

~ 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.

Keeping the streets clean

True confession: I goofed again recently when I failed to make sure I had "Dogi Pot" bags in my pocket when dogs and I went for our walk! (Tissues for my nose just don't work well.) This episode led me to think ahead, and in a way, our having three+ weeks to prepare for the St. Patrick's Day Celebration in Heppner is "Good News."

For various reasons, presenting our finest, most welcoming "face" to visitors during that celebration will be important to many of us, and we can, with a little bit of effort, enhance the impression we will make: Only a few steps to a garbage can will get out of sight the debris we might be tempted to just toss instead. (And we can even pick up and dispose of someone else's debris, following Dale Adlard's example?) And instead of leaving our dogs' messes when we're on the sidewalks and other public and private properties, just a few seconds can get those messes into bags and tossed into containers.

(Right now, many sidewalks require some careful footwork to miss messes; and I doubt that more rain or snow can eliminate those before A Wee Bit O' Ireland. Maybe some conscientious persons will remove them?)

We have Public Works employees who work at keeping our "home" looking good, but that does not eliminate our responsibility to clean up after ourselves. When our visitors and we are out and about – for instance: picnicking in our parks (weather permitting), just strolling Main Street, going to our museums, on the 5K walk, on the Memory Walk, going to the historic courthouse, touring the "talking rocks," following the walkabout with the sidewalk shamrocks, playing on the outdoor courts, etc. – doing so in Heppner's litter-free environment could be a pleasant experience for all of us and our visitors.

"Common courtesy" is what a friend recently called doing little but important things because we know they are the right thing to do.

(Yes, I have been remiss in my dog-owner responsibility a few times but am determined to always be well-supplied with doggie bags when we go for our walks!)

Doris Brosnan from Heppner

THE POEM

I recently posted one of my poems on social media. Oh, my goodness.... a number 10 sized can of worms opened up. I'm an intolerant bigoted white supremacist ignorant hater...and a bad poet too (that one kinda hurt). I don't know why I didn't see that coming. Am I devastated? Nope. But I am scratching my head trying over the response. This poem was called "Better Days". It was a reminiscent look at the good ol' days I grew

up in...sort of an "I Miss Mayberry" Theme. But one would think I was mourning the loss of Attila the Hun. I guess you had to be there. Maybe we have a generation that doesn't know what "normal" is. They figure America was a disaster.... until they arrived on scene. Probably a result of the new history class rhetoric. Now they're here to set us all straight with a whole new moral code. Love is tolerance, skin color is key, criminals are victims, LGBTQ are heroes, Christians (and Trump lovers) are evil, there is no such thing as evil, God, or truth...and that's the truth. This new morality is a badge of honor you are to display proudly while demanding others salute you. Well, here's what I have to say about that....

1) Love does not equal tolerance. It points out destructive behavior. It's not loving to watch someone head over a cliff and not warn them. 2) Our skin color doesn't make us special. God does...we're special because He loves us and made us unique. Stop dividing people by things that don't matter. 3) Criminals create victims. Excusing the crimes they commit doesn't help anyone, including them. Punishment works better. 4) Demanding I celebrate your sexual behavior is ridiculous... especially when God calls it sin. Stop bullying people. 5) Christians are human... sinners just like you. The difference between them and you is repentance. Jesus saves.... when you ask. 6) I fear we will all see the reality of evil, the power of God, and the real truth very soon.

We are playing into Satan's hands. The new batch or moral laws are only causing his agenda to prosper. To be fair, it's not just the younger generation that's the problem. After all, it's what the older generation is teaching them. We're all responsible for letting this stuff seep in. Is there hope for this generation? For America? If you study the Bible, you know what's coming and you're watching prophecy unfold. Though I'm tempted to hole up somewhere on a mountain and watch it all happen...that's not what God has called Christians to do. No matter what...we are to stand for righteousness. Watch, pray, and tell people about Jesus...even when they bash our poems and leave us inappropriate laughing emojis.

"But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, ⁴ treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people." ² Timothy 3:1-5

By Susie Crosby from Prineville

Spiritually Speaking
Father Thankachan Joseph



LISTEN & BE TRANSFORMED

The season of lent is an invitation for all of us to move from our old nature to a new way of living – to have that wonderful experience like the disciples. This Sunday's scripture readings take us to the mountains to have communion with the Father. Abraham, the father of faith, is tested on Mount Moriah and proves his unconditional love for his heavenly father. Similarly, in the transfiguration scene on Mount Tabor, the Heavenly Father reveals the Son Jesus as His beloved.

In Genesis (22: 1-2. 9-18, 26), Abraham was tested and remained faithful to God. Abraham was willing to observe God's plan in his life, even when God asked for something very dear to him, his only son to be sacrificed on Mount Moriah. God's telling Abraham to offer his only son prefigures how God would later offer His own son for our salvation. Abraham was ready and willing to give everything for God, even his only son. Is it true with you and me? Are we willing to give up anything for the Lord? The sacrifice of Abraham teaches us that he was attentive to the word of God and obeyed God's command and that he trusted God. There is no place for selfishness in one's life with God. This must help us to pause and to ask God: "Please Lord, what must I do to make You happy?" The answer is simple: We must be ready to listen to God and to do what He asks us to do, as Abraham did.

Our second reading is very encouraging because it is full of hope, especially during this season of Lent. Paul in his letter to the Roman (8: 31-34), offers us three assurances: When God is with us, who can be against us; when God is on our side there is no opposition; there is no condemnation and no separation." Through the second reading, Paul urges us to die to our sins through our Lenten observances and practices of mortification, almsgiving, prayer, fasting, etc.

The Gospel for this second Sunday of Lent is one of the accounts of the Transfiguration of the Lord (Mk 9: 2-10). The transfiguration scene begins with Jesus climbing the mountain with Peter, James, and John, and He is being transformed in front of them: His clothes become white and His face radiant. Christ is revealed through His transfiguration as the Son of God. The only thing that God demands from us is to "Listen to him!" If we listen to Christ, we shall be successful in our journey with Him this season.

For us Oregonians it is very easy to imagine the transfiguration scene of the Lord after each heavy snowfall. The recent snow falls of January and February brought to my mind the scene of transfiguration, Jesus with his three apostles who had the wonderful experience on Mount Tabor. It is surely good for us to have this mountain experience, to draw close to one another and to Christ. Once we spend that time in communion with the Heavenly Father, when we listen to Christ and experience Him there up on the mountain, it will be like that of Peter, who forgets himself and thinks of others only. Though Peter tells the Lord it is nice to be there up on the mountain, Christ brings them down the mountain to live a life of heavenly call, like Abraham.

Once when we listen to Him, the Transfiguration should give us inspiration and hope. In our daily life we encounter problems, difficulties, tribulations, and trials. But in the midst of all these, we are reminded that the Lord we are following is a victorious Lord, the beloved Son of the Father. All our troubles in this world are momentary. Our final destiny is glory, victory, and eternal happiness. It is like reading a novel in which the happy ending is already known to us. No matter how difficult the problems that the main characters in the novel encounter, we are not discouraged because we know the story will have a happy ending. We know that with Jesus, our happy ending is certain. So, Paul said, "The sufferings of the present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed in us" (Rom 8:18). Sufferings are part of our lives, especially as we closely follow the Crucified Lord. The zeal with which we have begun all our Lenten observances will take us forward to achieve our victory.

MCHD Press Release

-Continued from PAGE ONE
required to safely provide ambulance service. MCHD cannot agree to a brief extension period because this does not provide stability to the community or staff.

Our EMS personnel have been dealing with uncertainty in their jobs since the 2021 ASA Plan was repealed in April of 2023. Our crews are exceptionally dedicated, but they are also real people that have bills, families, and obligations they need to consider. Many have sought employment elsewhere due to the considerable uncertainty and looming end date. An extension of 90 more days is not enough to ask these employees to put their plans on hold or to recruit new staff. Is there a way for MCHD and Morrow County to immediately resolve the situation? Yes. MCHD has proposed a draft ambulance service contract. At any time, Morrow County could engage in negotiations with MCHD and could immediately execute this contract. This does not require a lengthy process of any kind because both entities are public entities and ORS CH190 allows us to execute an intergovernmental agreement for the benefit of the public. Attached is a legal explanation of this process. Why does Morrow County Health District want to be the ambulance service provider for the entire county? MCHD provides ambulance services to all of Morrow County in a coordinated manner.

There are two ambulances in Boardman and two in Irrigon. These locations cross cover, meaning that if an ambulance goes

out in Boardman, the ambulance in Irrigon is prepared to respond and vice versa. Both stations can mobilize a second crew as needed. There are some circumstances, such as extreme weather, when all four ambulances are in service and Quick Response Teams are mobilized as backup. This works seamlessly because the crews use an app called Active 9-1-1, which allows instant communication with all EMS personnel. To serve Heppner, Lexington, and Ione, there are two ambulances in Heppner and one in Ione. Quick Response Teams are formally established in Ione, Lexington, and remote parts of Heppner. Using Active 9-1-1, a total of three ambulances can be mobilized and Quick Response Teams can be mobilized as backup. The number of transports in Boardman, Irrigon, and Heppner are typically about the same: in FY 2023, Boardman had 336 transports, Irrigon had 323 transports, and Heppner had 293 transports.

MCHD's response times are better than the National averages and are significantly better than the response times required by the local Ambulance Service Area Plan. We are concerned that splitting up the ambulance service area will result in less coordinated services and increased response times, particularly if a service provider is responsible for staffing both ambulance and fire simultaneously.

Morrow County Health District is always happy to respond to public inquiries, which can be directed to community@mocoehd.org



BUCKNUM'S TAVERN
146 N Main Street
Heppner
541-676-5274

Lunch & Dinner Menu
Specials 2/22 - 2/28

Thursday - Chipotle Beef Taco with chips
Friday - Popcorn Chicken Mashed Potato bowl
Saturday - Seafood Platter with cup of clam chowder
Monday - Beef Nachos covered in nacho cheese
Tuesday - Grilled ham & cheese w/ broccoli cheddar soup
Tuesday Night - 2-9pm \$2 hard shell tacos
Wednesday - Chicken plus with Mac n cheese

Congratulations Heppner District Champion Wrestlers!

Good Luck at the State Tournament February 22 and 23 at Portland Memorial Coliseum



Zach Brown



Jaime Cavan



Landon McMahon

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**124 N. MAIN STREET
HEPPNER OR (541) 676-9481**

