

~ 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 \$15. Email to editor@rapidsolve.net or upload to Heppner.net.

Food For Thought

I don’t know what to eat. I’m not talking about dinner. I mean like ...forever. Lately, I’ve been trying to decide just how to go about losing this extra baggage I’ve been packing around. I want my waist back. I want my comfortable Wranglers back....and my favorite flannel shirts. I wanna sit and breathe at the same time.

You know, a little warning would have been nice. Maybe somebody a few years my senior could have told me there would come a time when sniffing a brownie would add a pants size. Sure, I’ve heard of the “slowing metabolism” deal. But nobody told me it would eventually sit on the sidelines smoking a cigarette. Not fair.

I know some people love food. They think about it, plan for it, love trying new tastes, love a great restaurant, and actually enjoy cooking. Not me... never been a Foodie. Give me a PB and J and chocolate milk for every meal and I’m good. Just one little problem. My favorite meal has turned on me. What used to be sustenance has joined up with that stinkin’ lazy metabolism and now I’m one sandwich away from the moo-moo gang.

So, I figure since food got me to this point...food (or lack of) will get me back. But...what to eat... what not to eat...that is the question. Ok, I know the basics of the bad list: sugar, preservatives, additives, bad fats.... anything at Jack’s Mini Mart (thank you EMS). But they keep adding stuff to the list. Remember the “Staff of Life”? Yeah...it’s on the bad list

Volunteers brighten community space



Kylie Holden standing in front of new murual she helped create in front of Willow Creek Community Learning Garden.
~ Contributed photo

Heppner residents may have noticed that the once blank wall on the backside of Willow Creek Community Learning Garden is looking a bit more lively as of late. The garden, which is used for educational outreach and to provide produce for the food bank, has been a work in progress since its inception in 2021. Andrea Nelson, who owns Flood Town Books, “manages the garden and has had a clear vision since the beginning stages.” “I not only wanted to create a community space for education and outreach, but also a place of beauty. I asked my newly formed National Arts Honor Society if they could use some of their volunteer hours to work on creating the mural on the back wall,” explained Nelson.

now. Got gut aches? Bad breath? Rash? Flat feet? Got fired? Probably gluten. Anything dairy is a no-no and has been replaced by “Nut Milk”. Seriously? Who thinks of these things? NUTS? Mention raw milk and folks start backing away, getting out the rubber gloves and masks. Just sad. They obviously don’t appreciate the value of a good udder.

Well, after much research, soul-searching, and prayer, I’ve finally figured it out. Keto, Atkins, South Beach, Noom, Nutrisystem, Weightwatchers, Whale-watchers.....whatever the diet....I think I’ll pass. Instead, I think I’ll go gluten-free and just stop putting so much in my mouth.

Oh...and my daughter says to get my heart rate up for at least 10 minutes a day. I figure one ambulance page-out per day should suffice.

Just a note: Remember the land flowing with milk and honey? Well, I figure if the good Lord used it as a reward...it has to be good. And while He did say we shouldn’t live by bread alone...He didn’t say to dump it all together, right? So far.... that’s bread, milk, and honey. I know John the Baptist added locust to the mix but, he was a little braver soul than I. And, unless they were dipped in chocolate, I doubt I could get past the legs. Now I just need to search The Word for peanut butter and chocolate. I’m sure it’s in there somewhere....

“Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4

Susie Crosby
Prineville, OR

Good News Only by Doris Brosnan

Kit and Shirley George’s daughter, Kimberly, treated her husband, Mark, to several first experiences this month. Kim and Mark live in Wilmot, Illinois, and Mark was raised in Marion, Iowa, so he was in for some new Eastern Oregon opportunities when they came on September 8. By the time they left on the 17th, they had attended the Dress-Up Parade, the Pendleton Underground, Pendleton Woolen Mills, Happy Canyon, Bull-riding (joined by long-time family friend Ty Arbogast), and the Pendleton Round-Up (joined by Kim’s parents and Ann Schwarz). Tasting Pendleton Whiskey was also a must. So much to see and do, a repeat trip is already being planned!

On September 9, Ruth Maben’s family helped her celebrate her 90th birthday. Her home was a hubbub of activity as thirty celebrants from Portland, Prineville, LaGrande, and the local area gathered to honor their matriarch. Ruth was pleased to have the five generations of her family represented, the youngest four months old.

Last Thursday, a group of women gathered at the Elks for their monthly birthday lunch. This month’s celebrant was Diane Mullins, who was joined by 12 friends from Ione and Heppner. This time, Karen Haguewood, recent transplant to AZ, was visiting area friends and family so was able to join the group. They again enjoyed the menu prepared by Chef Heath, but they paused for several tributes and a toast to Nancy Ekstrom, who recently passed away and is greatly missed.

Royalty with roots in Heppner and Lexington: Last Friday evening, Justus Counsell and Megan Joyce were crowned king and queen of the Hermiston High School homecoming. Megan is the daughter of Phil and Tina Joyce, Hermiston, and granddaughter of Gary and Marcia Kemp, Lexington. Justus is the son of Donita Counsell of Heppner and Justin Counsell of Hermiston. Obviously, impressive young man and woman with good roots.

On Saturday at 4 PM Gibson McCurry and Mackenzie Heideman became handsome man and beautiful wife on the grassy banks of the Columbia River. About 175 guests joined the couple in the Marine Park at Cascade Locks, with Gibson’s uncle Todd Harrison officiating. “Mackie’s” six attendants wore lovely forest-green long gowns, which matched the ties of Gibson’s six groomsmen in their black slacks and shirts. And those groomsmen and Gibson had a great experience together as they actually prepared the two pasta recipes and the salad that were served at the reception - while the women “were getting ready.” Following the buffet meal and traditional toasts, cake-cutting, and dances, most everyone danced away the rest of the evening. Mother-of-the-groom, Tiffany Clement, emphasizes that the support of the guests and the wedding party was greatly appreciated. “The kids’ attendants were such considerate, kind young people, obviously, totally there for Gibson and Mackenzie. Many happy tears were shed many times.” The couple is now honeymooning in Mexico before returning to their home in Roseburg.

Across the River from Cascade Locks on Saturday, Logan Grieb and Kylene Briggs also recited their wedding vows, as 160 guests showed their support. Adding to the memory that this special day at the Wind Mountain Ranch Estate will always hold is the fact that Logan’s father, Ken Grieb, officiated. Kylene was raised in Medford, and at OSU, she was friends with Kevin Murray and his wife, Kellie, as was Logan. The two shared many hours in a study group, seemed to feel from the start that they belonged together, according to Ken, and four years later have become Mr. and Mrs. Logan Grieb. All of Logan’s five groomsmen were teammates from his time at HHS. Kylene was attended by her sister, a college friend, Kevin’s wife, and Logan’s two sisters. Ken reports that the couple did a fantastic job of planning the wedding, with the help of a wedding planner, down to the smallest details, so it was a beautiful affair that included a reception into the night until 10 p.m. The young couple call the Grieb farm “home,” and Kylene works and coaches at Irrigon High School and Logan is in administration at Umatilla Electric Cooperative, so a honeymoon has been delayed.

After a not-so-successful vacation in Canada, William and Neva Mahon decided to end the travel season with a few days on the Oregon Coast. What could possibly go wrong this time? Following that long drive to Seaside, they were looking forward to relaxing in an ocean-view room at the Shilo Inn. That didn’t happen. Seems their reservation didn’t get entered into the computer system. Even having a confirmation number did no good as the hotel had no vacancy. So, the scramble was on. Neva was beginning to think their vacation would become a Portland weekend or maybe at some other Oregon beach. Finally, a nice room was procured about a block from the ocean, and the rest of their trip went smoothly enough. The ocean was amazing, as it always is. And the fantastic sand castles were still standing after last week’s festival. Once again new friendships were made. However, they are glad to be home for a while.

Kudos to Amanda Roy, PA with the Morrow County Health District, for bringing to Heppner the first Free Comprehensive Vision Screenings offered by OHSU Casey Eye Institute. Amanda arranged for these screenings in Wheeler County some years ago and hopes to make the screenings that were held last Sunday a yearly opportunity for this area. According to Paola Macias’s report, offering support with the menus for the visiting professionals were the Market, Murray’s, the Pizza Parlor, and the Mini-Bakers. Hats off to All!

Reading about what has brought smiles to others’ faces must surely bring a smile to the reader, so please think about spreading your smile by sending your item to dbrosnan123@gmail.com or call 541-223-1490. That is all it takes to add your good news.

Hope good news comes to everyone reading this column.

**DEADLINE:
MONDAYS
AT 5PM**

Spiritually Speaking

*Father Thankachan Joseph
St. Mary’s Catholic Church Wasco*



Often in life we are given a choice to say ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to people’s questions or requests to us. How do we respond to the queries of people around us? When we say yes to someone and their request we need to take the responsibility that demands. So often people easily say ‘Yes’ when they mean ‘No’! It is easy to give and escape from the request of someone who needs our helping hand. The cost of our ‘yes’ comes later if and when we honor or respect our words. Do we mean what we say? Can someone take our words/ trust our response we give to them? Are we people of our word, or are we merely yes-men and women? Are we ready to substantiate our word with deeds? Today’s scripture readings challenge us to be people of our word.

The previous week we reflected the theme called “it is not fair.” The opening words of the first reading from the prophet Ezekiel (18:25-28) start with “The Lord’s way is not fair!” (25). Yahweh poses a question to everyone is to answer are our behavior and ways living unfair or the Lord is unfair? This question is personal, individual responsibility for responding to God’s call to us. At the time of the prophet Ezekiel, there was a belief that a child was punished for the sins of his parents. Ezekiel didn’t agree with this. He stated clearly and unambiguously that each individual is answerable for his or her frauds, and he or she alone will have to answer for them. We can’t hide behind the goodness or evil of others. However, if we sin, true sorrow will win us pardon and forgiveness from God. Unless we accept accountability for our sins, we will see no need to repent for them. If we confess our sins we have nothing to fear but trust in the mercy of God. Ezekiel thus reminds us of the constant need for conversion, which is not a one-time experience but has to be experienced constantly.

Today’s gospel reading from Mathew (21: 28-32) narrates a parable which is found only in Mathew alone. The parable of the two sons the Evangelist is trying to explain the different operanti mode of these two sons towards their father. To drive the point home he poses the dilemma in the form of a parable of the two sons, who are called upon by their father to work in his vineyard. One responds, “No, I will not go!” but afterwards thought about it and changed his mind and went to work in the vineyard. The other immediately said, “Yes, I will go.” But did not go and work in the vineyard. Jesus now poses the question: “Which of the two sons did the will of the father?” The Pharisees admit that the first son was the obedient one. Jesus then applies it bluntly to their own response to God. “Tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom before you.”

The parables of Jesus were meant to intrude his listeners and make them think about their lives. Jesus wanted to confront the Jewish religious leaders and accuse them of not doing God’s will. He further enraged them by saying that John the Baptist, whom they would not accept, was an example of true righteousness or conformity to God’s will. Jesus was not holding either of the two sons as an ideal. We are called to be sons and daughters of the Father who immediately respond with a ‘Yes’ to God’s call and immediately do what he asks of us. Christianity is not a matter of saying the right prayers or following the precepts of the Law. Our actions have to witness to the God in whom we believe in and the faith we profess. Sin does not necessarily imply doing something wrong. The greatest sin is not to do good: the sin of inactivity, of doing nothing. The parable teaches us that promises can never take the place of performance, and fine words can never take the place of fine deeds. The Lord’s parable continues to probe the Pharisee in our hearts today.

Jesus was always upset with the Pharisees because of their favorite defense system of the law. They had always some particular precepts or other principles that could always be found to justify escaping the painful demands of reaching out to the needy/doing charity. We ourselves would have to admit using some excuse or another not justify our actions: ‘I am too busy right now... come on another occasion..., we are not allowed to do that.. the boss is out at the moment and I cannot take a decision...that’s not my responsibility...what would the Bishop think...this is a dangerous precedent....we don’t know where this will end.’ To conclude our reflections; Today’s readings speak about two paths: One leads to sadness, isolation, impotence, rage - and death. The other path leads to purpose, communion, serenity, power - and life. We naturally want our young people and all of us to choose the second path - the one that leads to life.

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