

## 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.)*

### HP neither harmless or delightful

To the Editor:  
I am fascinated by the Harry Potter letters to the Editor. Those opposing the HP series say that it contains things that are harmful to the students.

When my daughter was in school she was required to read one of two fiction books. One was designed to destroy respect for the United States in general and Christian values in particular. The other was designed to teach rebellion against government, parents and school.

I objected and she was given a book I approved of. The other students learned what the teacher wanted them to. So, what else is new?

The first thing we notice about the letters supporting HP is that there have been a lot of them over several weeks. This means that the belief is widespread and not just one or two people on an ego trip.

Most of these letters are being written by highly educated intelligent professionals who know the cardinal rule of "Never create hostility over trivia." Intelligent professionals do not accuse their neighbors of

ignorance, intolerance, lack of Christian love, or all of the above over "harmless," "delightful stories" for children. Who cares?

The obvious conclusion is that the HP series is not "harmless," "delightful stories" for children. If it were, the teachers would drop it and select some other harmless delightful stories for children that the parents do not object to. After all, who cares about one harmless form of children's entertainment over another?

This brings us to the inescapable conclusion that the HP series contains some political and/or religious philosophy that certain teachers are determined to force on the students whether their parents like it or not. Apparently they consider it to be superior to the material already in use for the same purpose.

The supporters of HP are willing to condemn their neighbors who disagree with them and take a lot of flak because they know exactly what they are promoting. Do you know what it is? Do you care?

(s) Dick Temple, DVM  
Lexington

### A good day at school became great

To the Editor,

One day last spring the Heppner Elementary School had a very good day. It was a very good day for the school, because they not only taught students, but they also taught adults, and I was one such adult. I still think about that day often and I share it with you.

I was invited to Heppner Elementary School to participate in a "Special Friend" day at the school. All the students got to invite family and friends into the school to show them what they had been learning. I was invited by my niece to attend the class of Jannie Allen. The topic of the day was literary elements. The students spent the hour talking about the literary elements they had learned from "Harry Potter," the book by J.K. Rowling.

I was amazed that fifth and sixth graders were not just learning, but were proficient in the use of the terms: allusion, analysis, author's purpose, cause and effect, characterization, climax, comparison, conflict, dialogue, exaggeration, fantasy, fact and opinion, figurative language, foreshadowing, metaphor, irony, onomatopoeia, personification, simile, stereotype, theme, and the list goes on and on. Three full pages of literary elements were discussed in that hour.

I was very thankful that Jannie provided the guests with a list of the elements and their definitions, because I could not tell you the meaning of many of the words on the list. I could not tell you the meaning, but the students could.

Not just some of the students, but all of them participated.

Jannie would say, "Please recall for your guests how J.K. Rowling used the element of cause and effect" and the hands would go up. Each student could find different areas of the Harry Potter book where this element had been used. The discussion continued for many literary elements on the list. Each time a student was called on to participate, they could recount a part of the story that displayed the use of the element.

It was a very good day for the school. What made this day great is what I learned when Jannie got to the "theme" of the book. I was not prepared for what I heard from the students. The theme was relayed in these ways; "Some kids don't have nice parents, and that's okay because you can learn to live with it." "Some kids have parents that are not nice to them, it's not always a nice world." "Bad things happen to nice kids." "Some kids have parents that are really mean to them. But even if you have the power to stop them, you should not use that power, because it would be wrong." All of the other students nodded their heads in agreement.

At that moment I saw the Springfield shooting, Columbine High School and many of the other tragic events with children. I thought; this is the answer, this is what's missing. Some children don't understand that even if you can get the power (guns, etc.) that you should not use it, because it's wrong. But our children understand, in part because of Harry Potter and Jannie Allen. It was a great day for Heppner Elementary School.

(s) Cyde Marie Estes  
Heppner

### County should be united, not divided

To the Editor:

Should a county be united in purpose, support, and geography? Or should it literally be split down the middle?

Morrow County is currently split into north and south factions by 93,000 acres leased by the State of Oregon to Boeing in the 1960s. All that links the county is a private dirt road with limited access. For years many of us have sought a public easement for a road that unites the county as directly as possible.

All of that effort may soon be defeated. As reported in the East Oregonian on Jan. 14, the State of Oregon, the R.D. Offutt Company, and seven environmental groups are forging a deal that would permanently divide Morrow County. If 23,000 acres of the property in question became a nature preserve as planned and the road is permanently blocked, the ramifications would hurt every town in the County.

However, a public road linking the two ends of Morrow County would have several benefits for everyone:

1. Improved access to north-end jobs by residents of Lone, Lexington and Heppner, all of which now suffer from a lack of job opportunities within driving

distance.

2. Stable enrollments in shrinking Lone and Heppner schools (rated "excellent" and "strong" in the latest State report card).

3. Strengthened county tax base because workers could find accessible housing within the county.

4. Relief from overcrowding for Boardman and Irrigon schools.

5. Quicker response time for emergency services.

6. More direct access to markets for south-end farmers.

It has been argued that the land needs to be closed to the public to protect the Washington ground squirrel. However, since the road affects only about 30 acres out of 23,000, it hardly seems a dire threat to any animal.

But the lack of a road is a dire threat to the people of Morrow County. Please write Morrow County Commissioners Dan Brosnan and John Wenholtz, and County Judge Terry Tallman, as well as Greg Smith at our State Legislature to urge them to insist on a public easement for the property.

Morrow County should be united, not divided.

(s) Joel Peterson  
(s) Lea Mathieu  
Lone

### HP concern not idiotic

To the Editor:

To Jeremy Rietmann, Ione, and Monika Hunter, Heppner: your referrals to (concerns about) the Harry Potter series as idiotic and being "overly protective" of worldly ways, I ask you both, do you know what God says about those who offend any child? Our loving Jesus has some quite harsh and blunt words for those by whom these offenses come. Please read Matthew 18:1-14, Mark 9:42-50, Luke 17:1-2.

In John 17:9-19, Jesus prays for his disciples and I quote Jesus, verse 9: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are mine." Verse 14, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Verse 15: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil."

Jesus Christ is, "God almighty" manifest in the flesh: John 1: 1-14. If either of you truly have any fear of God, Ecclesiastes 12: 13-14, you would clearly understand the concern of parents who know that young children are vulnerable, impressionable, and innocent. Sin came into this world when man disobeyed God by reasoning that the fruit would make them wise. It was Satan who misrepresented God's word, Genesis 3:1-6.

As a Christian parent of 11 children, I take my responsibility to teach my children God's word, Deuteronomy 6:7, with great respect to my God: Children who learn to obey God through obedience to parents make good citizens, respect authority and will not be led astray by peers, but will be leaders and teachers of good, not evil.

The Apostle Paul had a great concern about the teaching of God's word, that is that the whole counsel thereof would be taught. Paul warned about taking heed unto ourselves and all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God. Hebrews 20:21-29. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." Jesus spoke of being aware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves, Matthew 7:15. James, the brother of Jesus wrote in James 1:27, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James warned in 3:1 "My brethren, be not many masters (teachers) knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation."

This concern over the Harry Potter series is not idiotic and protecting our children from written material which is occultic in nature is of the greatest

concern. By no means is this an isolated concern to Morrow county. I read in the February 2000 issue of 'Charisma' magazine about the concern of parents in Ohio, South Carolina and Georgia. From this article, Harry Potter is an orphaned boy at a school for wizards. According to this article, a pastor named Paul Wesler says author J.K. Rowling deals with the occult in a fantasy way. "In the books you find animal sacrifices, threats of human sacrifices, witchcraft, wizardry and divination." (pg. 61.) All of these practices are abomination unto God who is the author of life and what is sin and sinful. Deuteronomy 18: 9-13, Leviticus 19:31.

I ask you both and all who read this to look at the big picture, what is the overall condition of American public schools? I've read in many articles of these young killers who hear voices in their heads telling them to kill. Do we need something like this to happen? Don't say it can't. Remember Thurston High and Columbine. The Titanic could never be sunk, but it went down on its maiden voyage. Remember what happened to Israel's first king, Saul. He was disobedient and God refused him as King. Eventually, he went to a woman at Endor who had a familiar spirit.

Jesus Christ said in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." He also said in Matthew 7:21, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." In Matthew 10:34-36 Jesus states, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword," (that is, God's word); 35: For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

What is being said here is what Saul failed to understand as Samuel told him: I Samuel 15:22-23. God doesn't want our sacrifices, he wants our obedience. Thus Samuel told Saul, "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

This is no trivial matter and the silence of pastors speaks clearly to why America is failing; we fear people and not God. Revival will only come when we see our true condition, and only God's pure unpolluted word will set his people free. If we want safe streets and neighborhoods, let us turn back to our God and his word. Otherwise in our humanly efforts we will continue to see violence. We need God's counsel, not man's, for God is absolute and unchanging and so is his great love for us all.

(s) Beryl Stillman  
Lexington

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For Advertising: advertising deadline is Tuesday at noon. Cost for a display ad is \$4.50 per column inch. Cost for classified ad is 40¢ per word. Cost for Card of Thanks is \$5 up to 100 words. Cost for a classified display ad is \$5.10 per column inch.

For Public/Legal Notices: public/legal notices deadline is Monday at 5 p.m. Dates for publication must be specified. Affidavits must be required at the time of submission. Affidavits require three weeks to process after last date of publication (a sooner return date must be specified if required).

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### Be a blood donor

To the Editor:

To the people of Morrow County,

Many of you have seen the posters for the Red Cross Blood Drive. But did you make an appointment to donate blood? How many of you have families who have had surgery-or maybe yourself? Do you know anyone who has had a car accident? How about had a baby?

The point I'm trying to make is all these people may need your help; they might die without your blood.

Now don't panic, it is only a pint. You won't even miss it. And just think about the lives you might save by donating.

I am a real live person whose life has been saved by someone taking the time to donate. Also my daughter, who had open heart surgery when she was 18 months old, probably wouldn't have made it through surgery without someone donating.

My father is 73 now and is in bad health but he is a lifetime donor of 16 gallons of blood. That seems like an incredible number, but that added up one

pint at a time. I can remember when I was a child the phone would ring, sometimes in the middle of the night, and my Dad would rush to the hospital. No, he wasn't a doctor, but he was a rare blood type.

So here we are many years later and I donate every time I can. Why? you might ask. I only have to look at my little girl to answer that question. Someone, somewhere gave the gift of life, not only to me but to an innocent 18 month-old who had a hole in her heart and would not have lived to be my rowdy little three year old that I thank God for every day.

This could be someone in your family's life you save. It only takes a little while to donate; it only hurts for a minute - no, I'm not going to tell you it's painless, but it isn't the most painful thing I've ever experienced either. Then you can have snacks after you are finished, usually cookies and juice or punch.

I can promise that you will feel much better afterwards. I'm not sure it's the cookie though.

(s) Cassie Rhode  
Heppner

### St. Pat's committee plans meeting

All interested persons and committee chairs are encouraged to attend the next St. Patrick's Committee meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 30, at 6 p.m., upstairs at Kate's.

The schedule of events for Wee Bit O'Ireland 2001, to be held March 16-18, will be finalized at this time and decisions will be made regarding Celtic entertainment. The committee has a number of excellent options.


The committee is trying some new things this year with the auction scheduled for Friday evening following the stew feed.

Tentatively, Sunday will feature the Sheepdog Trials and special Irish entertainment, free

to all the hardworking groups and individuals who make the event happen, as well as for those visitors still in Heppner for the event and the public at large.

Saturday will again feature the Coffee Hour, Parade, Sheepdog Trials, the Kiddee Carnival and the Ceili featuring The Irish Singers, Little Fiddlers, bagpipes and stepdancing, plus much more in Heppner to whet the appetites of the Irish and Irish for a day.

Organizations interested in having concessions at the Sheepdog Trials or serving dinner on Sunday in conjunction with the Irish entertainment are asked to contact Claudia Hughes or Cara Osmin or attend the meeting.



## Super Bowl Party!

at RJ's Restaurant, Lexington  
on Sunday, January 28th

*Bring a favorite snack and join us for fun, games and prizes!*

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