~ 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@rapidserve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Global Debacle

The new Climate Change folks make me chuckle… and scratch my head. I wonder what the next title will be for the ever-changing weather. The whole Global Warming thing kinda went flat. I guess they figure their new term is more all-encompassing, as in, including weather changes that have happened since the world began.

It's ok though. The experts are gonna fix it. Perfect, non-changing weather is on the horizon… just as soon as they get a few other things figured out. They're currently working on determining the definition of a "woman." Last thing I heard there's still no consensus. I guess they're pretty busy trying to figure out how to scare the socks off us so they can get us to agree with all their planet-saving ideas, which readily become new laws that micro-manage our daily lives. On the chopping block so far: cows that break wind, gas stoves, gas cars… basically anything that has to do with gas. Watch your husbands, ladies. They may be next.

All this from our illustrious scientists that think they can fix a planet, you know, the one they believe came into being because of a fluke. BANG… then everything fell into place. Luckily planet earth happened to land the perfect distance from the sun. A fraction closer and we fry, farther and we freeze. Whew… that was close.

Mention "creation" in the presence of these guys (and gals… whatever they are) and they come unglued. Doesn't matter that everything we touch has been created by someone. The chair you're sitting on, your shoes, this computer I'm typing on… all have a designer and creator. But trees, flowers, rocks, fish, humans… all here by accident. Yep. Makes perfect sense.

The audacity of it all astounds me. These guys can't create one blade of grass from scratch yet they're gonna fix the earth. God must be chuckling too.

Seriously, I guess if I believed there was no God, I'd be worried sick too. Maybe I'd even be ok with a teenager reprimanding me and telling me the planet's about to expire. Still, the thought of depending on my fellow humans to extend the expiration date isn't very comforting.

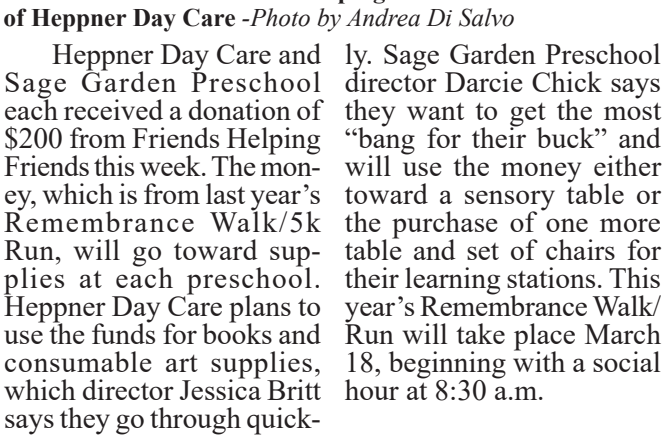
What is comforting is knowing there is a God that is very capable of managing the world He created… including the climate. Next time you try to convince me that our world was not made by intelligent design… I challenge you. Take a box of 1,500 City Legos and throw the entire contents into the air. If they come down and land in the form of a city, I'll consider your opinion valid. If not, I'll keep my Creator thank you… but you might wanna watch where you step in stocking feet.

"But ask the beasts, and they will teach you: the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you: or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you, and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In His hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind" (Job 12:7-10).

Susie Crosby
Heppner, OR

Heppner preschools get boost from local charity

Tayllor Brannon and Darcie Chick of Sage Garden Preschool. *-Photo by Andrea Di Salvo*



Kathi Dickenson of Friends Helping Friends with Jessica Britt of Heppner Day Care *-Photo by Andrea Di Salvo*

Heppner Day Care and Sage Garden Preschool each received a donation of $200 from Friends Helping Friends this week. The money, which is from last year's Remembrance Walk/5k Run, will go toward supplies at each preschool. Heppner Day Care plans to use the funds for books and consumable art supplies, which director Jessica Britt says they go through quickly. Sage Garden Preschool director Darcie Chick says they want to get the most "bang for their buck" and will use the money either toward a sensory table or the purchase of one more table and set of chairs for their learning stations. This year's Remembrance Walk/Run will take place March 18, beginning with a social hour at 8:30 a.m.

'Stuff the Bus' drive collects food for Neighborhood Center

Mid Columbia Bus Company and Heppner Market Fresh teamed up to collect food for the Neighborhood Center last Saturday. Five bus company employees—four of them Heppner school bus drivers—collected the food for the "Stuff the Bus" event. Despite the cold weather and a power outage, Heppner-area residents stepped up and helped donate an estimated 400 pounds of non-perishables for the Heppner food pantry. A Heppner school bus delivered the food Monday morning. Pictured (L-R) are Mid Columbia Heppner bus driver Russell Rollis, Neighborhood Center Coordinator Lisa Patton and Neighborhood Center Vice Coordinator Kelly Fritz. *-Photo by Andrea Di Salvo*

Barbershop to sponsor chili cookoff

Faded Joe's Barbershop will hold a "Wee Bit o' Chili" chili cookoff on Saturday, March 18, during the Wee Bit O' Ireland celebration in Heppner. All proceeds will go to Tupper Outdoor School.

Cooking will begin at 10 a.m. with judging from 12-1 p.m. Limited entries are available for teams of three. Contact Faded Joe's Barbershop for entry forms.

NRCS Oregon announces CSP application deadline

The next deadline for Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) applications to be considered for funding this year is March 31.

Through CSP, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) helps farmers, ranchers and forest landowners earn payments for expanding conservation activities while maintaining agricultural production on their land. CSP also encourages adoption of new technologies and management techniques.

While applications are accepted throughout the year, interested producers should submit applications to their local NRCS office by the deadline to ensure their applications are considered for 2023 funding. Learn more about the program on the Oregon CSP webpage.

CSP is offered in Oregon through continuous signups. The program provides many benefits including increased crop yields, decreased inputs, wildlife habitat improvements and increased resilience to weather extremes. CSP is for working lands including cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of a tribe.

For additional information about CSP, contact Misty Beals at misty.beals@usda.gov or your local service center.

Coffee Hour and Ceili return for St. Pat's

The Irish Coffee Hour and Ceili will be back again this year at the Wee Bit O' Ireland Celebration in Heppner March 18. Both event will be held upstairs at the Elk's Lodge, the coffee hour from 10-11:30 a.m. and the Ceili from 2-4 p.m.

Great programs have been planned to fill the day with music and local talent, and the group Whiskey for Breakfast will fill listening ears and hearts with lots of Irish songs—and, of course, they will want the audience to join in. Onlookers and listeners also shouldn't be surprised if Heppner's leprechauns make an appearance and dance to some of the music during their visit.

Also at the coffee hour, the audience will hear some stories about this year's grand marshals, past "key organizers" of the Heppner St. Patrick's celebration, with a special mention of founder Jim Farley. It can only be hoped that Joe Lindsay will also be there with a song to share.

The Irish Brogue Contest will give the audience a chance to tell the best "Blarney" stories for a chance to win some gold coins, so everyone should be thinking of something appropriate to share.

The Ceili will run from 2-4 p.m. with Alan Feves and the rest of the Whiskey for Breakfast group. Joe Lindsay will join to wrap up the afternoon. The weekend's main entertainment, Tiller's Folly, will be stopping in around 3 p.m. to sing a few of their songs to get everyone warmed up for their concert, planned for 7:30 p.m. in the Gilliam and Bisbee building.

The weekend is sure to make everyone want to clap their hands, stomp their feet, have a few laughs and even dance as they enjoy some great Irish music and entertainment.

Spiritually Speaking

Father Thankachan Joseph
St. Patrick Catholic Church Heppner

Lent: A Time Transform Oneself

The first Sunday of Lent we reflected on the theme of temptations we are faced with. We meditated that Christ could win over his temptations since he was led by the spirit of the Lord. We sometimes fall into temptations since we are led by the spirit of this world and its attractions. We are all invited to have the same desert experience as Christ himself had gone through.

The Second Sunday's scripture reading invites us to transfigurations; i.e., we need to get away and move from our present state to a spiritual state. The word transfiguration literally would mean a complete change of form or appearance into a more spiritual state. That is what the desert experience leads us all to.

The first reading of this coming Sunday is taken from the book of Genesis (12: 1-4), wherein we read and reflect the call of Abram. Abram was called from a little hamlet of Ur in the southern part of Mesopotamia in what is today southern Iraq. Abram seemed to appear from nowhere, suddenly making his appearance in the Scripture in the book of Genesis. But this was the man whom God had called and chosen, for God who knows the heart and mind can see that Abram had faith in Him and was a righteous and obedient person. When God called Abram, he changed his name and asked him to leave behind all his kith and kin and take up a hazardous trip to an unknown land which the Lord God would show him. God promised that the name of Abram would be blessed and great, and He would bless all those who bless him and curse all those who curse him. God called Abram to an unknown wilderness and an uncertainty. Abram had a lot of property, connections and things he enjoyed in his ancestral homeland. But Abram chose to trust in God and leave his past behind him, and walked to the distant land which God promised that He would give to him and to his descendants. Abram trusted and had faith in God, committed himself fully in the promises of God, and we see that he and his offspring were blessed by the Lord.

The Gospel reading on the second Sunday is the theme of transfiguration of the Lord from the gospel of Mathew (17: 1-9). Christ prepares himself well for this event. He is taking only a few of his close collaborators with him to Mount Tabor where in front of them he was transfigured. Through this incident of Transfiguration mentioned in our Gospel passage, the Lord Jesus was glorified and appeared before three of His disciples: Peter, James and John. In this manifestation, His fullness of glory and divinity was exposed to them, and we see the presence of Moses and Elijah to give the understanding that Christ is the fulfilment of the law and the prophets. It was revealed at the Transfiguration that Christ was not merely a human being, but also the divinity of Christ as the Son of God, in the person of Jesus Christ, Savior of the world; the Messiah. Two distinct yet inseparable natures of Human and Divine were exposed to humanity.

What happened then at the Transfiguration and what is its significance for us? We need to pay attention how the Transfiguration of the Lord revealed to us what we ought to do as Christians, how we ought to be living our lives and our faith from now on. In the transfiguration scene we hear a beautiful declaration of Peter suggesting to the Lord Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah" (v 5). He completely forgets himself at this juncture and begins to live for others. This experience of the desert and Mount Tabor will lead us out of ourselves and to living for others.

The season of Lent, in particular, we are called to re-examine our lives and how we have lived thus far. Are we able to think and discern carefully what we are going to do with our lives, how we are going to proceed forward? In our life, we certainly go through and will go through a lot of trials and challenges for the gospel values. It is not easy to keep our faith and trust in God always and every time, if we don't believe in what we read in the Bible. God promised to Abraham to be a father of a great family of faith. Jesus promised his disciples a glory that they will share with him in heaven. These are our hopes. Christians do not hope in this material world; we hope in God's promises. We hope in God's mercy that we will be glorified with him in heaven if we accept to suffer with Him. The words of St. Paul are very apt here: what we endure in this life is incomparable to the reward for us in the life to come. Do you believe in this as Abraham believed, and can you go ahead like he did? God is calling all of us during this season of Lent to make the leap into such unknowns to which the Lord God leads us all.

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Save the date!

Murray's Irish Fest
Friday, March 17, 2023
Gilliam & Bisbee
Event Starts at 7pm!
Follow our Facebook page for more info!

Prescription profiles for tax or insurance purposes available upon request.

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