

~ Letters to the Editor ~

Benefit planned for HHS graduate in need of bone marrow transplant

Continued from page one
FA patient is still at high risk for other cancers, particularly head and neck.

Dave Frohnmeyer, president of the University of Oregon, and his wife, Lynn, are the official spokespersons for FA. Their family has coped with the disease for years since three of their five children were diagnosed with it. Sadly, two daughters passed away due to complications of the disease. The Frohnmeyers and their supporters formed the Fanconi Anemia Research Foundation based in Eugene. FARF coordinates fundraising and research for FA worldwide. Since FA is an extremely rare disease, funds for research are scarce. Fanconi Anemia is DNA linked, thus researchers believe that when a cure is found for FA, other cancers will be cured, including breast cancer which shares genes with FA. The Proctors have all participated in FA research.

Funds are raised privately for FARF and used worldwide for FA research grants. Since FA is an orphan disease with no major affiliation and funding, FARF counts on FA families to raise money. The Frohnmeyer family has raised the majority of funds over the years, but many other FA families work hard year round to help.

In 2002 Roy was granted a wish through the Make A Wish Foundation. Roy's wish was to meet Michael Jordan. Since Jordan was playing for the Washington Wizards, the entire family was sent by Make A Wish to Washington DC for an entire week.

With the development this fall of further illnesses due to his immune system failing, Dr. Kurre, Roy's doctor at

Doernbecher, and Roy decided that now was the time for his bone marrow/stem cell transplant. A marrow donor search took place including tapping into worldwide registries. An unrelated donor with 8 out of 10 matching markers was recently found for Roy.

Timing for a bone marrow transplant for FA patients is tricky. If a transplant is held off too long and leukemia develops, survival is rare. Roy was diagnosed seven years ago as preleukemic and was showing signs of a failing immune system. Doctors and specialists monitored him with monthly blood tests and regular bone marrow biopsies (he has had 17 bone marrow biopsies). In 2004 and 2005, Roy was quite ill and hospitalized for unknown viral infections. In April 2006 he developed pneumonia and was hospitalized at Doernbecher for five weeks. Surgeons were forced to remove part of one of Roy's lungs. Serious complications set in with post-op, internal bleeding and tachycardia. However, Roy accomplished his goal of walking at his high school graduation ceremony in Heppner in June.

Marrow transplants for Fanconi Anemia are done only at a handful of hospitals across the country and unrelated, unmatched transplants to high-risk patients are even more specialized. The Proctor's chose Dr. Farid Boulad at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City for the procedure. The success rate for transplanting bone marrow from an unrelated donor and imperfect match to a high-risk patient with FA has improved over the last 7 years from a 25% success

rate to 50%. Dr. Boulad's has an even higher rate of about 75%.

Roy's insurance companies have approved coverage for MSKCC and the transplant process will begin around the first part of May.

Accompanied by his sister, Julie, Roy made his second trip to the hospital in New York the first week of April for testing. He will return to Oregon for a while and then he and his mother will travel to New York the first part of May to begin the transplant process. The goal of 100 days is set for the marrow transplant although the hospital would like the patient to live in the area for a total of six months.

The Proctors will be staying at the Ronald MacDonald House in Manhattan. The Ronald MacDonald House asks for financial help from their guests of \$35 per night.

Parents Mike and Kay Proctor of Heppner have worked hard to be sure their family always had health insurance coverage. Even so, since 2000 they have paid over \$89,000 out of pocket for health related expenses. MSKCC requires a family member to be with the transplant patient throughout the entire process. Kay will be with Roy in New York for at least three months. During that time, health insurance premiums and other living expenses will need to be met with a reduced income while their financial resources are already stretched.

Any branch of the Bank of Eastern Oregon will accept donations to the Roy Proctor Medical Savings account.

For online updates of Roy's medical progress, go to caringbridge.com and enter [royproctor](http://royproctor.com).

Keeping informed about Fanconi Anemia

Fanconi Anemia is a rare genetic disease where the body's DNA cannot repair itself. Fanconi anemia (FA) is one of the inherited anemias that leads to bone marrow failure (aplastic anemia). It is a recessive disorder: if both parents carry a defect (mutation) in the same FA gene, each of their children has a 25% chance of inheriting the defective gene from both parents. When this happens, the child will have FA.

There are at least thirteen FA genes (A, B, C, D1 (BRCA2), D2, E, F, G,

I, J, L, M and N). These genes account for almost all of the cases of Fanconi anemia. Mutations in FA-A, FA-C, and FA-G are the most common and account for approximately 85% of the FA patients worldwide. FA-D1, FA-D2, FA-E, FA-F, and FA-L account for 10%. FA-B, FA-I, FA-J, FA-M, and FA-N represent less than 5% of FA patients. Twelve of the Fanconi anemia genes have been cloned.

FA occurs equally in males and females. It is found in all ethnic groups.

Though considered primarily a blood disease, it can affect all systems of the body. Many patients eventually develop acute myelogenous leukemia (AML) and at a very early age. For a young child diagnosed with FA, achieving adulthood is rare. FA patients are extremely likely to develop head and neck, gynecological, and/or gastrointestinal squamous cell carcinomas, again at a much earlier age than in squamous cell carcinoma patients in the general population. Patients who have had a successful bone marrow transplant and, thus, are cured of the blood problem associated with FA still must have regular examinations to watch for signs of cancer.

For more information about Fanconi Anemia visit www.fanconi.org.

The Heppner Gazette Times will print all letters to the Editor with the following criteria met: letters submitted to the newspaper will need to have the name of the sender along with a legible signature. We are also requesting that you provide your address and a phone number where you can be reached. The address and phone number will only be used for verification and will not be printed in the newspaper. Letters may not be libelous. The GT reserves the right to edit. The GT 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 \$10.

Morrow County loses another "pioneer"

To the Editor,

With the passing of Floyd Jones, the last of the Jones boys, Morrow County has lost another of a splendid age of pioneers who have enriched our common heritage in a land that is rightly touted as the "Rugged Country" of Oregon. Floyd's heritage will long be felt in 4H, rodeo and fair, and especially his passion for quarter horses and the art of training cutting horses. He and Lorena were wonderful friends to our family. In an hour when fee hunting has closed the general public out of hunting, Floyd always allowed the common folk to hunt on his lands.

I appreciated the testimony of George Koffler on behalf of another pioneer of Floyd's era, Gene Pierce. Men like Gene Pierce, Floyd Jones, Paul Jones, Oscar Peterson, Vic Groshens, Doc Tibbles, Glen Ward, Sheriff Clarence Bauman, Gordon Pratt, Lois Winchester, Delpha Jones, Orville and Barbara Cutsforth, and my father, Ed Dick just to name a few, had an indelible impact on my life and the heritage of all in Morrow County. Like George

Koffler, I miss these people. With the passing of these pioneers it is important to sustain the values they all represented. There are too many examples of the character and integrity these pioneers brought to the table that continue to bless our common heritage to be included in this letter. Nevertheless, George has inspired me to include a couple of examples of this integrity. Larry Muessig came to Heppner unbeknown to almost all as a teenage orphan, with no friends or family in the county. Judge Oscar Peterson not only oversaw his nurturing as a teenage boy, but also was his most faithful letter writer when Larry served in Vietnam. When Dan McBride told Judge Paul Jones he couldn't enlist in the Navy during the same war because of his court record. Paul told Dan "What record? Go serve your country."

The closing of the Kinzua Mill has proved the strongest economy of Heppner is the integrity and grit of the people. That great industry has been built upon the integrity of our pioneer fathers. Heppner continues

to thrive because the next generation has sustained the integrity of our fathers. The story of the Bank of Eastern Oregon under the leadership of George Koffler is one shining example. The quality of journalistic excellence and integrity under David and April Sykes equals or exceeds the excellent work of earlier Gazette publishers Wes Sherman and Bob Penland. Heppner sports programs continue to prosper because of the integrity and commitment of the legions of volunteers that support the programs at the grass root level. How many young men have been changed because of the love and commitment Rick Johnston has given to baseball in Morrow County? It is no surprise that the roots integrity of Morrow County and Heppner has produced two athletic directors at Oregon and Oregon State, Pat Kilkenny and Jim Barrett.

Thanks George for inspiring me to write this letter to give thanks to the great men and women that came before us. Floyd Jones was one of those great men and hell be sorely missed.

(s) Stuart Dick Pendleton

Community colleges getting shortchanged

To the Editor:

For the past 45 years Blue Mountain Community College where students already drive long distances to attend class. Since 2000, BMCC enrollment has dropped from 15,400 to 12,300 and tuition increased from \$40 to \$61.80 per credit hour. As one BMCC executive recently wrote me, "there's a dark cloud on the horizon."

Community Colleges shouldn't have to compete against K-12 for funding. In fact Community Colleges do a lot to help our high school graduates who aren't ready for college.

We also know Community Colleges are the best source of workforce training

especially devastating for rural institutions such as Blue Mountain Community College. Legislative leaders have cut \$70 million from the amount proposed by Community Colleges just to maintain programs for the next two years.

The impact could be especially devastating for rural institutions such as Blue Mountain Community College where students already drive long distances to attend class. Since 2000, BMCC enrollment has dropped from 15,400 to 12,300 and tuition increased from \$40 to \$61.80 per credit hour. As one BMCC executive recently wrote me, "there's a dark cloud on the horizon."

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We also know Community Colleges are the best source of workforce training

for family wage jobs in Oregon. They provide essential services and workers to help our agriculture industry and small businesses sector.

Budget deliberations for Community Colleges are underway in the Joint Ways and Means Education Subcommittee. Please contact my office if you want to submit letters or other testimony in support of Community Colleges. After all - there's a reason they have that name - they are truly part of your Community.

Sincerely,
Greg Smith, State Representative, House District 57

I wish for chocolate



Bridget Doherty, 3, daughter of Chad Doherty, checks out her prizes after the annual Heppner Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 7. This event is sponsored by the Heppner Elks Lodge.

Old-Time Fiddlers to hold performance

The Blue Mountain Old-Time Fiddlers will hold a concert on Saturday, April 28 at 6 p.m. at the Stokes Landing Senior Center in Irrigon. Cost is \$5 for adults; \$2 for children 6-12; and five and under are free.

There will be sandwiches, pie, soda and coffee available at 5:30 p.m.

Birth announcements

Luke Emery Sarich - Nick and Lori (formerly Moeller) Sarich of Nampa, ID welcomed a new baby boy, Luke Emery Sarich, on Thursday, March 15, at 8:14 p.m. At birth he weighed six pounds, 15 ounces and was 20 1/2 inches long.

Grandparents are Chuck and Douna Moeller of Hermiston, and Gerry and Guy Sarich of Boise, ID.

Justice Court Report

Judge Charlotte Gray, Heppner Justice Court, has released the following report:

-Rita Jean Glover, 24, Heppner, no operator's license, \$244 fine.

-William Maddern, Heppner, DUII 180 days in jail with 165 days suspended, three years probation, must complete alcohol education program, \$2312 fine with \$500 suspended.

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