

~ 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.

**MEMORIES**

Memories are funny things. Sometimes, they show up when you'd rather they take a hike. Embarrassing moments and hurtful words seem to always be readily available for recall. But when you've assured yourself that you'll remember turning on the hose to fill the horse's water trough, your memory takes an untimely vacation....until you look out the window and wonder why there's a pond in your pasture. Oh yeah.... NOW I remember. Memories can be cruel.

My dad had an incredible memory. There wasn't much he couldn't remember. From reciting his lines from a college play back in 1943, to the name of your 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin twice removed. He was a Jeopardy Extraordinaire....even well into his eighties.

I'd love to have that kind of memory. Unfortunately, this apple not only fell far from the tree, it rolled down hill and into another county. I probably have the current record for the number of times a burrito has been reheated in the microwave....and found around dinner time. Well, no wonder I'm so hungry.

Although we are all born with different degrees of memory proficiency, there's a line that even us Bad Memory folks never want to cross. In all seriousness, it's heartbreaking when Grandma or Grandpa's memory starts declining to the point that they can't remember family. My heart goes out to those folks. Age takes its toll and it's not easy to watch.

Unfortunately, lately it's been verified that the Leader of the Free World has crossed the line from

normal forgetfulness to a state of dementia. And although his supporters have failed to admit it, the worsening decline has been obvious since he's taken office. Our enemies see it. They see our lack of intelligent leadership. We have now become a laughingstock to the rest of the world and a prime target for some sinister schemes. Although it's left lots of material for those one-liners and memes, I find it a serious subject due to the catastrophic consequences we all are facing because of it. The fact that there are those who would consider placing him in office again is a major jaw-drop moment. Insanity at its worst.

Even more insane....a man that could and should face trial for illegal behavior has been declared too feeble-minded to endure the process. Seriously? Somebody please explain to me how a man that is not mentally capable of standing trial can remain in the most powerful office in the world. Who is managing our country? Not that I can think of one single thing this president has done to benefit our country, knowing that he can't remember when he was Vice President is downright scary. Does anyone else feel a little vulnerable here? One good thing.... maybe we'll get lucky and he won't remember the nuclear code.

"Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens". Exodus 18:21

By Susie Crosby from Prineville, OR.

**EOU 2023 Fall Term Dean's List**

Eastern Oregon University named 591 students to the dean's list for the 2023 fall term. Qualifying students achieve and maintain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale while completing a minimum of 12 hours of graded coursework for the term. The following are students from Morrow County.

From Boardman, Ariel Lissman, Education, Early Childhood Education

Carmelita Morrison, Education, Elementary Education  
Lesliy Rivera, Arts, Humanities & Soc Science, English/Writing

LilyAnn Rockwell, Business, Business Administration  
From Heppner, Trevor Nichols, STM and Health Science, Biology  
From Lexington, Paul Lindsay, STM and Health Science, General Studies-Exploratory

**Smith to hold session Feb. 17<sup>th</sup>**

Boardman, Ore. – On Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at the Port of Morrow's Riverfront Center (2 East Marine Drive Boardman, Oregon 97818), Representative Greg Smith (R-Heppner) will be hosting a 90-minute listening session on Measure 110, starting at 10:00. Last week, Rep. Smith was appointed to serve on the Joint Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response. This committee will have the task of reviewing Measure 110 and proposing solutions to the public safety and behavioral health

crises the State of Oregon is facing.

"I want to hear from my constituents regarding their thoughts on Measure 110 and how the legislature should go about solving the public safety and behavioral health crises the State of Oregon is facing," said Representative Smith, "this meeting is not for me to deliver a speech or lecture, but rather to listen and ask questions to constituents, law enforcement officers, public safety specialists, and health care professionals."

**Spiritually Speaking**  
*Father Thankachan Joseph*



**LENT: A TIME TO REPENT & RETURN TO GOD**

Several churches are into the first Sunday of Lent and the theme of how we can be victorious in the struggle against evil. In the Gospel we see Christ in the desert struggling with the tempter. Through prayer, fasting, and fidelity to the word of God, He emerges victorious. All of us need to face temptations in our day-to-day life. Lent provides us with a great opportunity to intensify our efforts to overcome them.

When Lent begins, the first question many people ask is, "What will you do for Lent? What are you planning to give up for Lent?" Some will answer, "I will give up smoking," or "I will give up alcoholic drinks," or "I will give up watching the movies and TV." Others may say, "I will go for daily Mass," or "I will read one chapter of the Gospels every day." But for you who neither smoke nor drink nor watch movies and TV, for you who go for daily Mass and read Gospels every day, for you, what is there to give up? The real question of lent is not so much, "What will I give up for lent?" but rather, "What do I wish to become as a result of lent?"

Lent is a time to investigate oneself and to realize that if we have walked away from Him, we need to return to Him, with a sense of repentance and with a heavy heart for all our sinfulness. Sin is the breaking of relationships with God (Adam and Eve), with others (Cain and Abel), and with self (tower of Babel). God continuously calls us to conversion and waits for us to return to Him like the father in the parable of the prodigal son. Or he runs after us like the hound of heaven in the poem of Francis Thompson. Lent invites each of us to make a self-examination and evaluate how we have walked away from God.

**a) Refusal to help those in need:** This beautiful time of lent is a time to acknowledge moments we have not even reached out, even to our family members, when we are needed most in their lives. The Lord has placed before us opportunities to do corporal works of mercy. We cannot ignore the pain and struggle of someone else and pretend to live a happy and contented life. The story of the Rich Man and Lazarus helps us to reflect: Mt. 25: 41-46; Lk. 16: 19f.

**b) Waste of Talents:** The season of lent invites everyone to see the numerous blessings we have wasted in our lives, to identify our talents. The Lord has blessed everyone according to his or her talents. Instead of thanking and being grateful to God for the numerous blessings we receive each day, like the man who got one talent, we look at someone else's gifts and blessings and waste our lives, we forget to live our lives to the fullest. The one who buried the talent is condemned. (Mt. 25.24-30).

**c) Unwillingness to Forgive:** The Lord asks each one of us to forgive the mistakes of others. We might examine the case of the one who received forgiveness from the king but was not able to grant pardon to the man who owed him only a hundred dinar. When others can deal with my shortcomings and frailties, why can't I forgive? (Mt. 18:21f).

**d) Pharisaism:** We can search for the times of pharisaic behavior in our lives, treating others as did the pharisees, pinpointing mistakes of someone else and finding happiness in doing so. One example is the parable of the tax collector and the publican. Lent is a time for all of us to acquire the habit of humility, not condemning others and despising them. (Lk. 18:11-12; Mt. 23:13f). **e) Refusal to accept:** Jesus explains this through the parable of the prodigal son. When the youngest son returns home, the father is ready to forgive him, rejoice, and makes a feast. Many are like the older son, waiting for opportunities to ditch others and keep on pecking on their mistakes. (Lk. 15: 25-32). Let us make use of this season of lent to examine ourselves. God does not keep track of our sins/evildoings (cf. Lk. 15:21f). But we ourselves do. Our guilty conscience torments us (Lady Macbeth, Herod). We punish ourselves. (Readiness to forgive and contrition are more important than whispering sins to the priest.) Readiness for a personal transformation is a necessary condition. (Zacchaeus, Lk. 19:8).

**First grief share meeting Feb.21<sup>st</sup>**  
Grief share is a network of 15,000+ churches worldwide equipped to offer grief and support groups, the program is a non-denominational and features biblical concepts for healing from your grief. Grief share is a support group that meets weekly. Three key parts to your grief share experience, a video seminar with encouraging, information-packed videos featuring leading grief recovery experts. A support group that discusses the weekly video content. And a workbook for journaling and personal study exercises that reinforce the weekly session topics. If interested the first meeting, of thirteen, is Wednesday February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, 2-3pm at St Patrick's Bldg. Parlor 190 N Main St, Heppner, OR. For more information contact Jerry Conklin, PMH Chaplain (541)-676-2946.

**Good News Only** by Doris Brosnan

Wow! Two weeks ago, the junior-high/high school pep-band members were a stellar feature at the basketball game with Irrigon: Outstanding music and a fantastic chanting section! How could it get any more impressive?! Last week, for the senior-night basketball game with Stanfield, the rafters in that packed gym might have been shaking as the elementary-school band members added their instruments and their loud cheers to the stands upstairs! Fantastic talent and energy! These musicians and instructor Brooke Baker are Good News for the music programs at our schools.

Maybe indicative of Ione's tight-knit community was the recent, sudden outbreak of twenty-five cases of Covid! The Good News is that nearly all of those victims are now testing negative and able to reengage in the social fabric of their community! They and other Ione citizens have just received an online update from the high-school building committee that indicates that the plan is on track, all is well. Those committee members understand the need for communication with their public.

Terry and Karen Thompson recently returned from a two-week stay on Kona. The weather was perfect for them as they relaxed and enjoyed their sightseeing, the highlight of which was South Point, the southernmost point in the USA. Two weeks later, Thompsons returned to Heppner's 40- and 50-degree weather (even another skiff of snow last Saturday!), "always feels good to get home," Karen reports, "And we were happy we missed the earthquake that happened right after we left!" Good News, indeed!

Returning last Sunday early enough to catch the Super Bowl on TV while she rested from her three-day trip north and east: Diana Ball travelled to the TriCities on Friday AM, running an errand, and then meeting up with grandson Jake for continued travel to Spokane. There they joined Jake's parents, Duane, and Stephanie Ball, enjoyed dinner together and with the star of the weekend's visit, Jake's sister, Alison. On Saturday, all eyes were on Alison as she competed in Whitworth University's last indoor track meet held in their "Podium" facility. Time then remained for a little shopping and dinner. On Sunday, as Diana started home, she stopped at a Richland store and was pleasantly surprised to encounter Tresslyn McCurry, who was to meet up with her mom, Tiffany Clement, in the store. A nice surprise, a thoroughly pleasant time with family, certainly Good News for Diana.

The City Maintenance Crew were quick to brush away the gravel that had been put on the street corners and inclined streets for safety during the more hazardous weather! Kudos again for your care of our community. The removal is good news for windshields!

"It's a blessing, really," says District Attorney Justin Nelson when asked about his new assistant. Justin was fortunate to have an assistant for ten years before that person left and Justin had to face the challenge of replacing him for our rural setting. The wait has not been as long as feared, however, and Justin now has Greg Goebel in the position. Greg comes from Grant County most recently and brings several years of experience in a variety of law practice.

Some young couples might want to mark April 6 on their calendars, which will offer some Good News for couples: An evening out, at the St. Patrick Parish Hall, an evening of fine dining, games, and speaker. More information will become available.

Remember: just a few minutes can inform and entertain in a positive setting! A note to [dbrosnan123@gmail.com](mailto:dbrosnan123@gmail.com) or a call to 541-223-1490 can make a positive difference for the Gazette Times readers.

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

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