

~ Letters to the Editor ~

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. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Saddened to see Dr. Nichols leaving

To the editor,
I was saddened to see Dr. Nichols was leaving us. He is not only a good doctor, but a huge part of this community. He coached basketball and boys' track and Toni coached girls' track.

Their children are active in sports, excellent students as well as volunteers in the community. Both Hunter and Madelyn have earned scholarships.

Dr. Nichols' patients

Endorsing Stokoe

To the editor,
I am writing this letter to endorse Richard Stokoe

for re-election to the position of commissioner for the Port of Morrow. My association with Chief Stokoe goes back to when I was a member of the Oregon State Sheriff's Association and got to know Chief Stokoe for his work representing Boardman through his activities with the Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police. As the Sheriff of a small county, I was then, and still am, very moved when I see people who have a passion for representing the interests of their small communities. I was later able to work with Chief Stokoe on issues surrounding crisis intervention training. It was during these times that I came to recognize and respect his

were not just a number, they were important people that he cared about. House calls and extra time with his patients were not uncommon. He is a kind, considerate human being. I am alive because Dr. Nichols insisted on a follow-up procedure.

He and his family will be missed and are leaving a huge void to fill.

Good luck to you and God bless your family.

Joanne Burleson

leadership skills, his work ethic and his passion for service.

Richard Stokoe is the kind of person who is focused on helping to make his community and those around him better. He does not have a personal agenda. Even during times when we may have disagreed, I always found him to be open and approachable and willing to listen. In fact, it is in those moments that Chief Stokoe sees opportunity in building relationships while finding inclusive solutions. Richard Stokoe has proven ability and leadership skills. He will continue to be a tremendous asset to this community and should be re-elected to the position of commissioner for the Port of Morrow.

Sheriff Chris Humphreys (ret.)

Vote yes for Ione school

To the editor,
I will be voting yes for the Ione School District bond for the same reasons I supported creating an Ione School District back in 2003.

I believed then, as I do now, that the community of Ione cannot survive without a K-12 school. If young families don't see modern, safe facilities with the ability to graduate students who are ready for college or to enter a trade, they will not choose to live and raise their kids in our community. We all want to keep our very rural way of life, but it will eventually fail if we don't continue to add a few

folks. To survive as a community, we must remain optimistic and invest in our future. We leaned into the future when we created a school district. Now we need to lean in again and build for its future.

It's sometimes hard to be optimistic about the future. There's so much in the world to be concerned about but, at a local level, we can keep doing our best to support the children who truly are our future. So, I'm voting yes to build that future. I encourage you to do the same.

Sincerely,
Jerry Rietmann

Heppner plans community clean up

The city of Heppner is planning a community clean up offering free dumpster access for garbage collection at the city yard on Riverside between Wednesday, May 19 through Tuesday, June 1.

There will also be a spot there to leave yard de-

bris and burnable material, however the city will not accept tires, appliances, hazardous waste or household chemicals. The free dumping will be for Heppner residents only and for more information contact city hall at 541-676-9618.

Ascension - an invitation to mount the throne of God

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph

On this Sunday, usually the Church celebrates it as the Ascension of the Lord. Jesus, after having completed His earthly life, ascends into heaven. It is a day for renewing our hope in the goal toward which the Lord is leading us, namely, a place in His Kingdom. This event is preceded by the commissioning of the apostles with a mission – to preach the Gospel to the whole world. Jesus was faithful to His mission entrusted to Him by His Father. For our failure to live as His witnesses in the world and for not carrying out faithfully the mission entrusted to us, let us be sorry and ask pardon of God.

Imagine this conversation of "What will you do next?"

At the end of your secondary school what do you want to do? - I want to go to college.

After college what do you want to do? - I want to get a job.

Then what do you want to do? - I want to make big money.

What do you want to do after making money? - I want to build a big house.

After that what do you intend to do? - I want to get married.

What will you do after getting married? - I will have a family.

What will you do after having a family? - I will retire.

What do you want to do after you retire? - I want to take a rest.

What will you do after taking a rest? - I don't know.

Will you die? – Oh, yes, I will die too.

We are so busy doing things, achieving, making progress that we can forget what life is all about, preparing to meet God in heaven. The Ascension of Jesus reminds us that we are "only passing through here," as we say. We are pilgrims on a journey. Just as Jesus's earthly life was temporary and he ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father, so also our lives here are temporary, will come to an end and we will meet God in the next life. The Ascension of Jesus reminds us in all of our busyness not to forget what life is all about. The above person had an answer for everything but never thought about what would happen after dying. One of the lines in the prayer in Paul's letter to the Colossians is so beautiful and relevant: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Col 3:1)" The feast of Ascension reminds us that we are mere pilgrims here we need to seek the things that are above.

As I was preparing for the homily, I was reminded of a story I received recently. A very poor family by the name of Carpenter lived in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. The oldest boy was given an education in the city, with the help of some family friends who generously financed his studies when they realized he wanted to become a doctor. The boy graduated with honors but declined all job offers to practice medicine in the city. He decided to go back to the mountains, where there were many sick people and few doctors. For many years he ministered to the sick. Some paid, most couldn't. He gave his very best and helped everyone he could. In his old age he was in broken health himself and almost penniless.

Two small rooms above the town grocery store were his home and office. At the foot of the creaky stairs leading up to his office was a sign with these words: "Dr. Carpenter is upstairs." One morning someone climbed those stairs to find their devoted doctor dead. The entire community was plunged into grief. They wanted to erect some kind of monument to him. But they decided to simply write these words on a large tombstone: "Dr. Carpenter is upstairs."

UEC sponsors youth entrepreneur contest

Umatilla Electric Cooperative Business Resource Center has announced the UEC youth entrepreneur contest. The competition is open to all upcoming high school freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. Applications will open on May 17, 2021 and close on June 17, 2021.

The UEC youth entrepreneurship contest is an opportunity for high school students to enhance their business and entrepreneurship experience by creating a realistic and sustainable

business plan. The UEC Business Resource Center team is available for one-on-one advising appointments with applicants to assist with the business plans.

The UEC board of directors will be judging the contest and awarding the top three applicants with the following prizes: first place - \$1,000; second place - \$500 and third place - \$200.

Applications can be found at <https://www.uec-brc.com/>. For additional information, call the UEC Business Resource Center at 541-289-3000.

DEADLINE:
MONDAYS
AT 5PM



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

What is the Ascension of Jesus? Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, He ascended into heaven. It was a moment of prodigious celebration. All the angels gathered around Him and asked about His life and mission on earth. Jesus was glad to share His wonderful life experience of living with mankind, His life struggle with priests and rulers on earth and how they condemned Him to die on a cross because he stood for the cause of the marginalized of the society. How He failed

to impart the love of the Father to the priestly clan and their refusal to believe in God and finally, His dying on the cross for their salvation. The Lord has already built a bridge between the heaven and the Earth. He has come and lived with us and set connectivity between God and human beings.

Why did Jesus Ascend to the father? In the letter of St. Paul to Philippians is written: "Our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to receive the glory due to Him as the victor over sin and death" (2:8-9). Jesus in the Gospel of John reminds in several places that He needs to ascend to the Father for the Advocate to come to us. Jesus, in John, reminds us that He ascended to the Father to prepare rooms for us (14:2).

How to make Ascension Possible in our Life? As noted above, St. Paul in his letter to the Colossians, gives us this message: "So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." This teaching of St. Paul reminds us the believers believe that ascension is possible for everyone. He suggests three ways to ascend to the father:

1) Material Ascension. With the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are being led to our material freedom. Poverty is converted to riches, lack is converted to abundance. The works of our hands are blessed. (Deut. 28:12; Psalm 90:17). From a tendency of amassing wealth for oneself, we need to have an option for the poor, prominent in the lives of great saints who are good examples of this material ascension, like Francis of Assisi, who was born into a noble business family, but the love of Christ led him to leave aside everything and follow Christ, who is poor and chaste.

2) Mind Ascension. An old proverb goes like this: "A sound mind dwells in a sound body." When our mind is engaged in material things and things of this world, we can say that we are in mental slavery, which leads to acute depression, worry, anxiety fear, etc. Mostly the "haves" are more involved in things of this world and attached to things of this place.

3) Sensual Ascension. Everything seems available at our fingertips. There is a tendency in the present world to waste time in front of social media screens, to enjoy and take pleasure that appeals to our sense organs. Our eyes and ears need to be controlled to ascend above this world of sensual pleasures.

Today, on this Ascension Day, the Church proudly displays the placard of hope and salvation: "Dr Carpenter is upstairs!" But unlike the doctor boy who died, Jesus – the Divine Doctor of our souls – is alive and continues to heal people and bring salvation to all people! The Lord invites everyone on this particular day to ascend from our present style of life to Him. The Church, consisting of all His believers, continues this ministry of teaching and saving people with His living presence and with the help of the Holy Spirit. After Jesus ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit came down to empower the followers of Jesus to become His effective witnesses. The Holy Spirit is always with us to ascend from this present way/style of life to a life worthy of His disciples through our words and actions.

Please join us to celebrate

Our Wedding

**Torri Lovgren
&
Kyle Nicol**

June 12, 2021

3:00 in the afternoon

at

58520 Rhea Creek Road, Heppner

Reception to Follow

We are Looking for Drivers In Heppner, Lexington or Ione

The Loop provides public transportation to the residents of Morrow County. The Loop is seeking a professional team member who has excellent customer service skills, enjoys working with the public, organized, detail-oriented individual who can work independently to perform a variety of duties.

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