

# OPINION

## Hood River News

**CHELSEA MARR** Publisher  
**KIRBY NEUMANN-REA** Editor

**JODY THOMPSON** Advertising Manager  
**TANYA LINDSEY** Circulation Manager

**DICK NAFSINGER** Publisher, Emeritus (1933-2011)  
**JOE PETSHOW** President, Eagle Newspapers, Inc.

Subscription \$45 per year in Hood River trade area. \$71 outside trade area.



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



## Our Readers Write

### 'Not all bad'

I doubt I'm the only one who anticipated the impeachment trial to be a real emotional downer for any political centrists. Sure, those with views clearly aligned with one side or the other would have repeated adrenaline rushes, but nothing much for those of us in the middle.

But I was wrong. The process, including coverage by a free press, has provided a refresher regarding the United States form of government. I'm being reminded that nobody is above the law. At the same time, I'm being reminded that impeachment is a political process — an important one, but one that can be abused. And I'm challenged to weigh reasonable and opposing points of view, even if some of the emotional content is a bit over the top, every time I tune into any form of news media.

That's not all bad.

**Doug Roof**  
Hood River

express my personal gratitude for that quick response to our needs but then realized that I also want to acknowledge all of the restaurants who supply us through the shelter season and hope that the community will show their appreciation by eating in these establishments and letting them know why they are choosing to spend their time there. It is no small thing to produce a healthy and tasty meal for 25-30 people and our guests, volunteers and staff love the food we eat there every night we operate.

The list of restaurants includes Riverside, Farmstand, Full Sail, Basik, Hood River Taqueria, Bodas, Ferment, Kickstand, Mesquiteria, Celilo, Double Mountain, 6th Street Bistro, Pelinitis, Pfriend, Solstice and Andrew's Pizza. Thank you, thank you, thank you! And a special thanks to Mark Deresta at Riverside who has coordinated our food for years now.

**Sarah Bellinson**  
Hood River

what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine, they say CrowdStrike..." and "there's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution ..." (1). "CrowdStrike" is code for a Russian propagated conspiracy that Ukraine hacked the 2016 election, not Russia. I bet Trump got this propaganda from Putin in Helsinki. And of course, Biden is Trump's chief rival in the 2020 election.

So, Zelensky asks about weapons and Trump responds, asking for investigations of "Crowdstike" and the Bidens. Both of these self-dealing "favors" were to benefit Trump's re-election, not the U.S. interest. And by withholding the \$396M to coerce Ukraine into doing these investigations, it should be considered extortion. There is a volcano of evidence to support these facts. And come judgment day there will be a special corner of hell for those who obfuscate, disseminate and lie to justify Trump "asking for favors though."

Now, it's common when giving aid to ask a foreign government to do things that benefit the U.S. national interest but it is a high crime for Trump to extort a foreign leader to investigate his chief political rival to cheat in a U.S. election based on Russian propaganda. Trump should be removed from office and then Mike Pence would be president. Evangelicals shall rejoice!

www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Unclassified09.2019.pdf

**Guy Tauscher**  
Hood River

### 'Expecting best efforts'

The upcoming session is only for a month, and there's a great deal to be done, including ne-

gotiating proposed legislation for things like funding for police and wildfire protection. I absolutely expect every one of our senators, including my senator Chuck Thomsen, to spend that entire month in Salem, working with their colleagues and making their best efforts to do the job for which they were elected.

Last year, several senators left the state during the legislative session to prevent a vote on a climate change proposal, a subject near and dear to many Oregon residents. This subject is once again on the table to be discussed, and it is being insinuated that another walkout is possible, though a newly elected House Republican Leader Christine Drazan stated (according to an OPB article published on Jan. 17) that a walkout would be a "breakdown of the process"... though she didn't rule it out.

That ... just won't do.

**Nikkita Paulson**  
Hood River

### Think tank solution

12-year-old Hood River writer Anderson Brunner's letter, "Crosswalk worries," may require a "Think Tank" solution. Since the offending object (a car) functions on four wheels, with a fifth wheel that may have a nut behind it, demands personal responsibility. Our best means of public awareness information with the greatest impact, the "next door" Hood River News, is missing. Gee whiz, I'm assuming that there was an ambulance, police cars and cell phone cameras in abundance, and no photo images? WOW!

Now back to "brainstorming" for "Think Tank" solutions: remembering that you can only control you, but not that nut!

Place education warning signs at the curb:

- No running
- When walking in front of a

stopped car, stop and look, wait and walk ... to the sidewalk.

These are my thoughts for starters. Now it's your turn to think!

**Alan Winans**  
Hood River

### Saddened

I've been saddened by the news of Kobe Bryant's death this week and just wanted to state how grateful I am that he was able to inspire so many people world wide for as many years as he did.

It is a helpful reminder to do things that we love with our short time on Earth and to share with those we care about how much they mean to us while we are alive.

**Avery Hoyt**  
White Salmon

### Community restaurants

Sometimes it takes a crisis to realize what a great community you live in. I don't need a crisis myself to know this. But we did have a small crisis at the Hood River Warming Shelter when the water was not drinkable and the restaurants in town had to close down for two days this week. We very gratefully rely on the generosity of many of our local restaurants to feed the hungry at our shelter. It was suggested that we contact a restaurant in White Salmon for help and without hesitation, everybody came through with an ample and delicious meal enjoyed by all. I wanted to

### Transactional

Why did Mike Pence agree to be vice president? Trump is an unlikely person for an Evangelical to support. Trump mocks, he insults, bullies, he's vindictive, vengeful and his lifestyle is antithetical to Christianity. He trumpets so-called 'religious freedom.' Perhaps Evangelical support for Trump is merely transactional?

Donald Trump has been impeached! For a perfect call? Read the transcript. Here's the impeachable from the transcript, President Zelensky of Ukraine says, "We are almost ready to buy more Javelins from the United States for defense purposes"; Trump cuts in, saying, "I would like you to do us a favor though..." and "I would like you to find out



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

# Brimstone's revival respectfully blends humor and sense of history

By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**  
News editor

Successful businesses typically possess either a sense of history or a sense of humor.

Both those are found in one of Hood River's newest businesses.

Brimstone Boulders is unique to Hood River: A climbing gym created inside what used to be a church.

Turn to page B1 for the full story.

Space in Kaleidoscope restricted my ability to write about the sense of humor owners Conor Byrne and Jen Altschul, and their staff, clearly convey.

And it needs to be pointed out that the new owners of the venerable former Asbury United Methodist Church have created an entirely new use of the former worship space while giving it the respect it deserves.

"Behave like a decent human," is the first item in the Code of Responsibility sign prominently displayed at Brimstone.

"2. Don't take yourself too seriously. Really." And here is where you can see the owners' adherence to the McMenamins' model of playful reverence for transformed spaces:

"We're in an 1897/1912 repurposed church, pulling very hard on plastic holds bolted to plywood. This activity is inherently ridiculous."

No running, keep the pads clean, keep your shirt on and "Keep yelling at a minimum: there's an echo" are some of the other rules.

The church was formally decommissioned in 2013, and I was there for what was a solemn ceremony, a sad one for long-time members of the church, which blended with a local Lutheran congregation and is now Spirit of Grace on Tucker Road. Members and friends of Asbury still hold a connection to the beautiful building, and I like to think their feelings would be upheld in seeing the vibrant place it is today. Yes, the pews are gone, save one that provides comfortable seating, and almost all of the organ is in storage (Conor Byrne said they are considering future uses). Some of the pipes line the facing of the reception counter, and the organ keyboard is the first thing you see when you walk in, honorably repurposed as a counter to sign in before using the walls.

The organ played songs of reverence and adherence to healthy, uplifting rules of life, and now the keyboard serves as a platform for people to say they agree to the same kind of thing.

And the Brimstone owners faithfully displayed their respect for the quirky history of the building in several ways: Look beneath the keyboard plexiglass and see the typed 3-by-5 card signed by an organ-



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

**ROCK OF AGES:** The lady on the rock is inspired by the Book of Psalms, and Brimstone owners were inspired to use her hands as symbols of strength.

ist with a special love for the instrument, one Jason L. Grable on 3/18/89. The card reads: "A few points to ponder about this organ: 1. When turning off the organ, please leave the express

shoe in the 'open' or depressed position. This helps keep the swell in tune with the Great.

2. Use the crescendo pedal at your own risk. Some stops will stick on after it is closed, due

to the age of the mechanism (it's not repairable without console dismantling). 3. Note that the Dulciana on the Great is tuned a little out of tune. This is deliberate, since the voice is not useful on the Great, being overshadowed by the rest of the voices. It is intended to be used with the swell Salicional coupled to the Great, and provides a very useful Celeste string combination for quiet music. I felt this would be much more useful."

I have no idea what a Dulciana, Express Shoe are, but you don't have to know; you just read Mr. Grable's notes to get a sense of the evident beloved personality of the old organ.

A placard, undated but likely from the 1950s, memorializes Pastor J.J. Patton with his family's gift of "the public address system and hearing aids."

The stained glass windows remain the star of the space, and they will always remain, complete with the names of people to whom they were dedicated: Oscar Stranahan, Abby Mills, "Wm. Boorman and wife."

The very branding image of Brimstone honors the key stained glass motif, the gripping hands of a woman climbing a rock shaped like the cross. Pastor David King of Spirit of Grace described it as "visualizing the idea that God is the solid rock that we can cling to in turbulent times," specifically Psalm 46: "God is our refuge and strength,

a help always near in times of great trouble."

The Brimstone name is a reflection of the history of the building, though the facility has no religious affiliation other than a reverence for what the adopted space can still mean. If you visit, make note of the way climbing wall designers Vertical Solutions used arcs of dark wood that mimic the rich earth tones of the head board that graces the ceilings, woodwork that was mostly covered by drop ceilings in the 1950s and 1960s, and discovered in mint condition when the von Flotows started renovations. The new design flatteringly imitates it is one of the sweeter features of the revival of the old church interior, albeit with a totally new purpose.

The von Flotows purchased the church from the Methodists and with contractor SMP Construction did a solid stage one job of getting it ready for future generations. Byrne and Altschul have in turn invested heavily in the facility, and the careful work of Orange Construction shows. Brightly lit during use hours that are increasingly busy, the building glows, and that will only increase: plans are, Byrne said, to replace the aged plexiglass exterior coverings that dull the impact of the windows when lit from within.

That change will only enhance the bright future of this transformed building.