

~ 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.

Archive provides poignant reminder of father

The "archives" feature in the 8/16/23 edition was a poignant reminder of my father's way of getting a point across. The opening paragraph of the 1973 letter made clear that he respected Mr. Joiner's skill in producing the newspaper and appreciated the way news was reported.

What followed, however, was a vivid example of the challenge many faced when talking with him. Was he chuckling at the shock of the chicken who was just minding its business looking for lunch when it was accosted by tons of steel? Or was he questioning Ernie's country driving skills, since he had relocated from a more metropolitan area?

Even if he was "razzing" because it was a humorous event, there was often a deeper, serious question or moral of the story. As much as those conversations drove me crazy as his daughter, as an adult I miss that level of social skill. Don't get me wrong. The man was quite capable of getting directly to the point when necessary, and the message always came through loud and clear. His preferred style, when circumstances allowed, was to let people figure it out in their own time with a little bit of humor thrown in. I'm thankful that I got to benefit from that humor and guidance, and that you saw fit to re-publish the letter. I hope it brought a little humor to folks and maybe provoked some deeper thinking.

Karla Gray
Yakima WA

Emperor of Empathy

Some people have the gift of empathy. They can very easily relate and put themselves in the difficult circumstances of others, finding it easy to feel their pain and bring words of comfort.

I've recently heard our President described as one who cares very deeply for others and who has a reputation as such. This admirer even gave him the highly esteemed title of Empathizer in Chief. I actually prefer Emperor of Empathy.... has a better ring to it.

Seniors Matter menus for September

On Sept. 5, South Morrow County Seniors Matter will be serving Beef Stroganoff, rice, green beans, dinner roll and dessert at its Tuesday lunch.

Other September meals are:

Sept. 12—Baked Ziti, garden salad and dressing, cheddar garlic biscuits and dessert.

Sept. 19—Biscuits and Gravy, scrambled eggs and dessert.

Sept. 26—Tamale cas-

Well, since most of us could use a little help in the empathy department, I figured I'd take a few notes from Mr. Empathy and see exactly how to do it effectively.

So here are some suggested responses in case you find yourself with the opportunity to show empathy toward some unfortunate folks. These responses will assuredly make you a "ten" on the empathizer scale and maybe even on the same level as Emperor Biden, which is what we should all strive for.

1) To a Holocaust survivor: "I was on a train once. Had to stand in line forever. But that was before I had my 68 Corvette."

2) To the parent of a missing child: "Once I lost my dog. Thought I'd never find him. Once we got him fixed, he quit running off."

3) To someone who has lost everything they own in a fire: "Hey, I got seven hundred bucks for you man. Don't spend it all in one place. Ha ha."

4) To a grieving parent: "My cat almost died."

5) To a pregnant woman during a difficult childbirth: "Shoulda had an abortion. They're free in most places now ya know."

6) To someone who just lost their job: "Hey I got someone fired with a quick phone call. Don't mess with The Big Guy."

7) To a veteran who is a double amputee: "Holy cow. Looks like you don't have a leg to stand on."

8) To your grandchild: "Who are you?"

9) To thousands of people mourning the loss of their loved ones, whose remains will most likely never be recovered. "No comment."

Another way to display the utmost empathy is to make up a story about your own experience. It can be as fake and far-fetched as you make it. Just have fun with it. Include enough details to make yourself the center of the story so as to divert the attention from the one deserving your empathy. Hopefully, you'll have several opportunities soon to put these suggestions into practice.

"Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" Romans 12:15.

Susie Crosby
Prineville, OR

serole, garden salad and dessert.

Meals are served at 11:30 a.m. every Tuesday at St. Patrick's Senior Center in Heppner. Seniors 60 and above may donate what they can toward the cost of the meal. Those 60 and younger are asked for a suggested donation of \$5.

No to-go plates or delivery are offered at this time, but diners may bring empty containers for a portion to take home.

Good News Only by Doris Brosnan

Camille Sykes and son, Oscar Gonzales, Milwaukie, OR, visited Camille's parents/Oscar's grandparents, David and April Sykes, in Heppner this past week. While in Heppner, Oscar went swimming at the Willow Creek Water Park with grandma and cousins, Waylon and Sophie Sykes, did some back-to-school shopping at Murray's and Dollar General, enjoyed eating out at Bucknum's and the pizza parlor, taking walks around town, getting a back-to-school haircut at Blondes and playing at Waterland Field. He helped celebrate Waylon's fifth birthday, along with Sophie, aunt and uncle, Chris and Rachel Sykes, Heppner, uncle Andrew Sykes, Pendleton, uncle Will, aunt Myndi, cousins Logan and Brennah, College Place, uncle Scott Archer, Condon, grandpa, Mark Parm, Pendleton, and David and April. Oscar's dad is Eddie Gonzales, Milwaukie.

Frank Di Salvo visited son Carmelo Di Salvo and his wife Andrea and their three children in Lexington this past week. He visited from Norfolk, VA, where he and his wife recently moved after a lifetime spent in Buffalo, NY. "Papa," as he is known to his grandkids, is the namesake of his grandson, Frank Joseph Di Salvo II. Frank and the Di Salvos enjoyed cooking Italian food, visiting with the Miles in-laws, playing with the family's menagerie of pets and an afternoon at the Ione pool as part of Frank's visit.

Last Wednesday, JoAnne Bureson's son Warren came for a four-day visit, which gave the West Oregonian time to become a little better acquainted with our community and a few more Heppnerites/Heppnerians (?). His nephew—JoAnne's grandson, Jimmy, also from the Portland area—joined the twosome on Friday but just for most of the day as his tight schedule only allowed time for a brief visit and the taking away of some items Jo had offered him. He promised to return soon.

Last Saturday, my daughter Darci Brosnan and my granddaughter Amy arrived with a huge gift: they had brought my sister Edie Morris, from Lake Oswego, with them for a two-night stay! Although we tried, we never did figure out how many years had passed since Edie's last visit to Heppner, but agreed that this was a gigantic treat for both of us. A drive about town offered several surprises as we reminisced about growing-up years. A visit with Shirley George was a bonus for Edie, who used to babysit her and her three siblings, the Jack and Ruth VanWinkle family. A drive to Anson Wright Park on Sunday enabled Edie to also visit with our brother Bob Morris and his wife Elizabeth, who hosts at the park. As the threesome departed on Monday morning, hopes were high for a repeat visit.

Last Saturday was also the Father Gerry Condon Memorial Golf Tournament. Over 20 golf enthusiasts enjoyed the toasty weather, the camaraderie and good-natured competition, and the table of good foods after play. Tying for first place were the Tom Wolff - Karen Wolff - Steve Puntney - Jan Puntney foursome and the Rick Johnston - Larry Lutchter - Scott Johnston team. (Rick explains that Fr. Condon was always part of their foursome, "until he moved on," which is when Brian Kollman joined them but was not able to play this year.) Winning the prize for youngest participant was Mack Sweeney. The proceeds from the entry fees are support for the Knights of Columbus scholarship fund.

Mack and his brother, Keller, who also golfed, brought 12 of their homing pigeons to the tournament, and in memory of Father Condon, in front of all the players, they released the pigeons. Rick Johnston reports that that was the highlight of the whole day, as the birds "headed towards the heavens, circled around a few times, and then turned together to head where they knew they were going." All flyers made a safe return to their Rhea Creek home, and the boys' father, Cam, reports that the youngsters "are not afraid to let their pigeons go from any distance" because they are confident that they will return safely.

Many readers will remember Ed Groshens, who graduated from HHS in 1958. Two weeks ago, Ed stayed in Heppner as he was traveling through to several points east. Last Saturday, Ed had again stayed in Heppner, on his way back home in Florence. His overnights gave Ed time to visit some local spots, including the Elks and Murray's, and run into familiar faces. One such was Bill Doherty. Ed said last Saturday that seeing Bill immediately took Ed back to 1960: Ed was in the Army, stationed in Stuttgart, Germany. He and three buddies were on leave, headed for the Vatican because his friends were Catholic and had arranged for an audience with Pope John. They travelled through France, with time for visiting the Eiffel Tower. On the second floor of the Tower, Ed heard something like "Hey, Groshens!!" What a surprise to see the East Oregonian from just down the road, Bill Doherty! Ed said that he always appreciates his visits to Heppner and is even considering moving back someday.

Thanks to JoAnne, Ed, Cam, April and Andrea for contributing this week and giving us readers a pleasant pause! A note to dbrosnan123@gmail.com or a call to 541-223-1490 is all it takes to add your good news!

Hope good news comes to everyone reading this column!

Over the Tee Cup

It was windy and slightly cooler but still a little "muggy" for the seven ladies who played golf at the Willow Creek Country Club Tuesday, Aug. 29.

Low gross of the field on the ladies play day went to Virginia Grant.

Tiffany Clement had low net of the field.

Karen Thompson, Pat Dougherty and Sharon Harrison each had least putts.

For flight C, Kris Lindner

had low gross and Jackie Allstott low net.

In upcoming events, the Eddie Skow Tournament is planned for Sept. 5 and 12.

Spiritually Speaking

Father Thankachan Joseph
St. Mary's Catholic Church Wasco



Discipleship in the concept of Christ

In the first reading for this coming Sunday, we hear from Jeremiah (20:7-9), grumbling and complaining to God about the incredible mission he has been given. "Lord, you have seduced me! Daily I am a laughingstock! ... The word of the Lord has meant for me insult, derision, all day long."

Jeremiah was called to be a prophet as a very young man, probably even as a teenager, unwelcome in most societies, but especially in a society that valued the wisdom only of old men. Besides, he was called even though he seems to have had a speech impediment.

He was called to be a prophet of doom. The people had to be reminded of their evil ways and the need to repent or else they would face destruction. Jeremiah's reward for his message was to be accused of treason. He was tired of being God's prophet, yet he felt strongly the call to be a prophet. "There seems a fire burning in my heart ... and the effort to restrain it wearies me."

In Jeremiah, as in all who are called, there is faith and doubt existing together. Why can't God make life simpler and easier for his faithful ones?

In this week's Gospel reading from St. Matthew (16:21-27), Jesus informs His disciples for the first time that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, chief priests, and the scribes and be killed, and on the third day be raised. Actually, the disciples did not grasp it properly, and Peter comes on their behalf, takes Jesus aside, and objects. That plan does not make any sense to him. Still puffed up with the pride of his own success, still holding in his hands the keys he has just received, Peter asserts himself with boldness: "God forbid that, Lord, this must never happen to you" (Mt 16:23).

Peter is clear and concise. He's also dead wrong. Jesus turns on Peter with a real force. "Get behind me, Satan," Jesus says. The rock on which the church is to stand speaks out and crumbles. Success collapses into failures when the first of the apostles stands on the side of Satan. At this juncture Jesus gives a discourse on discipleship and the cost of discipleship, the theme of this Sunday.

The concept of Messiah that Peter was thinking about was a glorious triumphant Messiah who would come in grandeur and with a show of power to set Israel free. But Jesus foretold of a Messiah who would be a suffering servant, humble and meek, stripped of all power, obedient unto death. Peter just could not stomach the idea of a suffering Messiah, so he takes Jesus aside and tries to reason with Him. The cross is too frightening a prospect, isn't there a more palatable way of presenting it? Can't there be a compromise, a little watering down to make it acceptable?

In response to Peter, Jesus reacts strongly to his advice: "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path, because the way you think is not God's way but man's."

Peter was making two mistakes. First of all, he did not listen to the full destiny of Jesus. The mention of being raised on the third day passed over his head unheard. His second mistake was to dictate what God's will should be, something most of us do all the time. This mistake could have serious consequences, so Jesus puts Peter in his place.

Peter, who was earlier called the rock, is now called a stumbling stone, Satan, the tempter. Jesus attacks him violently to teach Peter in this hard and blunt way to seek new directions of thinking and of living. Peter had faith but not yet that faith that gives the unconditional answer, "I am ready," to God's demanding word.

To conclude the reflections of the day, from the Gospel of Matthew (16:26): "What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? Or what can one give in exchange for his life?" This calls us as disciples to put Christ first in everything:

A) Prioritize: Lk. 10:38-42 (Jesus commended Mary because she chose the good, important things. Like Mary, you must make a decision to put Christ before everything.)

B) Set Your Mind on Heaven: Col. 3:1-2 (Set your cares and affections on heavenly things. Don't be too absorbed with earthly goals. Instead, make heaven your goal.)

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