

Letters to the Editor

Editor's note: Letters to the Editor must be signed. The Gazette-Times will not publish unsigned letters. Please include your address and phone number on all letters for use by the G-T office. The G-T reserves the right to edit. The G-T is not responsible for accuracy of statements made in letters. (Any letters expressing thanks will be placed in the classifieds under "Card of Thanks" at a cost of \$5.)

What we fear has power over us

To the Editor:

Isn't this fun? Meeting together like this in the pages of our local paper? I've been trying to call a couple of you for prayerful time together, to visit and discuss... but, alas, it just hasn't happened. It is with great respect that I enter this conversation that I really didn't think I'd be entering (dermit). How can I not - with such great faithful hearts and minds? May God bless this continuing conversation.

My main concern, as a confessing and professing, praising and praying-the-Word Christian is this: Is it the right thing, by our good God, to keep ourselves and our children as totally physically protected and removed from the world as humanly, parentally possible? I think not.

My prayerful humble understanding of the Christian walk, at least how my Lord reveals it to me, is that Jesus, indeed, came in the flesh - not to condemn the world but to save it. Jesus does not banish any one of us - he welcomes all of us. (But he was pretty p.o.'ed at those Pharisees. You remember them; they were the ones who were telling everyone else what to do in order to be in the favor of God and they were also the ones who orchestrated Jesus' death on the Cross.)

We are told to be the salt in the world and also to not hide our Light under a bushel. How can we do that if we deny God's love, hence our love, for the world? How can we do that if we're running from it? If we're spending all our energy building impenetrable blockades against it? I'm not saying to choose the world over God. I'm saying walk with God in the world, because that's where we are, that's where God put us, to bless the world with the Truth of His Love.

The second fact about myself I'll reveal: I read (with a critical and entertained mind) the first H.P. book. I've found that some of the nicest, fun, faithful, compassionate Christian people I've ever met have read and enjoyed the H.P. series and I'm not worried about them boiling up like frogs. I think our good God cares more about His people than we can possibly comprehend or imagine.

Allow me to suggest here three scriptures (please do look them up): Romans 14:14, Romans 8:15 and 1 John 5:18. Seems to me that whatever we fear has power over us and whatever we give power controls us - through our fears. This is what is satanic in every sense, not J.K. Rowling, for God's sake. But if you're still seriously burdened

with her on your heart, let us pray for her unceasingly... she could probably use it.

I give Jesus Christ all power. He is sovereign. If God is for me, who stands against me? Whom shall I fear? No one - except God in a trembly, excited, awe-struck sort of way.

The third piece of information I am led by the Holy Spirit to share is that before I accepted Jesus into my heart as my Lord and Redeemer, my Savior, my Guide and my God, I was more of a "pagan" than not. And the Lord will not allow me to stand by and listen to so much blaspheming, that is, to so many false accusations. Brothers and sisters, this is a big bad sin. By assuming that all, or even most, those on a pagan or Wiccan path are engaged in worshipping Satan and being satanic is blatantly false. Do not mistake my words: I do not encourage the dabbling in wizardry or witchcraft. I simply inform, from firsthand experience, that the basic tenet of the Wiccan faith is: Harm none. We, as Christians, must stop falsely accusing others, also made in the image and likeness of God, of uncommitted horrors. Sure, there are extreme cases in witchcraft and cults, and dabbling ignorantly and

without protection in the spirit realm is dangerous (none of which I recall being condoned in the Harry Potter book I read). But, have we forgotten our own history? We aren't perfect either - far from it, as I can see in history, in God's Word and our own.

Finally, allow me to say, we do not assist in the bringing about the Kingdom of Heaven by condoning fear, that is, by being hoodwinked by demons of fear into so much uncompassion and blatant acts of hate, in the name of some humanly misinterpreted God. If that's not being satanically boiled like frogs, I don't know what is. There are Paul's words to the Ephesians in chapter six, verse 12 to consider as well.

I expect few will approve of my words, but few approved of Jesus'. That's okay by me and my God. I only aim to serve a God of Truth, Light and Love (all of which I found evident in the H.P. fiction); therefore, I humbly submit this sincere, yet terribly imperfect letter. Those against God work by division and isolation; therefore, I am grateful for this conversation, even if it takes place in the letters of our local editor.

-A sister in Christ. (Let us wash one another's feet...John 13:14-16)
(s) Monika Hunter
Heppner

Harry Potter debate utterly idiotic

To the Editor:

Recently our county has become embroiled in an utterly idiotic debate on whether the Harry Potter series is inherently "good" or "evil".

It seems to me that it is futile to debate this issue. How can anyone truly believe that a book of this type will somehow unhinge readers' moral principles and cause them to cast them aside to become followers of Satan? If anyone truly believes this, they surely do not have a solid grounding in their own personal value system. If a person feels threatened by a work of children's literature, they need to reassess their own beliefs and discover why they are feeling threatened by something so minor.

It is true that some works of literature do test readers' moral principles, but the Harry Potter series is not one of these; it just isn't that deep. If one wanted to debate banning such books as "A Clockwork Orange" or "Heart of Darkness" from high school libraries, at least they would have an argument as those works do pose challenges to one's personal beliefs. The Harry

Lions speech

contest upcoming

The Lion's Club is seeking entrants for the Lion's youth speech contest this year.

The local contest will be held in February. The district speech contest will be held at the Lion's Club district convention on March 10 in Baker City.

For more information, contact Steve Rhea, 676-9922.

If we don't defend Measure 7, no ones property will be safe

To the Editor:

We have been seeing some very interesting headlines in the newspapers since the recent election bawling the passage of Measure 7.

Governor Kitzhaber and some of our liberal politicians have stated that we citizens don't understand the bill and they can't understand why we citizens passed a bill requiring compensation for government appropriation of private lands.

Much of the public support for the bill stems from reading of the Dolan, Dodd, English or Bea cases in our daily papers. In the Dolan vs. Tigard case, the city attempted to take a 15-foot strip of his property for a bike trail in exchange for a building permit in an industrial area.

In the Dodd, Hood River and English, Multnomah cases, the counties rezoned property that these elderly couples had purchased to build their houses and then prohibited them from building. In the Bea case, the Bea family got a building permit from Skamania County, built their house and then the Columbia Gorge Commission, the brainchild of the Portland elite, decided that it could be seen from I-84 and demanded its demolition. Of course in these and similar cases, there is never any discussion of recompense.

Similar cases by government and environmental groups in many states have short-circuited constitutional protections for just "compensation" during the last eight or 10 years. Fear of being trapped in a similar situation has influenced voters to support Measure 7.

The opponents have stooped to outright lies in their campaign. The first is, if the cost of the stated charges were true, then the land use system is stealing 5.4 billion dollars a year from private property owners in Oregon every year. However when SB 100 was adopted it was to have been accompanied by SB 749 which would have provided for such losses. That bill was held up and Sec. 24 of SB 100 was substituted. That section, among other things, provided that the legislature study and make recommendations for the implementation of a program for compensation by the public to property owners in this state for value of any loss of use of property resulting directly from zoning or regulations restricting use of those lands. Unfortunately the planning contemplated under that section has never been done. Measure 7 closes that gap.

Other claims are that the measure will allow development on the beaches or deny access to ocean beaches. Not true. Oregon beach law has passed the tests of both federal and state supreme courts. Another falsehood is that it will allow commercial development in residential zones. It does not allow damages for failure to up zone property, only for damages for restrictions imposed after purchase. Finally, it has no effect on building codes.

We have heard many claims about the proliferation of lawsuits. The only claims that will wind up in court are those in which the particular agency does not amend the action and refuses to pay fair compensation within 90 days after the claim has been filed. Probably the claim filers will be limited because of the cost of litigation unless there is a substantial loss involved.

I am much more worried about a form of legal extortion being practiced by certain environmental trusts to obtain lands which they may keep or sell to the government as a wildlife or endangered species reserve. I blame Congress for allowing anyone or any environmental group to bring suit against the government or private individuals for violations against the ESA, Clean Water Act or any environmental act. These may be completely frivolous suits but the federal government must pay their attorneys and court costs, win or lose. These suits are tremendously expensive to defend and some of the judges have no compunction against making "new law" so many of the cases are forced to appeals courts.

Governmental agencies sued are defended by the Justice Dept. and the particular agency must pay Justice Dept. the costs from their operating budgets. Consequently the agencies are usually anxious to settle. Individuals, if they choose to fight, often wind up bankrupt, like Hage in Nevada. Corporations or wealthy individuals may have the lawsuits dropped for a gift of land or a substantial cash donation to some environmental group. These settlements may substantially damage communities or individuals, but the politicians who have sold their souls for the radical vote help keep those dirty little secrets.

Those of us who helped defend the Camp Creek case in Grant County are well aware of the costs. That case was a suit by the Sierra Club against the Forest Service that would have effectively stopped multiple use of public lands and in reality had nothing to do with Camp Creek itself. The initial cost to enter the case as a "friend of the court" was \$26,000. The final cost through appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court was about \$240,000. Without the support of the Oregon Agricultural Legal Foundation, the Oregon Farm Bureau and the Cattlemen's Association, most of the public land grazers would have lost their businesses. At the same time, a very high government official was pressuring the agency to settle.

My point in writing this is that if we do not defend Measure 7 and

press our congressmen to amend some laws, no one's property will be safe. In the case of Measure 7, the solution is simple: Obey the law and decide on a case-by-case basis whether the benefit to the government is sufficient to justify the payment. For the disposing of frivolous federal lawsuits, the first and simplest method would be to force the loser to pay all the costs of the defense and the trial. The second method involves amending the laws that make these suits

possible.

We lose salmon because we protect their predators. We lose farmland for fairy shrimp and now maybe for Washington ground squirrels. If all our streams were drinking water clean, would they be too barren for fish? It seems obvious that we should weigh the costs of complete protection against the very real costs. None of these things will be accomplished unless we become as vocal as the radicals.

(s) Donald McElligott
Lone

Fair board changes meeting date; lobbies for funds

The Morrow County Fair Board, at its January meeting, changed the board's meeting date to the first Monday of the month.

This change is due to the fact that there are several other important meetings held on the second Monday of the month, said fair secretary LaRae Kindle.

The public is invited to attend Fair Board meetings.

County fairs in Oregon are once again busy lobbying for dollars from the Oregon Legislature.

During the past several years, each county has received \$42,000 through the agriculture budget. Premiums,

ribbons, judges and entertainment are a few ways these monies are used by Morrow County to help put on the yearly fair.

Governor Kitzhaber has said that he will veto this funding. According to the Morrow County Fair Board, without these dollars, the county will probably not have a fair this year.

The board asks that people write to their legislators and let them know how important this funding is to the county fairs.

For more information, contact any Fair Board member or the fair office.

You are Invited to a SURPRISE
50th ANNIVERSARY PARTY
for
Ray and Gloria Papineau
on Saturday, January 27 beginning at 5 p.m.
at the Heppner Elks Lodge
There will be a potluck dinner and dancing
WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

(If you have any funny stories/memories you would like to share with family and friends, please send to Carmen Wilson, P.O. Box 401, Lexington, OR 97839)

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MILLER
MANUFACTURING
is holding an **OPEN HOUSE**
at their new facility *(the old Kinzua truck shop)*
on Thursday, Jan. 25th from 1 - 4 p.m.
There will be a presentation at 2 p.m.
and a tour following.
Everyone is invited to attend!



We look forward to seeing you there!