

# Grant County has a holiday style all its own

Last Wednesday, on one of the most frigid days of this winter so far, a big yellow school bus rolled up to the Valley View Assisted Living Center in John Day and disgorged a passel of kindergartners from Humbolt Elementary School. Fresh-faced and adorable, the kids were there to show off their Christmas hats to the residents.

The Humbolt hat parade is a holiday tradition that goes back a number of years and, by all accounts, is enjoyed by young and old alike. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has been especially deadly for older people, Valley View remains closed to visitors except for family members. But that didn't stop the hat parade.

Led by their teachers, the kids marched around to a small patio at the back of the building, where they took turns modeling their holiday haberdashery for appreciative residents and staff, who took in the fashion show from the facility's dining room. (You'll find a photo essay on the kindergartners' visit on Page A8 of this newspaper, and you can see additional pictures on our website.)

It was just one more example, if any were needed, of how the holidays seem to bring out the best in Grant County residents.

On Dec. 11, John Day's Main Street came alive with the 28th annual Timber Truckers Light Parade, a holiday tradition created to honor the contributions of the timber industry to Grant County's economy and way of life. Log trucks, pickups and at least one ATV festooned in

multicolored Christmas lights lent a festive glow to downtown John Day. Well over 100 residents braved the cold to take in the sight, clapping and cheering as the convoy of 30 parade entries rumbled past.

One week earlier, several hundred people filled the Elks Lodge for the 29th annual Carrie Young Memorial Dinner and Auction. The event broke its own record, set a year earlier, by raising just a scoche under \$50,000 to provide groceries, heating oil and Christmas gifts to around 300 vulnerable seniors in Grant County. The week before that, the lodge was the scene of a community Thanksgiving meal as the Elks dished up more than 100 free turkey dinners.

Happy holidays, Grant County style!

## Send us your events

As you may have noticed, we've revived our community events calendar, known as "What's Happening." We stopped running it for a while after the pandemic put the kibosh on most in-person gatherings. But now, with many of the state restrictions lifted, group events are starting to come back, and we here at the Eagle want to help spread the word. If you have a community event you'd like to publicize in "What's Happening," please email the details to [editor@bmeagle.com](mailto:editor@bmeagle.com). Be sure to get them to us no later than 5 p.m. on Friday for the following Wednesday's paper, and if you get us the information soon enough, we may be able to run the announcement more than once. And be sure to include a phone number we can call in case we have questions.



## THE FARMER'S FATE

# Eat what you can, can the rest

Grab your Balls (and Kerrs) — it's canning season! OK, bad joke, I know—I should just shut my lid and can it. (Insert rimshot here).

This is the point at which my family would tell me to sit down, because I'll never make a standup comedian. But this is what happens when one stands over a hot pressure canner for days on end. You become so steamed that your humor gets dry.

It's a season I both love and one that I am not sad to see end. It's a time when my counters are covered in jars filled with all manner of deliciousness; the burners on the stove are covered with large pots bubbling delightful aromas and pressure canners; pitchers are filled with sugar syrups or vinegar brines; and no amount of mopping prevents the floor from being sticky. Canning thyme is a scrumptiously messy season.

The animals love this time of the year, as they get the tasty scraps and remnants of whatever is being processed. Even the llama will come running when she sees that big, silver bowl come towards the pasture. She will be sad when the last of the garden produce is finally tucked away in pretty jars, and the silver bowl reverts back to a popcorn container.

I'm not entirely sure the kids will be as sad to see the end of canning season as the animals. One of the beautiful things about homeschooling is the ability to tweak the curriculum as life happens. And canning is like a hands-on history/science lesson just begging to be had.

While we prepared the produce, we discussed the history of food pres-



Brianna Walker

ervation and told family canning stories. We also discussed the heat, pressure, weights, types of produce, the brine or syrup and all manner of "whys?"

When their eyes started to glaze over, we would turn on an audiobook or listen to Christmas music (yes, I'm one of "those" people).

The kids eat a lot of pickles at my house, so canning our own is a really "big dill." This year the kids picked out spices to make their own jars of pickles. My oldest loves hot things, so he filled his with black pepper, Thai dragon pepper, red chilis, jalapenos and garlic — my stomach was begging for antacid pills just breathing the aroma wafting from the jars. My youngest doesn't like anything hotter than ketchup, so his were mostly garlic and dill.

They also got to make, flavor, and can their own pizza sauce.

We can what we can... but some things we prefer frozen. Which brought me to a job I'd been dreading all year — defrosting the freezer. Longer ago than I care to admit, we were on vacation and somehow the freezer door came open in our absence.

Climate change happened right there in my garage. First the polar caps melted, then an ice storm ensued — and "Ice Age 3" met us when we got home. We finally created enough of a shift in the polar ice caps to shut the door, but I never did a proper defrost cycle.

I couldn't avoid it any longer,

though. The corn needed a place to go. Armed with a chisel, a hammer and insulated gloves, I headed out to deal with my very own Antarctica.

After a few hours, my oldest son comes out to check the progress. "Do you feel like an archaeologist?" he asks, watching me chisel around a bag of what at one point in time might have been spinach. "Well, I'm finding a lot of old, dead, buried stuff," I winked. He rolled his eyes. Unfortunately, though, he didn't tell me to sit down with my humor — because looking into that frozen abyss, I would have gladly!

Over the years, I've heard so many people say how Disney movies have set unrealistic ideas of love, romance and marrying the prince in a glorious castle. But honestly, as I stare into that disastrous icebox, I am seeing our ducks and chickens, sheep and goats, horse and llama.

I'm not thinking about castles and glass slippers — I'm just annoyed that no matter how much I sing, my animals never come running to help me clean like they do in Disney movies! They've never once surprised me with a new ball gown or helped to me to tidy the kitchen after canning.

I guess maybe they didn't feel they had enough thyme. Or perhaps I should change the labels on my herb jars in the kitchen. Then I can at least tell myself the animals haven't helped yet — but soon they'll find their thyme is cumin. Or maybe I should just focus on my frozen task in front of me and "let it go."

Brianna Walker occasionally writes about the Farmer's Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.

## COMMENTARY

# Cap and trade will hurt farmers

Like many of you, I wrote my legislators, testified, and fought against the cap and trade proposals in front of the Oregon Legislature in 2018, 2019, and 2020.

As a custom farmer in Tillamook and chair of the Oregon Farm Bureau Ag Production Committee, I knew that my operation and many farms and ranches around the state could not afford the fuel cost increases that were inevitable under the program. It would be one more in a long line of poor policy decisions coming out of Salem that make it harder to stay farming in Oregon.

After it was defeated in Salem three times, I was floored when I learned last year that the governor had issued an executive order directing the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to move forward with the program via rule. I watched over the last several months as the agency ignored data about the impacts of the program, created sweetheart deals for investment in non-governmental organizations, and failed to analyze the impact of cost increases in fuel, natural gas, and propane on Oregonians under the program.

The agency adopted the final rules for what it is now calling the "Climate Protection Program" on Thursday, Dec. 16, with the program coming into effect after the first of the year.

While DEQ opted to ignore the cost impacts of this rule on working families and the agricultural sector, it is clear that the program will increase



Karl Zweifel

the price of natural gas, propane, and transportation fuels. For a governor who has built her administration on promises of transparency, concealing the impacts of such a significant program to Oregonians is unacceptable.

Because DEQ failed to consider how the fuel sector would come into compliance with the program, it's highly likely that we will see fuels rationed in the state after the credits run out. I never thought I would see fuel rationed again in my lifetime, especially due to a regulatory burden created by our state.

For propane and natural gas, the goal is to eliminate those fuels completely. That approach totally ignores the needs of rural Oregon and is yet another impractical and out-of-touch policy pushed on us by a Portland-based governor who doesn't understand our needs.

In drafting the rules, DEQ totally ignored the impact the rules will have on the Oregon economy, particularly those industries that are trade-dependent, like agriculture. Eighty percent of the goods produced by farmers and ranchers are exported out of the state, and the new rules will render many farm families uncompetitive in the global marketplace because we will be priced out.

On the investment side, DEQ decided to only allow investments that would result in direct carbon

reductions, ignoring the potential for working lands sequestration programs. The only reason I can think DEQ would do this is to penalize rural Oregon for our strong opposition to cap and trade as it worked through the Legislature.

Further, those community groups and NGOs who get funding do not have to demonstrate actual carbon reduction, just give a rough estimate of what they expect to accomplish. This is unacceptable and just creates a slush fund for environmental groups with no accountability.

The worst part about the program is that it will increase the cost of fuels for farm families and rural Oregonians who can least afford it — but it will have no impact on global climate change. It's simply a "feel good" piece for progressive Democrats, once again put largely on the backs of rural Oregonians.

Rural Oregon is tired of bearing the brunt of policies that do not accomplish what they set out to do, but instead have real costs for our communities.

The Oregon Farm Bureau and other business groups are planning to revive their prior challenge to the executive order. Oregonian families cannot afford a new program that would increase fuel prices and home heating costs — at a time of staggering inflation — just to make progressive Democrats feel good about taking action.

Karl Zweifel is a custom farmer growing corn and chop grass silage in Tillamook. He is vice president of the Tillamook County Farm Bureau.



## WHERE TO WRITE

- GRANT COUNTY**
- **Grant County Courthouse** — 201 S. Humbolt St., Suite 280, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0059. Fax: 541-575-2248.
  - **Canyon City** — P.O. Box 276, Canyon City 97820. Phone: 541-575-0509. Fax: 541-575-0515. Email: [toc1862@centurylink.net](mailto:toc1862@centurylink.net).
  - **Dayville** — P.O. Box 321, Dayville 97825. Phone: 541-987-2188. Fax: 541-987-2187. Email: [dville@ortelco.net](mailto:dville@ortelco.net).
  - **John Day** — 450 E. Main St. John Day, 97845. Phone: 541-575-0028. Fax: 541-575-1721. Email: [cityjd@centurytel.net](mailto:cityjd@centurytel.net).
  - **Long Creek** — P.O. Box 489, Long Creek 97856. Phone: 541-421-3601. Fax: 541-421-3075. Email: [info@cityoflongcreek.com](mailto:info@cityoflongcreek.com).
  - **Monument** — P.O. Box 426, Monument 97864. Phone and fax: 541-934-2025. Email: [cityofmonument@centurytel.net](mailto:cityofmonument@centurytel.net).
  - **Mt. Vernon** — P.O. Box 647, Mt. Vernon 97865. Phone: 541-932-4688. Fax: 541-932-4222. Email: [cmtv@ortelco.net](mailto:cmtv@ortelco.net).
  - **Prairie City** — P.O. Box 370, Prairie City 97869. Phone: 541-820-3605. Fax: 820-3566. Email: [pchall@ortelco.net](mailto:pchall@ortelco.net).
  - **Seneca** — P.O. Box 208, Seneca 97873.

Phone and fax: 541-542-2161. Email: [senecaoregon@gmail.com](mailto:senecaoregon@gmail.com).

- SALEM**
- **Gov. Kate Brown, D** — 254 State Capitol, Salem 97310. Phone: 503-378-3111. Fax: 503-378-6827. Website: [governor.state.or.us/governor.html](http://governor.state.or.us/governor.html).
  - **Oregon Legislature** — State Capitol, Salem, 97310. Phone: 503-986-1180. Website: [leg.state.or.us](http://leg.state.or.us) (includes Oregon Constitution and Oregon Revised Statutes).
  - **Oregon Legislative Information** — (For updates on bills, services, capitol or messages for legislators) — 800-332-2313, [oregonlegislature.gov](http://oregonlegislature.gov).
  - **Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale** — 900 Court St. NE, S-301, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1730. Website: [oregonlegislature.gov/findley](http://oregonlegislature.gov/findley). Email: [sen.lynnfindley@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:sen.lynnfindley@oregonlegislature.gov).
  - **Rep. Mark Owens, R-Crane** — 900 Court St. NE, H-475, Salem 97301. Phone: 503-986-1460. District address: 258 S. Oregon St., Ontario OR 97914. District phone: 541-889-8866. Website: [oregonlegislature.gov/findley](http://oregonlegislature.gov/findley). Email: [rep.markowens@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:rep.markowens@oregonlegislature.gov).

**Blue Mountain EAGLE**  
Published every Wednesday by ecMEDIA group

## Grant County's Weekly Newspaper

- Editor .....Bennett Hall, [bhall@bmeagle.com](mailto:bhall@bmeagle.com)  
 Reporter.....Steven Mitchell, [steven@bmeagle.com](mailto:steven@bmeagle.com)  
 Sports.....sports@bmeagle.com  
 Multimedia.....Alex Wittwer, [awittwer@eomediagroup.com](mailto:awittwer@eomediagroup.com)  
 Marketing Rep.....Kim Kell, [ads@bmeagle.com](mailto:ads@bmeagle.com)  
 Office Assistant.....Alexandra Hand, [office@bmeagle.com](mailto:office@bmeagle.com)

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**  
(including online access)

One year .....	\$51
Monthly autopay .....	\$4.25

Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

**POSTMASTER**  
send address changes to:  
Blue Mountain Eagle  
195 N. Canyon Blvd.  
John Day, OR 97845-1187  
USPS 226-340

Copyright © 2021 Blue Mountain Eagle  
All rights reserved. No part of this publication covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means — graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping or information storage and retrieval systems — without written permission of the publisher.