

VOICES

ANYONE CAN WRITE

Nearly 40 years in the business have taught me that readers are bombarded and overwhelmed with facts. What we long for, though, is meaning and a connection at a deeper and more universal level.

And that's why the East Oregonian will be running, from time to time, stories from students who are in my writing class, which I've been teaching for the past 10 years in Portland.

I take great satisfaction in helping so-called nonwriters find and write stories from their lives and experiences. They walk into my room believing they don't have what it takes to be a writer. I remind them if they follow their hearts, they will discover they are storytellers.

As we all are at our core.

Some of these stories have nothing to do with Pendleton or Umatilla County. They do, however, have everything to do with life.

If you are interested in contacting me to tell me your story, I'd like to hear from you.

Tom Hallman Jr., [tbhbook@aol.com](mailto:tbhbook@aol.com)

Tom Hallman Jr. is a Pulitzer Prize-winning feature writer for the Oregonian newspaper. He's also a writing coach and has an affinity for Umatilla County.

A short stint as mayor of Pendleton

By ROLAND HAERTL  
Special to the East Oregonian

I have held a variety of positions, most of them interesting, but none as brief as the "Mayor of Pendleton."

In 1976, my company was awarded the contract to build McDonald's first French fry plant in Hermiston. In the spring of 1977, I was driving west to visit our project office.

As I passed the Pendleton airport, the right lane from the airport on-ramp to Interstate 84 was blocked by a state police car, flashing its lights. I wondered, then remembered: It was dedication day of the Union Pacific Railroad's new switchyard at Hinkle, just south of Hermiston. The government and corporate officials were arriving.

I had time. I decided to attend the dedication. I fell in line behind the limousines just ahead of the tailing police cars.

After a short drive the convoy swung into the parking lot at the new switchyard. I followed the last limousine into the lot.

I got out of my car and

followed the hand motions of the parking lot attendants directing me to follow the limousine passengers. Everybody headed to the elevated seating platform reserved for the invited dignitaries. The platform was built straddling three of the switchyard tracks. At intervals an engine would come through.

I waved to a few acquaintances. Some waved in return. Some did not recognize me, and still waved in return. Familiar faces in unfamiliar settings present mental connection problems.

One person who did not recognize me was the senior vice president of the Union Pacific. He was officiating the dedication function.

About 120 people were attending, seated on the elevated platform arranged in about 10 rows. I opted to sit, less conspicuously, in the second row, off-center.

Since I had not received an invitation, I did not know what to expect.

The Union Pacific VP started with the usual welcoming speech, presenting corporate data, project data, outlining the importance of this facility. To his credit, he was quick and

compact. Then he switched to the introduction of the dignitaries and expressed gratitude for their attendance. From the top, the governor, Bob Straub; congressman from Burns, Bob Smith; Umatilla County commissioners, etc. He always called out the name, followed by the title and then pointed with an open hand towards the dignitary introduced, who would get up, turn to the crowd, smiling, or just wave.

He said: "I want to thank the mayor of Pendleton for attending this function and thank him for the hospitality arranged for our employees and project staff in the county and the towns around us. Mayor Joe McLaughlin." With an outstretched arm and open hand, he pointed at me.

I got up, bowed to the speaker, turned approximately 90 degrees toward the seated invitees, waved and sat down. Mayor McLaughlin never was introduced. I wondered how the Union Pacific VP would resolve this. Or if he needed to.

This story is longer than my position as mayor of Pendleton was.



Center for Whale Research/Contributed Photo, File

The Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Yakama tribes announced the first commercial gillnet fishery of 2021 opened Wednesday, June 16, according to a press release from the tribes. The tribes will harvest summer chinook, sockeye and a small number of steelhead that will be available for purchase by the general public through the summer and fall.

Tribes announce opening of first commercial gillnet fishery of 2021

Summer chinook, sockeye, steelhead will be harvested

East Oregonian

PORTLAND — Nez Perce, Umatilla, Warm Springs and Yakama tribal fishers are making their way to the Columbia River after the tribes announced the first commercial gillnet fishery of 2021 opened Wednesday, June 16, according to a press release from the tribes.

The tribes will harvest summer chinook, sockeye and a small number of steelhead that will be available for purchase by the general public through the summer and fall.

"The tribal fishery on the Columbia River is a long-honored custom that can be traced back to ancient times when the rivers ran wild," said Aja DeCoteau, interim executive director for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. "Whether people come

to the river to enjoy fresh Columbia River-caught fish or engage tribal fishers directly, the commercial fishery allows the public to enjoy a taste of history."

Fisheries managers estimate 115,600 sockeye and 78,000 summer chinook will return to the Columbia River over the next few weeks. The peak runs will occur around the end of June, and the abundance may drop quickly, the release said.

Due to the pandemic, a number of guidelines and recommendations have been made both to the tribal fishers as well as those interested in buying salmon directly in an effort to prevent the spread of the virus. Those planning to visit the river to buy a salmon are encouraged to wear a mask and should expect to see fishers make social distancing accommodations. Many fishers now accept credit cards or mobile payment to avoid handling cash.

As a population that is extremely at-risk for developing complications from COVID-19, the tribes have been particularly cautious, and they encourage fish buyers to help in this effort to protect not only themselves, but the tribal community, as well.

Both treaty and non-treaty fishery catches have been agreed to as part of the U.S. v. Oregon Management Agreement and will be adjusted throughout the season as the run sizes are updated. Besides chinook and sockeye, limited numbers of steelhead are available during the summer period. The tribal fishery is protected under treaties the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla, and Nez Perce tribes signed with the federal government in 1855. These treaties reserved their rights to fish for ceremonial, subsistence and commercial uses at all usual and accustomed fishing places in the Columbia Basin.

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Fri. June 18 & Sat. June 19, 8am-2pm.  
505 NE 35th St., Riverside area in Pendleton. Kitchen stuff, kids toys, clothes, garden tools and much more.

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1700 SW 44th, Pendleton.  
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Many years of treasures! Antiques, housewares, home decor, Women's clothes/shoes, lots of fun stuff and some toys.

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