

# The return of Misty

They still haven't invented a good dog that lives as long as the humans who get attached to them. And that's a shame. I'd like to see more effort from the science people on that front. Recently learned from friends that two more Wallowa County dogs I've known for a great long while have gone where the game of fetch never ends. We were sad about that, then started recalling all the other good dogs we've scratched behind the ears over the years. Just going down the list of charming creatures we wish could have stayed around longer.

Then I remembered the strange case of Misty, our black lab when I was a kid. She had the "classic" black lab looks, I guess you'd call it. You'd be flipping through a magazine or see a calendar photo involving a black lab and say, hey, there's Misty.

My mom was driving home with my little sister one day and just as they were turning into our driveway, they both saw Misty stretched out. She wasn't moving. And she wasn't in a natural position. She appeared to be very much not alive.

Mom hit the brakes and stopped a couple feet shy of the body. She was surprised, of course, to pull in and discover such a thing, but even more surprised when my sister turned and said, "You killed my dog." Then Jessica tore out of the car, ran around



AND FURTHERMORE  
Jon Rombach

and gathered Misty in her arms. Mom remembers that when she stomped on the brakes the anti-lock feature made the rig lurch before coming to a stop. Mom figures that little detail, combined with the shock of Jessica seeing Misty like that, just made her daughter a little less rational in the moment. Because the front bumper was a good two feet from the dog. Enough room for Jessica to now be out there, down on the ground cradling Misty's head in her lap, having a spirited cry.

Mom left the car at the top of the driveway and hustled down the long driveway to go get our dad to help. The house was surrounded by trees, so you couldn't see it from the road. She got past the trees and there was Misty, ol' trusty Misty, laying on the porch alive, well, and wagging her tail now that she saw mom coming. Surprise, surprise.

"Jessica!" she backtracked and yelled up the driveway. "It's not Misty!"

I mentioned this was a long drive-way. Guessing a hundred yards or so. Long enough that Mom's voice

didn't carry. Mom started jogging again, cut the distance in half and tried yelling once more to let Jessica know. No luck. Finally Mom had to stand next to Jessica, touch her on the shoulder and repeat the message several times to get it through, that this is not Misty. Misty is on the porch. Jess got the message, looked down at the strange dog she'd just been burying her face in and petting, fur wet with her tears, and decided abruptly that the mourning period had gone on long enough.

We called around to all the neighbors. Didn't locate the owner, but left the unfortunate dog with the classic black lab looks by the roadside overnight and planned to bury it the next morning. But it was gone. Somebody had gone looking, found their good dog and brought it home.

Grief is never much fun, I've noticed. But if you have to go through it, I prefer that angry grief, like when my sister came up with a fanciful reason for a result she didn't want to see. Didn't make any sense, but you're not thinking rationally in a case like that, so with that in mind it makes perfect sense. I'm not sure I buy that old line about time healing all wounds, but it does seem to work in some cases. Only took about five minutes for my sister to recover from that shock of Misty's untimely end.

Jon Rombach is a local columnist for the Chieftain.

## LETTERS to the EDITOR

### What happened to manners?

When I was growing up in the 60's and 70's, when we received a gift we were expected to send a thank you note or give a personal thank you; as in a hug to grandma. Now it seems as though thank yous for wedding gifts, graduation gifts and birthday presents are purely optional.

The past ten years have seen a thank you card or personal reply for maybe 25% of the events we have responded to. It makes me wonder who is teaching proper etiquette to children these days. It seems as though the individual is all that matters and they want what they feel that they are entitled to. Often cards will state that cash is preferred to gifts for a down payment on a house or to reduce unwanted items or so they can buy what they wish.

This has really soured my willingness to support anyone's major lifetime achievement. A Facebook reply thanking everyone just doesn't cut it. Besides, I don't have Facebook.

Alan Klages,  
sixty-year Wallowa County resident

### LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor is a forum for Wallowa County Chieftain readers to express themselves on local, states, national or global issues. We ask that all letters be contained to 350 words. Rules: No personal attacks. Please challenge the opinion or ideas of others, not the person. After all these are our neighbors. The Chieftain reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content when necessary. No anonymous letters will be printed. We also ask that a telephone number be made available to our staff should you need to be reached. For questions, email the editor at editor@wallowa.com, or call 541-426-4567. Thank you for your contributions.

# Gas prices edge lower to kick off summer driving season

East Oregonian

PORTLAND — Pump prices continue to inch down despite strong demand. The vast majority of Memorial Day travelers found gas prices a little lower than they were in early May. For the week, the national average loses two cents to \$2.83 a gallon while the Oregon average dips a penny to \$3.42 a gallon.

"Gas prices are edging lower and that's a trend drivers can expect to continue into early June. Stable crude oil prices are helping to put downward pressure on pump prices, despite tight domestic supplies and robust demand. Another bump in demand could push prices higher but only by a few cents," said Marie Dodds, public affairs director for AAA Oregon/Idaho.

Oregon is one of 43 states and the District of Columbia where prices are lower this week. Ohio (-7 cents) has the largest weekly decrease, while Wyoming (+3 cents) has the largest week-over-week increase. This week there are nine states with an average above \$3 a gallon down from 10 a week ago.

Oregon is one of 12 states with higher prices now than a month ago. The national



Ellen Morris Bishop

Along with other stations across the northwest, the Chevron station in Enterprise may sport lower gas prices this summer.

average is six cents less and the Oregon average is two cents more than a month ago. This is the ninth-larg-

est monthly increase in the country. Utah (+23 cents) has the largest month-over-month jump, Idaho (+18

### RANK REGION PRICE ON MAY 28, 2019

1. California \$3.99
2. Hawaii \$3.65
3. Washington \$3.54
4. Alaska \$3.49
5. Nevada \$3.48
6. Oregon \$3.42
7. Idaho \$3.20
8. Utah \$3.18
9. Arizona \$3.13
10. Pennsylvania \$2.98

cents) is second and Alaska (+12 cents) is third. North Carolina (-14 cents) has the largest monthly decrease.

The West Coast continues to have the highest pump prices in the nation with all of the region's states landing on the top 10 most expensive list. California tops the list for the 10th consecutive week with Hawaii, Washington, Alaska, Nevada, and Oregon rounding out the top six. Oregon is sixth for the third week in a row. This week California drops just below \$4 a gallon. Prices in the region have seen mostly modest decreases on the week, with Alaska (+2 cents)

seeing the largest jump and California (-4 cents) seeing the largest decline.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration's recent weekly report for the week ending on May 17

shows that West Coast gasoline stocks grew significantly by 1.3 million bbl from the previous week and now sit at 27.7 million bbl. The current level is 2.5 million bbl less than last year's level at this time. The West Coast may see continued price volatility, as a result of tight stocks in the region.

Oregon is one of only eight states where drivers are paying more than a year ago to fill up. The national average is 14 cents less and the Oregon average is seven cents more than a year ago, which is the sixth-largest yearly increase in the country. California (+26 cents), Nevada (+15 cents), and Arizona (+9 cents) have the greatest year-over-year increases. Florida (-31 cents) and Delaware (-28 cents) have the largest year-over-year decreases.

## Funding Available for Wetland Restoration Projects

PORTLAND — Up to \$40 million in technical and financial assistance is available to help eligible conservation partners voluntarily protect, restore, and enhance critical wetlands on agricultural lands.

Funding will be provided through the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership, part of the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.

Project proposals should be emailed to the Natural Resources Conservation Service at SM.NRCS.WRE@wdc.usda.gov by June 14, 2019.

Restored wetlands improve water quality downstream and improve wildlife habitat while also providing flood prevention and recreational benefits to communities.

Those interested can contact Bari Williams, NRCS Oregon easement programs specialist at 503-414-3226 or bari.williams@usda.gov. Proposals must follow ACEP guidelines for wetland reserve easements.

Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners interested in easements on their land should contact their local USDA service center or visit the ACEP webpage.

## The Earth is But One Country and Mankind its Citizens

The body of the human world is sick. Its remedy and healing will be the oneness of the kingdom of humanity

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~from the Sacred Writings of the Baha'i Faith~

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