

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



Printed on recycled paper.



OREGON NEWSPAPER
PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

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



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

TALL CEDARS in the Fairground Park provide shade and a gathering place for a variety of events this week.

Go to the Fair

Volunteers make it a blue ribbon experience

You can count on the Fair for a blue ribbon experience.

From the animals to the rides to the art displays to the delicious (and, okay, not always "healthy") food on and around the midway, this year's fair will provide much of what you come to expect.

This fair is always family-friendly, offering distinct glimpses into local peoples' talents and interests. The fair is one of the best entertainment values around, for the number of things to do and see — most of them free with admission — including concerts, livestock judging, kids' activities, and more.

Just for starters: things that smell good or appeal to the eye, the whirl and squeal of the midway, and examples of your neighbors' creativity, kitchen talents, or green thumbs.

The fair is a cornucopia that might not reveal lots of surprises, but the richness is an annual tradition: baked goods, the artful flair of jars of pears and cherries, photos or ceramics entered in the art show, the outfits kids create and exhibit in the 4-H Fashion Revue.

New this year is Big Winds' appearance Saturday with gear to give wind-and water sport newcomers an idea of the fun to be had on the Columbia. It's good to see something of the waterfront come to the fairgrounds lawn.

The Senior Expo is another new feature of the fair, on Thursday, it is a prime opportunity to learn about services and ideas for the elderly and for family members and friends who want to expand their knowledge in helping seniors meet their challenges.

The fair this year boasts expanded equestrian opportunities, including a showcase of Hispanic horses and riders, and the ever-entertaining team penning competitions, at the Frank Herman Arena.

On the topic of parking: last year, the fair expanded parking to private property on loan west of the school grounds.

It can feel like a long way to walk for people, and this year the fair board, with help from a couple of benefactors, has moved to deal with that reality.

Griffith Motors and Les Schwab Tires generously donated two golf carts to the Fairgrounds — they'll be used at other events, too — and those carts are sure to be well-used. People with mobility limitations can flag down the cart in the parking areas for a lift to the fairgrounds (and back) or hop aboard at the fair office and take the cart to locations including the animal barns, horse arena, or football field.

Fair board's Red Lago and regular fair "chauffeur" Jerry Petricko are sure to keep busy with this expanded service.

Most of what happens at the fair comes from peoples' donated time and effort. It's hard to say enough about the role of the volunteers at the fair, and it is impossible to pay tribute to each one.

It starts with the men and women of Lions who stand in the hot sun making sure parking happens safely and efficiently at what amounts to four separate lots.

The supervisors and volunteers in each Open Class and youth area deserve a collective thanks for the hundreds of hours they put into this, year-round.

Thanks in advance, too, to all the businesses and individuals who place bids at the all-important livestock auction on Friday night.

And, finally, thanks go to all the people who enter items in the fair: They have taken the time to do so, and somewhat bravely display the fruits of their efforts in a wide variety of skills and interest areas. One of the best ways to thank them is to look around and consider doing something similar in the 2016 fair, perhaps you will end up making it your own blue ribbon experience.

FIVE MORE REASONS TO BAN ASSAULT RIFLES



Our readers write

Pet reminder

Now that MaryJane is legal, keep in mind that it's also toxic to your pets. Keep it out of reach, locked away along with chocolate, brownies and raisins.

Maria Kollas
Hood River

Honor Roll

I was pleased to see Senator Chuck Thomsen and Representative Mark Johnson on the Oregonian's 2015 Legislature Honor Roll (July 19). We are fortunate to have them working for the good of us all.

Ruth Turner
Hood River

Do part

As you know, there is kind of a drought in Oregon. We need to use less water. Use sprinklers half as much, take a shorter shower, be aware of how much water you use. Together we can make a difference.

Elana Glatter
Hood River



ANOTHER VOICE

Ombudsmen needed to advocate for residents of care facilities

BY ART LABROUSSE

Bear with me a bit as we take a look at how it would be to be confined to a small room.

You have little say in who the person is that you share that room with.

You are dependent on your caretakers to make sure you are safe, to make sure you have food to eat, that you are able to use the restroom — when they are able to assist you. Until then, you have to wait.

You may get out of your room to eat in a dining hall. The food is bland. You may not be used to it or even like it, but that is all there is to eat. Your dietary needs are met, but since there may be over a hundred of you, they have to cook for all of you, and individual tastes are seldom considered.

You may have a period of time for recreation, but then you once again go back to that small room, where you spend most of your day.

You are alone. There are few, if any, friends to visit with you, and your family may have abandoned you.

You are confined to a small room — that is your existence, every day for the rest of your life.

Sounds like a jail, doesn't it? But what I have just described is how hundreds of people within our counties live their lives every single day. They are not in jail. They are cared for by people in facilities that strive to meet their every need, caring for and giving them comfort.

They are our elderly or disabled who reside in a facility because they can no longer care for themselves.

This is their home, this is where they live. This is their existence for the rest of their life.

There are laws, rules and regulations that govern each of these facilities. In addition, there are policies and procedures that each fa-

cility has set up to care for the residents.

The facilities that I am aware of in Hood River, Wasco and Sherman counties do the best they can to insure the proper care of their residents. I have observed employees go out of their way, doing things on their own time, to assist the residents and their special needs whenever possible.

But who the person the resident is can be lost in the crowd of others who also have personal needs — some greater, some lesser, but all individuals who once were active and self-sufficient adults.

Now, they are dependent on other people — strangers — for their well-being.

That is their life. What can you do to make it better?

The State of Oregon has a mandate to insure that every resident of every facility dealing with these citizens is following the law. Oregon Long-Term Care Ombudsman, overseeing the facilities has seven full-time Deputy Long-Term Care Ombudsmen employees who advocate for residents, promote their welfare and protect their rights. These men and women are responsible for more than 42,000 residents throughout Oregon. Over 1000 reside in Wasco, Hood River and Sherman counties.

Obviously those seven people cannot begin to perform this function on their own. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman program is designed to rely on volunteers, Certified Ombudsmen, in every area to insure the proper care is being given.

Currently there are no volunteers in Wasco, Hood River and Sherman counties. I used to be one; it was a satisfying and rewarding position, but unfortunately, I have medical issues that have caused me to step down.

It isn't for everyone — it can be trying and heart wrenching. Some

residents are difficult, others are unable to communicate, and others will reject assistance in fear of retribution from an employee.

It can also be very rewarding as a person's life becomes a little easier; even a small step makes a big difference in the resident's life.

A volunteer undergoes a background check to insure they are competent to do the work and are trustworthy. They come from all walks of life; their experiences help them become good advocates.

They are given five days of training to orient them to the laws and what their role as an Ombudsman is — but they are not left alone. They have almost instant access to the full-time staff assigned to the area and will be given guidance as needed.

These elderly citizens are not faceless people, warehoused in a facility; these facilities are occupied by our parents, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, neighbors — and, one day, maybe one of us. We want to insure the facilities are doing the very best they can for our loved ones and for those that may have been forgotten by their families and the rest of society.

An Ombudsman is an advocate for the residents. He/she is not a part of the facility's team — and can often be at odds with the facility or policies while advocating for the resident.

I encourage you to look into the program, talk to an Ombudsman to see if you might want to be involved, or give me a call and I will be glad to share my experiences with you.

The Ombudsman is independent, with the sole responsibility of making sure that each resident is properly cared for and is living in a safe and secure environment.

Isn't that what you want for your family member?

Art Labrousse lives in The Dalles.