

~ 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.

Better to be red

To the editor,
When I was growing up in the late 1950s Nikita Khrushchev, Russia's dictator, pounded his shoes on the table at the United Nations and promised, "We will bury you." "Better to be Red than dead." Americans were exhorted. This manifest doctrinal takeover of America is nearly complete. Virtually every vestige of our American heritage (the Bible, love of country and God, honoring our forefathers and their heritage, prayer, American individualism and sovereignty) has been removed and/or dishonored and Socialism/Communist censorship now controls our schools, our news media, our government.

Better Red than dead means better to yield your liberty and freedom than die of Covid. Better Red than dead means it is better to "show your papers" as in Hitler's Germany than it is to resist Covid 19 driven Socialist tyranny. Better Red than dead means wear your mask, take your shot (and the next and next), and see your unvaccinated friend as your enemy, than live as a free man like our forefathers that shed their blood for our liberty.

For me and my house it is better to die of Covid than live in fear. In Morrow County there has been 1,274 diagnosed Covid 19 cases and 17 deaths. That means 98.6 percent of those diagnosed with Covid 19 survive. In Umatilla County the survival rate is 99.1 percent. Of those Covid 19 deaths most die "with, not of Covid" because their

health was already compromised. Are we going to allow fear of a man-made pandemic that kills one percent ruin our way of life and destroy families and friendships?

What happened to choice? My body my, choice, right? 73 million babies died (murdered) in their mother's womb in 2020 because of choice. In comparison, 2 million citizens of the world died in 2020 of Covid 19 and the whole world is in lockdown with no choice. God's word says, "Choose this day who you shall serve" (Joshua 24:15). It is better to die as a free man than live as a coward.

When you are forced to wear a mask (and your children) because Gov. Brown's OSHA will once again shut down businesses and local governments, our schools that resist (better Red than dead) remember this. 6,000 illegal immigrants enter America every day and our current Socialist/Communist American government does not require masks, vaccinations or Covid 19 testing and those that are Covid infected are trucked all over America.

This Covid inspired fear mongering of America and the world is not about protecting you or your loved ones from the unvaccinated or the manifold variants that are coming. It is a fulfillment of Khrushchev's prophecy. Do not allow fear of Covid 19, the shot, masks or any other coming tyranny separate us as Americans.

Stuart Dick,
Irrigon

that seems to be taking over the town?)

A pleasing experience last week: Adding to my worn-looking wardrobe, a top that actually – ready for this? – has stripes that match at the seams. (Mrs. Hager would be so astonished and pleased.)

A big thank you to our contributors this week. Don't we all enjoy reading

other people's good news? Well, "other people" will surely enjoy reading yours. Please, share your good-news tidbits by sending them before Monday afternoon to dbrosnan123@gmail.com, or call 541-676-5382 or 541-223-1490, or stop me on the street.

Here's hoping that some good news comes to everyone reading this.

Masks required in all schools

Ione School District not able to ignore the mandate

The Oregon Department of Education has updated the Ready Schools, Safe Learners Resilience Framework for the 2021-2022 School Year. This update includes new rules regarding face coverings for schools. This is prompted by OHA's adoption of a rule on August 2, 2021, that requires face coverings for all students, staff and visitors that are indoors. This all follows Governor Brown's announcement that masks will be required in all schools for 2021-22 school year on July 29, 2021.

Kevin Dinning, Superintendent / Secondary Principal Ione School District, told the Gazette, "The Ione School board, district and school leadership have voiced our concerns regarding this change, and we want to assure you all that we will continue to work with our local health district and county commissioners to advocate for local control for our communities."

"We will continue to voice that we feel our community and local districts can make the most sound decisions for our students and stakeholders. While we all continue to advocate for local control, we are not able to ignore this mandate as it is law. It is important to note that we have retained local authority over all school and district programs and events that take place outside of the school day. We will continue to leverage those opportunities and those presented in the framework to ensure that we can offer a safe and supportive environment

for our students," Dinning continued.

The Ione School District will begin the masking requirement on August 12, 2021, to allow some time to support the students, staff and community members through the transition. They will continue to provide information for stakeholders regarding virtual school options that would allow a student to remain in the district, but not attend school in person.

The Kindergarten Jump Start program has begun and the staff will continue to work on a plan to facilitate that program outside, as much as possible. "We know this situation is not ideal, but we want you to know that we support what is best for your family. We will entertain every effort in planning for the next year to include as much outdoor facilitation as possible," noted Dinning.

In advocating for local control or expressing concerns around this recent rule change, the Ione district will continue providing the county commissioners with the public's concerns. Those concerns may be emailed to Dinning at kevin.dinning@ionesd.org, and he will forward them to the commissioners.

As with the last school year, changes to the plan are expected. Specifically, the mask rule will be reviewed on a monthly basis. Further information on board meetings, county meetings and other than in person learning options for the district will be provided as it becomes available.

Work to begin on Blue Mountain Scenic Byway

Contractors have begun prep work to chip seal 33.6 miles of the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway on the North Fork John Day Ranger District. This project is one of two projects on the Umatilla National Forest that was funded this year through the Great American Outdoors Act.

Work will be ongoing for approximately four weeks and includes cleaning the road surface, sealing cracks in the road and patching potholes followed by chip sealing the entire roadway. Construction crews are moving equipment on-site this week and stock piling gravel. The chip seal is anticipated to begin on Aug. 16. The construction work will require that the full length of the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway will periodically have delays and traffic will be managed by flaggers and pilot cars from Aug. 16 until approximately Aug. 30. The road will reopen once work is completed. Construction signs will be posted at each end of the project and as needed in work zones.

The Blue Mountain Scenic Byway is a popular 145-mile route that travels from near Arlington to Granite. This road is also a major portal to both the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests, offering numerous opportunities for scenic views and recreation. The deferred maintenance on this portion of the road will reduce risk to public

safety and extend the life of this scenic route for 10-20 years.

This project is part of the investment of up to \$40 million in 2021 for 29 projects on national forests in Oregon and Washington through the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), intended to address critical deferred maintenance and improve transportation and recreation infrastructure. Nationally, the funds will allow the Forest Service to implement more than 500 infrastructure improvement projects essential to the continued use and enjoyment of national forests lands this year.

In addition to the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway chip seal project, the Umatilla National Forest received funding to replace the Burnt Cabin Trail Bridge on the Walla Walla Ranger District. Implementing both projects this year will provide safe and enhanced visitor access through these areas of the Umatilla National Forest. The projects will also support local employment opportunities and strengthen shared stewardship of national forests and grasslands by expanding the Forest Service work with public and private partners. The forest will continue to share updates on these GAOA projects as construction begins.

Additional projects may be implemented on the Umatilla National Forest and will be announced as funding is allocated.

**ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.**

Good News Only

By Doris Brosnan

Apologies for an oversight last week: Those third- and fourth-generation Huddlekins who recently enjoyed a stay with grandparents Cal and Bev Sherman in Sunriver kayaking, paddle boarding, swimming and floating the lazy river were Kyle, from Denver, CO; Mahaley from Austin, TX; and Ron and family from Portland and Vancouver.

Last Wednesday, Ida Farra celebrated her 104th (not a typo) birthday in the Pioneer Memorial solarium with many friends. The Payne ladies had created a large birthday banner decorated with 104 pictures of flowers, and Maya and Isa also brought her a gallon jar full of exactly 104 pieces of candy. (Ida does like candy.) Purple (her favorite color) balloons and flowers completed the festive atmosphere. Ida shared her day with Lennon Albitre, Kathleen Greenup's son, who turned seven and fascinated Ida with his red hair and many freckles, and she shared birthday cupcakes and ice cream – Ida's favorite, Tillamook from the carton – with her many guests.

Just two months ago, Bob and Judy Stevens were so pleased to share that they had become great grandparents for the first time. Now, they are just as tickled to announce that granddaughter Katelyn, their son's daughter, and Mike Murphy welcomed their first baby, Calli, on August 1. She weighed in at eight pounds and was twenty inches long. The family lives in Dallasport, WA.

Karen Wolff reports, "I returned home last Wednes-

day after a five-day cruise from Seattle to Ketchikan and back. Ashley (our youngest) works for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines in their Call Center in Springfield, OR. Royal Caribbean is beginning to send ships back to sea following the pandemic. Before a ship goes out with guests, they send it out with employee volunteers and a guest. This allows the shipboard employees to practice their procedures and protocols. The employees are given a role play, such as being late for an assigned check-in time or being the whiney unvaccinated guest. The employee then reports how the situation was handled. We were sailing on the "Odyssey of the Seas," which can carry up to 4900 guests, with 1500 staff. They had the 1500 staff, but only 600 guests. It was a very different cruise from other cruises. No waiting for elevators, no lines, lots of room to move around. Lots of hand-sanitizer stations, which guests are required to use. 'Washy, Washy,' as you are escorted to the hand wash station before meals. It was a very fun Mom/Daughter trip."

John and Kelly Boyer travelled to Girdwood, Alaska, for the July 10 wedding of son, Tyler, and Lindsey McKnight. Kelly says that the Alyeska Resort, which attracts visitors from around the world, was a beautiful venue for the couple's ceremony, and the view from the top of Mt. Alyeska, accessed via a tram, where the wedding party enjoyed the rehearsal dinner, was spectacular. Tyler, an HHS graduate, attended Linfield College and then Lewis and Clark

for his master's in psychology. Lindsey was raised in Alyeska and attended the University of Montana. The couple moved to Lexington about two and a half years ago, and both work for Community Counseling, Lindsey as an HR manager and Tyler as a mental health specialist.

Tyler is just one more example of graduates of Heppner High School returning as professionals to establish homes and careers. Such good news for our south Morrow County communities, returning young people. Fortunate for the area, also, is that several individuals raised here knew a good thing when they had it and chose to stay and further develop their skills and talents among their fellow Mustangs, Jackrabbits and Cardinals. Another contributing segment of our communities is that of Boomerangers, those individuals who moved away, made their way elsewhere, and moved back to their hometowns upon retirement. What a wonderful mix of individuals: two and three generations who can "remember when..." with the newcomers to the community who eagerly say, "Tell me more." All contributing their skills and knowledge to the betterment of south Morrow County.

Many readers would be interested in learning about area graduates who have returned to pursue their careers and about graduates who chose to remain in their hometowns to pursue their careers. Just a top-of-my-head list easily contains well over twenty family names, but many more can surely be added. So, when

someone in the know sends in a tidbit about any of these individuals, it can be shared with GT readers. Would be great to feature some each week, so please contribute.

Can it be?. High school sports practices already? One can hope for a high school fall-sports season like the ones common before the pandemic. Good luck to the gridiron, volleyball and cross-country teams.

They're everywhere. They're everywhere. But the good news is that some people are working to eradicate the goat head, puncture vine plants that have a long scientific name and have been thriving where they hurt when stepped on, puncture bike tires, get stuck in pets' paws and invade flowerbeds. Anyone not sure of what they look like can find images online under the above names or ask our friendly librarians to find an image. And then have a good look especially along our sidewalks and driveways. We can all watch for this ground-spreading plant and dig it, burn it, or spray it before those yellow flowers become more plants, more burrs. (Then, should we discuss the Virginia Creeper

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Ione Community Church
470 E Main Street, Ione
Summer worship at 10:00 AM
Sunday Mornings

"You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."
-Jeremiah 29:13
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