

Hood River News

JOE PESHOW
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

OREGON NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

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

Heritage Council

Recent disruptions raise the need for this vital organization to actively listen

The main thing the Hood River Heritage Council needs to think of this summer and fall is not history but what is happening now, and indeed the future.

Regarding the recent firing of Megan Shuemate, the director it hired four months ago, it should be stressed that there is a distinct separation over that personnel change and the resignation by the previous director, Connie Nice, in 2014.

While this organization has endured plenty of turmoil in 2013-14 over record-keeping, it moved into 2015 with new energy — thanks both to volunteers as well as Shuemate. That energy is visible in the current exhibit on the history of wind sports in the Gorge — definitely worth seeing — and the ongoing list of events and activities happening this summer.

However, this is a time for clarity and communication by the Heritage Council, what with two director departures, for different reasons, in subsequent years, and the operational concerns hovering in the recent past.

Who are we? What do we do? How are we organized? What is our mission? How can we improve our service to the community?

These are questions that could be covered in a listening session or two; perhaps one at the museum paired with tours of the facility, and another in the upper valley. In turn, the community can learn how to get involved in this vital organization.

Setting aside any question of blame for past problems and recent staff changes, with all the positives going on the museum this is the perfect time for the Heritage Council to tell its own story, and be willing to listen to ideas and even criticism.

The museum moved to a regular pattern of outreach in the past few years, between events such as game days at the museum and the highly successful Cemetery Tales program heading in September to its sixth year. A couple of listening sessions, designed to inform as well as accept feedback, will not only continue that mission but provide a needed avenue to both healing and improvement.

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: 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/contact/greg

Governor — Kate Brown, 254 State Capitol, Salem, OR 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111;

E-mail: www.governor.state.or.us/email.htm

District 26 State Senator — Chuck Thomsen, 900 Court St. N.E., S-307, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1726; E-mail: sen.chuckthomsen@state.or.us

District 52 State Representative — Mark Johnson, 900 Court St. N.E., Bldg. H-385, State Capitol, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1452; E-mail: rep.markjohnson@state.or.us

Hood River County Board of Commissioners — Chair Ron Rivers, Vice Chair Maui Meyer, members Les Perkins, Bob Benton and Karen Joplin, Hood River County Courthouse, Hood River, OR, 97031. Phone: 541-386-3970.

Our readers write

Protect meadow at High Prairie

There is a proposed extension to the Cooks Meadow Trail 639 that has the last few hundred feet running through a meadow just below where a spring feeds it. This has just become known due to the project having the wrong categorization and the lack of any detailed information about it.

Where the trail will be is soft ground and will easily be damaged by mountain bikes, especially in wet times. Even now in this drought, the spring was still wet.

This proposal is about to get passed and there's only a few days left (Sunday, July 19) to comment on it. Due to the lack of information, I am asking others to contact the Forest Service to have the comment period extended for at least a couple of weeks. Contact information can be found in the scoping letter for this project found at <http://tinyurl.com/CMT639Scoping>

Brian Schultz
Mt. Hood

Great local arts

Once again, such inspiring cultural events lately ... among them, the "Independence Eve" live radio broadcast last weekend, the most bicultural entertainment I've seen staged in my 30-plus years in Hood River. Thanks to Radio Tierra, the Bingen Theatre, all the organizers, performers and sponsors for such a great evening.

Then last night I went to "Next to Normal," along with seeing the "Best of the Gorge" exhibit, both at the Columbia Center for the Arts — beautiful art work to enjoy during the intermission of a really fantastic show.

"Next to Normal," an adult musical about a family living with a mental illness and its many impacts, plays for two more weekends. It's intense, heartbreaking, serious and funny all at once. Hats off to director Mark Steighner and cast, crew and band for carrying off this ambitious work with such talent.

Tina Castañares
Hood River

Highline safety kudos

We are aware that the Hood River County budget has been extremely tight in recent years which makes any improvement all the sweeter. Mikel Diwan, director, and the staff of the Hood River County Public Works Department and Bill Wheat, road crew foreman, were very responsive to requests to repaint the rusting metal guard rails on a curve beside a dangerous drop-off on Highline Road.

This road is frequented daily by school buses, cyclists, motorcycles and trucks as well as ordinary traffic and the newly painted rails provide a necessary safety alert, especially at dawn, dusk and at night.

The road crew of Hood River County who carried out this work deserves kudos for their efforts on this project.

Rebecca and John Kirkland
Hood River

'More normal than not'

In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association published the DSM-5, a classification of psychopathology with over 500 diagnoses. Allen Frances, a prominent modern psychiatrist, criticized the DSM-5 in his book "Saving Normal." Frances argued that the DSM-5 over-pathologizes the normal behavior of modern Americans.

This year, CAST started its season with "Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe?" and ended with "Next to Normal" (now in production). Both plays are about similar themes — dysfunctional relationships held together by the ghosts of the sons of the relationships. "Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe" was a serious, unrelenting play with four actors. "Next to Normal" is a musical ensemble with six actors, containing comedy and satire,

ABOUT LETTERS

Hood River News reminds letter to the editor writers that shorter is better. Concise letters are not only better-read, they are more likely to be published because limited space is available.

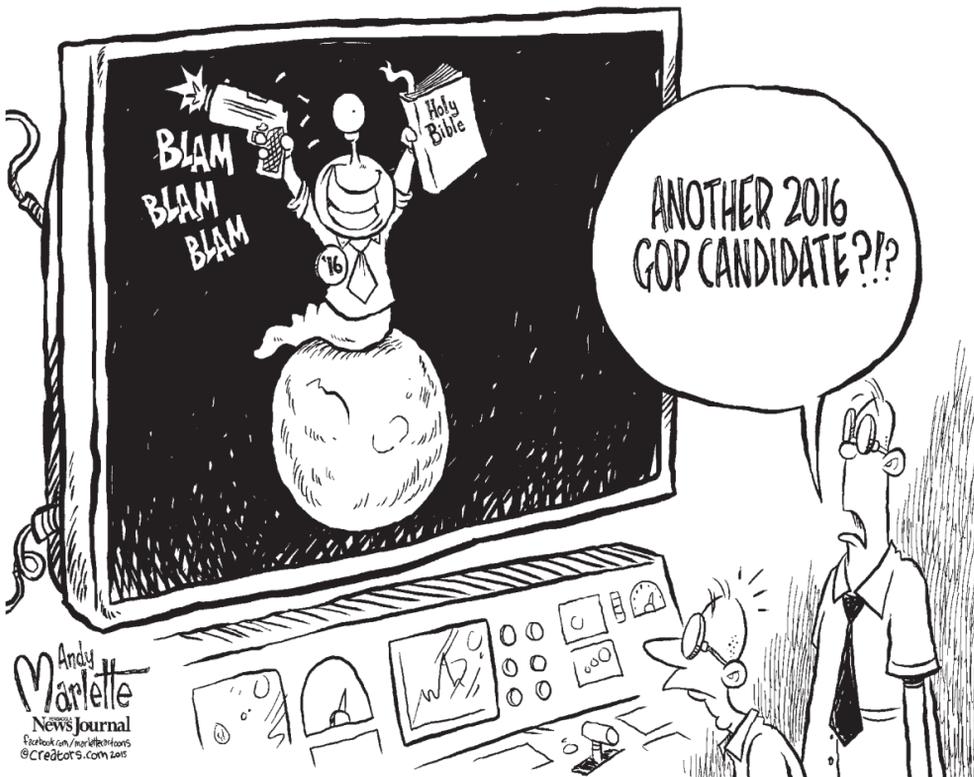
Almost any point can be made in 350 words or less, so this is set as an upper level for length. Letters exceeding 350 words will either be edited to 350 or returned to the writer for editing and resubmission.

Unsigned letters, letters signed with fictitious signatures and copies of letters sent to public officials are not accepted.

We limit letters on a subject when we feel it has been thoroughly aired, to the point of letters becoming repetitive.

Also rejected are letters that are libelous, in bad taste or personal attacks on individuals or private businesses. Writers must include addresses and telephone numbers. These are for identification purposes only and will not be published.

BREAKING: LATEST IMAGES OF THE SURFACE OF PLUTO



Education: Oregon Promise bill holds just that

By REP. MARK JOHNSON
At 6:05 p.m. on July 7 the 2015 Oregon Legislative Session came to an end. The final days and hours of a session are filled with the consideration of a huge amount of policy and budget bills that must be passed before the final gavel falls. This year I had particular interest in one bill that passed out late — SB 81.

Also known as the Oregon Promise, SB 81 is a bill I sponsored along with Sen. Mark Hass and Rep. Tobias Read that is designed to make community college affordable for all Oregon students. The bill works like this: If you attend an Oregon high school and graduate with at least a 2.5 GPA, enroll in an Oregon Community College within six months of graduating, and apply for and accept all federal and state grants that you are eligible for, the state will pick up the tab for the balance owed for the cost of tuition. In other words, the state pays the last dollar. As long as you main-

tain a 2.5 GPA and stay continuously enrolled in courses to receive an associate's degree or career technical certificate you can access up to 90 credits. Tennessee passed similar legislation last year and has seen millions of dollars of new federal Pell Grants flow into their state to support students. Their community colleges have seen enrollments increase dramatically for next fall.



Mark Johnson

The Oregon Promise is designed to address a couple of key concerns in Oregon. One is the cost of college and the debt that students accumulate. The Oregon Promise will say to those high school students who might not have considered college as a possibility due to the costs, if you study hard and play by the rules, the state will make it possible for you to attend and obtain a degree or career certificate.

The second is workforce development. Gone are the days when a student could graduate from high school and find a good paying job at a lumber mill or manufacturing

plant. More than two-thirds of all jobs now require some level of post-secondary education. The Oregon Promise will help more of our youth obtain the important career training needed in order to be financially self-sufficient and not have to rely on costly public assistance. It will also help provide the skilled workforce our private sector needs in order to grow.

SB 81 allocates \$10 million to provide tuition support for students beginning in fall 2016. A companion bill I worked on contains an additional \$7 million to build the support services necessary for students to successfully transition from high school to college and to ensure they are making progress towards completion.

Recent figures estimate that there are 70,000 people between the ages of 18-24 in Oregon who don't have a job or any post-secondary education. I believe the Oregon Promise can begin to change this troubling statistic by investing in education leading to a more prosperous society.

State Rep. Mark Johnson, Dist. 52, lives in Hood River.

...I WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE!

TAKE IT DOWN

