

~ 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.

Dear Mr. Sykes,
I feel like I am probably alive today because I was in Heppner a week ago. As you know, I have long maintained a home in both rural McMinnville and one in the town of Heppner. Fortunately, I was in Heppner when my Apple Watch sent me a message that I was showing signs of "AFib" and I should see a Dr. as soon as possible. I didn't feel weak enough to call the ambulance and yet I did not think I should be driving. Call to a neighbor and Marda Adlard came to drive me to the Emergency Room. The emergency staff promptly took me in and spent the next five hours on Feb.26th treating me. After Dr.Evert was assured that I had an appointment with my physician in McMinnville, I was able to walk out with new care instructions and prescriptions from Murrays.

My family came this past weekend and brought me home to the farm in McMinnville where I expect to celebrate my 88th birthday on March 6.

Some of the folks in town are worried that Heppner Hospital may have to close. I certainly hope that never happens. I have met folks who grew up in Heppner, went away for their working career, and came home to retire, where they knew they would get good care. That good care is often lacking in larger places.

If you're ever feeling unwell, I hope you are close to Heppner Hospital. Jean Opheim

Of God and Goats

Some things bring about a little heavier thought process than one would think. I'm a farm lady. So dealing with sick critters shouldn't be foreign to me.... like spending the last 24 hours trying to keep a baby goat alive. Her mama's pregnancy slipped by me, and the birth timing was not ideal. Snow on the ground and freezing temps gave her a pretty rough start. So, I gathered all the right stuff for well-kid care.... electrolytes, colostrum, a heating pad, snuggles, encouraging words....and much prayer. In just a few hours, she went from circling the drain to up and standing well enough for mama to give her some undivided attention. Yes! Mission accomplished. Not so. In the course of a day, she went from miracle recovery mode to heading down the drain again several times. It finally became apparent to me that she was serious about leaving this world and I watched her breath her last. In the course of her care and snuggles, I had time to look at her intently. The detail of her furry coat was beautiful... brown, white, and black swirls. I thought of how unique the pattern was and how there was most likely no other little goat just like her. As I watched her take her last few breaths, I wondered.... why did God bother to create this little gal just to let her die? And did all my well-meaning efforts make her time here more miserable? Should I have just let "nature take its

course" and walked away? But every life deserves a chance, right?

My thoughts went to some difficult times when I watched patients in their final moments. Why them? Why now? I don't understand how God thinks. I once heard a doctor ask a patient ... if something were to happen...did they want to be resuscitated? Their response was a nonchalant "no". I wanted to grab them and say "WAIT! Do you know what you're saying?! You can't do that!" Yes. They can....and they do. But what if God has other plans? Does He just shake his head and say, "Oh well...nothing I can do now." Or is He able to bring about life even when we see certain death? And what's the criteria for that?

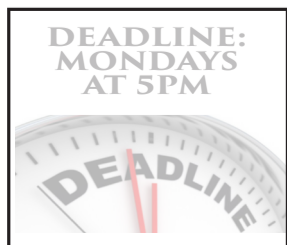
I don't have all the answers...or hardly any, really. But I do know this.... there are people alive today who "should" never have made it. And there are people that aren't here today that "should" be. The certainty of death is real. Closing our eyes and pretending it isn't doesn't change that. At some point, life here ends for all of us. I've heard the saying "when we die, we're dirt". I don't believe that. My response to that is then why are we here? Why do we think, or feel? Why do all the intricacies of life work together so that we can exist? There is a God. And there is a reason why you're here. Find out what it is...today.....please.

"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:9
Susie Crosby
Prineville, OR

New shelter fees

As a pet lover and concerned citizen, it has been brought to my attention. There is a time-sensitive event that the community should be aware of. The Oregon Department of Agriculture is considering a fee increase for animal shelters/ rescues from the current flat rate of \$375 per year to a per-animal scale that could cost as much as \$2,200 per year! Thanks to human neglect and abuse, there already aren't enough shelters/ rescues in operation, and this outrageous fee hike will put many of them out of business. If you would like to weigh in on this you have until March 15, 2024, @ 5 PM. ODA is accepting public comment via email at: animalrescue@oda.oregon.gov, or you can write to ODA 635 Capital St. NE Salem, OR 97301. Please accept my gratitude for responding to this unjust rate hike. If the shelter shuts down in Hermiston there will be no place to send stray and lost pets! We have enough problems with the cats! What will our town look like without some semblance of animal control?

Glorene Wright from Heppner, Oregon



Spiritually Speaking

Father Thankachan Joseph



DARKNESS TO LIGHT

We had begun the Lenten practices with the theme to turn away from sin and turn towards God. During the second week we reflected mostly on listening to the Lord and being transformed. The third Sunday we were told that Lenten observances is a time to get rid of our bodily cravings, worldly pleasures, attachments, etc.; in simple terms, to destroy and rebuild in Christ as a new being. This Fourth Sunday of Lent is always known as the laudate Sunday, a time for rejoicing. Rejoice in the Lord! We rejoice because we have made it halfway through Lent! In the Gospel, John says that when the light of Christ came into the world there were some who did not welcome it. Why not? Because their deeds were evil, and they were afraid the light would expose them. How do we respond to the light of Christ?

In the first reading, Chronicles (36:14-16, 19-23), we reflect on the compassion and patience of the Lord God. It was because of their sins that God allowed His people to be exiled to Babylon. The last chapter of 2nd Chronicle ends with the note of hope. The kingdom of Judah's last days, which follow the exile to Babylon and the return to Jerusalem, are depicted in this fourth Sunday's first reading. The reason for the exile was that the princes of Judah, the priests, and the people added infidelity to infidelity, practicing all sorts of abominations and polluting the Lord's temple – the causes of their downfall. The Israelites did not obey the prophets and everything was destroyed. God sent them all into exile in Babylon as servants to the king of the Chaldeans and their sons. God never abandoned them but rather disciplined them for a while to show them their powerlessness without His hand in their lives. The people of Israel were redeemed by the Persian King Cyrus. Similarly, if we turn away from the Lord, He will not abandon us. He will let us go our own way and use that opportunity to discipline us so that we may come to the realization that we, too, are helpless without His Divine Providence. The reading invites all believers to realize one's own mistake and return to the Lord.

The Gospel of the day from John (3:14-21) has two parts. The first part offers a passion prediction of Jesus in the Johnine way: "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up" (3:14). Jesus speaks of how salvation comes through crucifixion; similarly, our bodily fasting and Lenten practices leads us all to new creation in Christ. In the conversation with Nicodemus in today's Gospel, Jesus refers to an incident reported in the Old Testament. When the Israelites grumbled against the Lord during their sojourn in the desert, God sent venomous serpents to punish them for their complaints. The Israelites repented and asked Moses to pray for them. The Lord heard Moses's prayer and instructed him to make a bronze serpent and mount it on a pole. All who had been bitten by a serpent and then looked upon the bronze serpent were cured. By recalling this story, Jesus alludes to the salvation that would be accomplished through His death and Resurrection.

The second part of today's Gospel is a theological reflection on Jesus's words to Nicodemus. In these reflections, John elaborates on a number of themes that are found in His Gospel: light and darkness, belief and unbelief, good and evil, salvation and condemnation. In John's reflection, we find an observation about human sinfulness. Jesus is the light that has come into the world, but people prefer the darkness. We wish to keep our sins hidden, even from God. The gospel reflections conclude with these words: "People have preferred darkness to light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everyone who does wrong hates the light and avoids it." This causes us to pause for a short examination of ourselves. Whose side are we taking? Do we prefer light or darkness? During this fourth week, the Lord is inviting every one of us to get rid of the works of darkness and live as children of the day. I am reminded of the words of Paul's letter to the Romans: "Let us conduct ourselves properly, as people who live in the light of day – no orgies, or drunkenness, no immorality or indecency, no fighting or jealousy" (Rom 13:13).

6th Grade Drama Class to Perform March 14th

The Heppner Elementary School's 6th grade has been working on a play performance of "Disorder in the Court" since October and is pleased to perform for the school and the community on Thursday, March 14th at 2 pm and 7 pm.

"Disorder in the Court" is a farcical comedy where an unsuspecting tourist in an outrageous town gets

involved in a murder trial.

This is the first time these kids have ever had the experience of a stage performance and they have an amazing amount of natural talent. We may see many of them in the future with junior high and high school drama.

The play will be held at Elementary school gym

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:

MONDAY AT 5:00 P.M.

OLD TIMERS' NIGHT
Thursday, March 7th
Dinner at 6:00pm/Lodge at 8:00
Steak, Salad, Roasted Potatoes,
Asparagus, Bread & Dessert
prepared by Kim Coil



HEPPNER ELKS 358
676-9181 "Where Friends Meet" 142 North Main

Good News Only by Doris Brosnan

This Sunday at 4 PM, in a FREE concert at the Gilliam and Bisbee Building, the Inland Northwest Chorale will perform several selections, accompanied by instrumental ensembles of NW Orchestra members. From personal knowledge, some locals are guaranteeing an impressive performance by these area volunteer voices and instrumentalists. G&B's space is large and inviting for attendees of this splendid entertainment.

Last week, Allen and Nancy Anderson traveled to Elgin to celebrate Nancy's sister's "21st" birthday... such a youngster! (She is a leap-year baby.) The Andersons had "a great visit with her family."

Kudos, Ken Grieb!! Last Saturday at the State 2A Basketball Championships, Jim Kindle had orchestrated, to Ken's surprise, acknowledgment of Ken's 25 years of announcing the games at this competition, presenting him with an OSAA-reps-signed photograph of Ken behind the announcer's stand, with their thanks for his dedication and excellent announcing job. Jim has been traveling with Ken to Pendleton for the last few years, as both are needed for announcing games in two locations. Also true for several years, busy at the announcing stand working with the stats were familiar past-Heppner faces of Joyce and Randy Hughes and their daughter, Jaci Drigen, whose son Tyrone was with her.

Last weekend, as previously reported, Hunter Nichols traveled with the EOU track and field team to the NAIA indoor championships in South Dakota. Hunter ran the 1000- and 3000-meter races. Not realized earlier is that Madelyn Nichols, who also attends EOU, also traveled to SD. Madelyn ran in the 4x800 relay. They might have been surprised to see another HHS graduate at the event: Hannah Finch also ran in the 4x800 relay with her team from Vanguard University of Costa Mesa, CA. Hannah is a sophomore at Vanguard, majoring in film-making. Impressive – three outstanding runners so many miles from HHS!

Kim Coil reports that after much planning, Lance and Larry Tibble generously donated their family home to Heppner Community Foundation in mid-February. HCF will do some deferred maintenance and refreshing and offer the home as a short-term rental to the Morrow County Health District as they need it (this was the priority request from the Tibbles family), and, secondly, as a short-term rental to others. The Home is in nearly pristine condition and will offer guests a step back in time, as most of the original characteristics and furnishings will be used. This gift to Heppner will help preserve an important part of history - when Dr Tibbles served our community. Beth Dickenson's HHS students are going to help with yard work and landscaping to revive the yard.

A Wee Bit O' Ireland must surely be just around the corner, as evidenced by more and more green things showing up, the intersection shamrock being repainted, the work of Patti Matheny, Susan Hisler, and Sandra Ward Rice being distributed in strategic places for the Remembrance Walk. They spent time yesterday sorting the 800+ shamrocks that would be reappearing this year, and more shamrocks will be added this year.

My "trap area," wherever it is, must be lookin' better than it used to, and until Bev Harris (on Primetime Fitness) told me, I didn't even know I have obliques! (I plan to search for them.)

Positive tidbits will continue to offer GT readers a pleasant break from less positive news as long as contributions are shared, and you can help this happen by sending yours to dbrosnan123@gmail.com or calling 541-223-1490.

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

Tiller's Folly

On Saturday, March 16th, Canadian sensation, Tiller's Folly, will be performing at the Gilliam & Bisbee Event Center at 7:30 pm. This is a free concert with funding provided by the Morrow County Unified Recreation District (MCURD). For over twenty-five years, Tiller's Folly has been uniting the past with the present as modern-day storytellers of lore, singing the West's pioneer history to life. From the outset, Tiller's Folly aspired to create acoustic music that

is thoughtful, progressive, yet timeless in nature. Music that is representative of their Pacific Coastal home. They set out to preserve a measure of the West's colonial heritage in stories & songs. Drawing influence from Scottish, Irish, and Maritime Music traditions, Tiller's Folly has continued to expand and refine their potent blend of Pacific Canadiana, and 'beyond.' Attendees will be entered into a raffle to win a \$250 cash prize, provided by MCURD and Murray's Drug!

LIVE @ THE GILLIAM & BISBEE
3 / 16
7 : 30 P M

TILLER'S FOLLY

ATTENDEES WILL BE ENTERED TO WIN A \$250 RAFFLE PRIZE AT THE EVENT!!!

FREE ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED BY MCURD