

Happy Ned Year



Photo by Trisha Walker

A HOOD RIVER "pear forest," in winter

Everyday is a gift

By NED MCFEENY

"Pear forest." That's how a 6-year-old longingly referred to his grandma's orchard. Best thing I heard all year.

So, I left you a year ago when the government was shutting down and with no park rangers around, people were stringing Christmas lights on ancient Joshua Trees.

The image tantalizes me, on one hand, as the crummy crime against nature that it was.

Or, a humorously offbeat way to celebrate the season — the closest we'll get to a tannenbaum that was around when Jesus walked.

All of the criminal year 2019 lay before us; the one thing we know will never recover from it is the Joshua trees.

But, speaking of crimes, the shutdown did teach me one of two wonderful words: Protestors in a federal building were arrested for "crowding, obstructing, and incommoding..."

Incommoding! And in the UK, the police term for fighting in public is "affray." Hey, enough about Brexit ... I feel incommoded by the affray, so I will move on ...

2020 will be the year that the term "the opposite sex" ceases to have use and meaning.

Business idea: A chain of "Participating" restaurants, as in, "get it now only at Participating ..."

I loved the inspirational poster I saw in a hospital this year: "Everyday is a gift." Note the structure: *Everyday*.

I agree: We should celebrate the mundane. Everyday really is a gift.

Business idea: Novelty utility meters fashioned after gargoyles ... the spinning arrows instead of eyes.

I learned from personal experience that there is such a thing as "pseudogout" — a painful joint condition that's like gout but not quite.

Also known as "Boggy Knee." Which is a term I actually like.

The word "oblivion" just keeps going on and on ... I think "oblivyin'" ought to be a verb for some endless task. While we're at it we could make shove'l a contraction.

"When you're diggin' and oblivyin', a shov'l help you get there ..." even as far as Boggy Knee.

Maybe George Carlin once asked this: Why do sportswriters and broadcasters write or say that a team "plays host" — but they never say the visiting team "plays guest"?

Perhaps so not to confused people when they use the verb "plaguest?"

Like in Psalm 60: "With heavy things thou plaguest us ..." But enough about Tom Brady ...

... who is not nearly as interesting as Salamao Mousse.

The most compelling story I heard all year might be about the "meteorological department janitor" in Mozambique who hikes three hours several times a week to mow the lawn and clean the weather radar station built near the town of Xai-Xai (shy-shy) in the early 2000s. The station was constructed to alert farmers and ranchers when torrential rains will come and cause flooding, as meteorologists in the impoverished country try in vain to keep up with climate change. But the radar stopped working in 2013; no funds to fix it. Yet, Senhor Mousse goes three times a week to take care of the facility, hoping it will one day go back online.

When the Xai-Xai location opened in 2004, then-President Joaquim Chissano personally attended the so-called baptizing of the installation and gave it a name: "Life Radar."

We need a treatise on the rich and vital distinctions between street food and road food.

Who is this guy, Oz Moses, I keep hearing about? "It was done by Oz Moses," they say. I think he's as busy as Mo Mentum, whose best friend is Con Gusto.

Gone too soon, in 2018, Gord Dowdie of The Tragically Hip, whose sense of humor was razor sharp and Bay Rum bracing, once said during a concert: "I will remain motionless if you need a target."

Gord called for a "National Stupid Day," saying, "We could have our own motto: 'Who Are We Kidding?'" and adding, "If someone important asks you a question about something, do you answer it strictly because you'll feel important?"

Uh, yes.

While we're talking music: Most prescient lyrics ... ever? "They're putting us in identical little boxes/ No character just uniformity/ They're trying to build a computerised community/ But they'll never make a zombie out of me" That's from a song called "Muswell Hillbilly," by The Kinks. It came out in 1972 — 20 years before the home computer became common; yes, 35 years before "social media," the Davies brothers sang about a conforming, cyber-prone "community."

See NED, page B5

YESTERYEARS

HR welcomes 'little stranger' in 1930

1910 — 110 YEARS AGO

It was a beautiful day that the grange selected for their first all day meeting. The first day of the New Year and the first meeting of its kind to be held in Hood River County. As the hour approached for the "Gathering of the Clans," grangers could be seen approaching the Pine Grove Grange from all directions filled with the spirit of the day. The Happy New Year greeting gaily passed from one to the other until each heart responded to the touch of brotherly love.

1920 — 100 YEARS AGO

From the want ads: Lost between Tucker Bridge and Hood River, a large crank for automobile. Finder will be rewarded for its return to Paris Fair.

Wanted, to rent or lease, a good farm. Phone Odell 336.

Wanted, competent stenographer. Apply Hood River Apple Vinegar Company.

For sale, singing canaries. Apply 1227 State St., Hood River.

For sale, one DeLaval Cream Separator. A1 condition. Call 5951.

1930 — 90 YEARS AGO

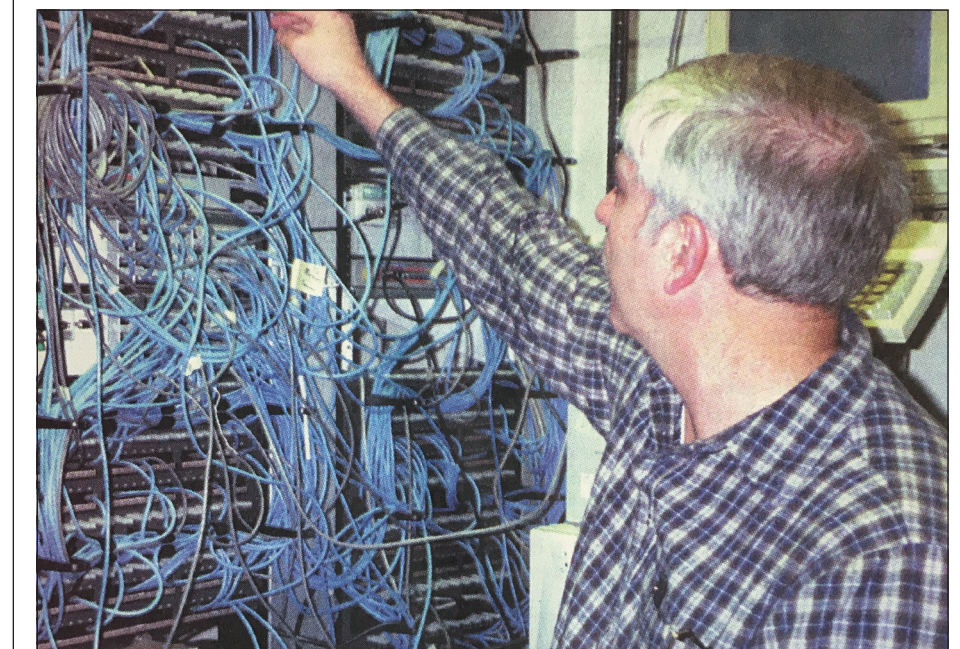
A few prolonged toots of motor horn, an exploding moto exhaust and the exchange of a few Happy New Years was about all that marked the coming of the New Year outdoors in Hood River. At a dance at Pythian Hall, there was much jubilation as the last minutes of the Old Year passed and all joined with members of the Pythian band in welcoming the little stranger as he arrived. Most of the New Year's noise was heard via the air, over radio, and quite a number of families joined at radio parties to hear the New Year arrive in leading cities in the four time zones, and to take in the dance across the continent.

1940 — 80 YEARS AGO

Old residents, Monday evening, were freely admitting that, tax their memories as they could, they could not recall a more glorious Christmas than that of 1939. While there were sharp frosts during the nights of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the entire countryside was bathed in sunshine and there was a total absence of chilly wind. As usual, this season of the year, the great majority of residents were either at their own homes or local friends' over the double holiday, and only a few were out of town. Christmas of 1939 will long be remembered, not only for its cheer, but also for its beautiful weather.

1950 — 70 YEARS AGO

Hood River post office had its biggest day in history during the Christmas rush season, reports Wm. B. Small, postmaster. The post office received 29,200 letters



Hood River News archives

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Mike Ellis, technology coordinator at Hood River Valley High, adjusts wiring connecting computers throughout the school. Of the six computer labs at HRVHS, two include mostly old machines that freshmen use to learn the basics of computing. Photo by Steve Kadel.

VERBATIM

Only Snow Was Missing At Ski Party

Enthused by a report on Tuesday from Mr. McMullen that seven inches of perfectly ideal snow had fallen in the neighborhood of the Spur road, members of the Hood River Ski Club left bright and early on the first day of this year for a day's sport. When they arrived, it was to find an open landscape, bare of any snow fit for skiing.

And then they heard the news that, after the report was phoned in, Old Borea got in his work and the new snow melted so rapidly that it was gone in a few hours. So the ski meet the first

of this year ended in a picnic, with weather conditions more like the middle of April than the first of January.

But with the winter months still ahead, members of the Ski Club were yesterday planning a snowshoe trip — when they can find enough snow to travel over.

Oh, yes, and Mr. McMullen is still wondering whether he got across with the explanation he offered the ski runners when they arrived at his resort on New Year's.

— Hood River News, January 3, 1930

first grandchild for both Bob and Barbara Norton and for Merrill and Betty Graves. Both parents of the last arrival of the '70s grew up and went to school in the Hood River Valley — Sheryl in Pine Grove, Randy in Odell. When the new year broke, Hood River had still not welcomed the first baby of the 1980s.

1990 — 30 YEARS AGO

Temperatures were chilly — even dipping below freezing — but that didn't slow the pouring of the main slab for Hood River Memorial Hospital's new addition near 13th and May streets.

Aware of the conditions, the contractor used special techniques to assure that the pouring could go ahead. There haven't been many winters in Hood River when construction crews could work continuously without having to take a "snow and ice" break. But if conditions through the end of the year were any indication, this could be the first time in that area.

2000 — 20 YEARS AGO

Back in the dark ages of 1983, Hood River Valley High School boasted a grand total of six computers. Today, students at HRVHS have nearly 400 computers and several other technological instruments at their fingertips. The computer age has changed the entire approach to learning. "We don't even buy encyclopedias anymore," Mike Ellis, technology coordinator, said.

2010 — 10 YEARS AGO

While snow blanketed the ground outside, the Horizon boys basketball team's defense blanketed The Dalles-Wantona Eagle-Indians JV team Tuesday night to win the Hood River Lions invitational Tournament. With their offense coming in fits and starts. The Hawks clamped down on defense, forcing turnovers and turning them into points to pull away for a 51-36 win.

Compiled by Trisha Walker and Emily Fitzgerald, News staff writers

COMMUNITY NOTES

CGGS to meet Jan. 11

The Columbia Gorge Genealogical Society will hold its next meeting on Saturday, Jan. 11 in the downstairs classroom at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, 5000 Discovery Drive, The Dalles.

This month's program will be the "Individual Research Assistance" project, said a press release.

"The project consists of members collaborating with other members in solving their research dead ends or brick walls," said a CGGS press release.

The project will run in January and February. Members are encouraged to bring their laptops and research data.

A short business meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m., followed by the beginning of the research

assistance project.

There is no admission charge to the Discovery Center for attending CGGS meetings. A \$1 donation is appreciated to cover room rental.

Lunch and Learn at the HR Library

Thursdays at the Hood River Library beginning Jan. 9, it's Lunch and Learn, a series of conversations about race, gender identity, immigration and the American dream. The conversations begin at 1 p.m., and lunch will be provided.

The first Lunch and Learn conversation, focusing on homelessness in the Gorge, took place in December.

The Thursday, Jan. 9 conversation is titled, "White Allyship in Close-knit Communities." The event is co-sponsored by the Oregon Humanities Project and

will be facilitated by Alexis James.

"What does it mean to be a white ally, especially in close-knit communities? And what does it mean to have the support of white allies?" asks a press release. "What is needed from white people in our communities to move the conversation about racism — both statewide and nationally — forward in a productive and respectful way? In this conversation ... participants will have the chance to explore their identities, learn how to acknowledge different lived experiences without alienating friends and neighbors, and move toward action in their own communities. This conversation will set the table for bringing discussions about racism, white culture, and identity to your dining room, living room, and backyard barbecues."

The conversation is free and all are welcome.

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