure multipliers needed in the analysis. The full report is available on the Gray Family Foundation website, grayff.org/outdoor-school-for-everyone.

Launched in 2007 as the Gray Family Fund of The Oregon Community Foundation, the mission of Gray Family Foundation is to engage the people of Oregon to become active stewards of their natural and built communities by championing accessible, experiential education programs that encourage integrated understanding of community and natural systems and inspiring action to enhance our natural and built communities. Since 2007, the Gray Family Foundation has awarded more than \$7.8 million in grants statewide.

