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of the City of Heppner and the County of Morrow

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For Obituaries: Obituaries are published in the Heppner GT at no charge and are edited to meet news guidelines. Families wishing to include information not included in the guidelines or who wish to have the obituary written in a certain way must purchase advertising space for the obituary.
For Letters to the Editor: Letters to the Editor MUST be signed by the author. The Heppner GT will not publish unsigned letters. All letters MUST include the author's address and phone number for use by the GT office. The GT reserves the right to edit letters. 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 \$16

Spiritually Speaking
Father Thankachan Joseph



Anointed with the Spirit of the Lord

We have just witnessed the inauguration of the President of America. When the parties contest for the election, each political denomination has its agendas to propose to humanity at large; we can call it the election manifesto of the political alliances.

This Sunday, we are reminded of our Christian fellowship with the rest of humanity in bringing about a change for the better in the lives of the poor. Jesus initiated this process in a Jewish Synagogue by means of proposing a missionary agenda of "bringing the good news to the poor."

Jesus proposes the kingdom of peace, joy and concern for everyone. As a preparation for this Sunday, let us examine our own personal agendas, and see if they are in consonance with what Jesus has initiated.

Jesus's life was all about change. He came to change the world, to teach us how to do a better job of loving God and loving our fellow human beings. His mission was oriented to this concept: He changed sinners by forgiving them and telling them to live good lives. He changed the lives of everyone who encountered Him. (In changing water into wine, he invites us to be His partners in transforming the world with Kingdom values.)

In his opening preface (1:1-4) Luke tells us why he wrote the Gospel. It was to explain to Theophilus, probably a Roman official, what Christianity was all about. The name "Theophilus" is a Greek name meaning "one who loves God." Theophilus could represent many non-Jewish characters, real as well as fictitious, in Luke's Gospel—like Zacchaeus, the Good Samaritan, the repentant publican who stood in the temple along with the proud Pharisee and many others. Theophilus could also represent each one of us today, as we hear Jesus presenting His "missionary agenda" at the beginning of His Nazareth ministry.

Have you ever tried to explain to someone what Christianity is all about, especially that which you profess and live? Many people think that Christianity is all about sin and judgment, heaven, and hell, and that God is a divine sheriff who is always monitoring our movements, writing down all our sins in His book and waiting to throw us into hellfire as soon as He catches up with us. The Evangelist Luke sees it all differently. For him to follow Christ has more to do with God's care, concern, love, empathy, and mercy than with punishment. That is why, in telling Theophilus about the Christian faith, Luke finds the incident in the synagogue in Nazareth extremely useful.

People who initiate a revolution usually start off with a declaration of their manifesto. Karl Marx started by publishing the "Communist Manifesto." Martin Luther started with the publication of the ninety-five theses in Wittenberg, Augsburg. Jesus has come to start a revolution of mercy, empathy, concern, compassion and love towards the marginalized and the downtrodden of society.

In this Sunday's Gospel reading, Luke announces the Christian manifesto: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:18-19).

In these few words we see in a nutshell how Jesus, in Luke, understands His mission in the world. What is Jesus's work? It is "to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Now, what is the significance of the statement, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me?" From the Gospel we know that the Spirit of God guides the whole life of Jesus.

Remember, when Jesus was conceived, it was by the Holy Spirit. When Jesus was baptized, the Spirit descended upon Him as a dove. The Spirit led Him day after day to a ministry of healing and the forgiveness of sin. After the resurrection, Jesus promised the same Spirit to His disciples. At Pentecost He bestowed them with the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2: 1-4). Our faith affirms that the Church founded by Him continues to live in the presence of the Spirit. So, all of us are called to be the Spirit-filled witnesses of Christ.

Buyer beware: Oregon DMV warns of potential vehicle and dealership scams

SALEM—Oregon Driver and Motor Vehicles Services is warning Oregonians about a new scam using fake Manufacturer Certificates of Origin to obtain titles for stolen vehicles.

An MCO is a document that certifies the original ownership of a vehicle. It's issued by the manufacturer when a vehicle is produced and contains information like the make, model, year and vehicle identification number.

Crooks are creating fake VINs that appear to be legitimate and adding them to counterfeit Manufacturer Certificates of Origin created by either altering printed information on a genuine certificate or by creating a completely fake version downloaded from the internet.

A fake certificate often lists the manufacturer's name and an out-of-state dealer or distributor as the first buyer.

To determine if your VIN is legitimate, you should:

1. Run the VIN through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recall site. This will show if the VIN on the certificate is one issued by the manufacturer. If no VIN is found, you will get an error message meaning the VIN was not issued by that manufacturer. This search is free.
2. Research the vehicle history through the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System, a consumer protection database that provides title information from states

across the country. Only use an approved National Motor Vehicle Title Information System data provider. These sites will generally charge a nominal fee.

If you suspect a certificate or VIN is fraudulent, Oregon DMV recommends you contact the dealer that originally purchased the vehicle from the manufacturer (listed as the buyer on the back or distributor on the front of the certificate) to determine if the vehicle transaction, certificate and VIN are genuine.

If the dealer or distributor cannot confirm they purchased the vehicle from the manufacturer, the certificate is probably fake.

If you're buying a vehicle from someone other than a certified dealer, always take a photo of the seller's identification and get their contact information. If they have another vehicle, write down or take a photo of the plate on that vehicle.

Oregon DMV is also warning of fraudulent dealerships being set up, giving the appearance of being a legitimate certified dealer.

The DMV website provides a look-up tool to verify if the business is a certified dealer DMV strongly urges you to check the website before doing any business with a vehicle dealer in Oregon. You should also verify the person you are dealing with is an employee of the dealership.

For more information, visit Oregon DMV's dealer web page.

DMV customers can also ask questions by calling 503-945-5000.

Obituaries

Harold Holly Holtz



Harold Holly Holtz

Harold Holly Holtz, 95, died Jan. 10, 2025. Funeral services will be held at the Ione Community Church in Ione on Saturday, Jan. 25, at 11 a.m. with a concluding graveside at Ione Cemetery to follow.

Harold was born Feb. 14, 1929, on the family farm near Northgate, ND, the second son of Clarence and Laura (Wolkenhauer) Holtz.

The family moved to

Grandview, WA in 1934. Then, in 1946, they moved to the farm in Ione. Except for a couple years in the Army, Harold continued to live on the farm for 76 years.

Harold married Irene Grant on June 4, 1960, in Hermiston.

Harold is survived by his wife Irene, son Tim (Debbie), daughter Tamara (Mike) Bernard and by his grandson Daniel Holtz.

He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Elmer, and his sister Mary Kirkelie.

Memorial contributions can be made to Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Hermiston.

Sweeney Payton Mortuary has been entrusted with the arrangements. Please leave your condolence messages for the family at Sweeney Payton Mortuary (sweeneypayton-mortuary.com).

BEO reports 2024 earnings

Bank 'going strong' entering 2025

Heppner—BEO Bancorp (OTCBB:BEOB) and its subsidiary, Bank of Eastern Oregon, announced consolidated year-end 2024 earnings of \$16,489,000. Total assets were \$867.6 million, net loans \$580.0 million, and deposits \$770.9 million.

BEO President and CEO Jeff Bailey said the bank is pleased with 2024, noting that a one-time non-recurring collection related to a legacy problem credit contributed approximately \$950,000 after taxes. "Even without this, 2024 would still be our best net income in the history of our bank," Bailey said.

Chief Financial Officer Mark Lemmon reported shareholder equity increased 26.1%, with Return on Average Equity at 22.71% and Return on Average Assets at 1.91%. "Earnings per share were \$13.40, and we paid our highest dividend ever at \$1.25 per share," Lemmon said. "Book value per share increased 24.6%, ending at \$65.09."

Chief Operations Officer Becky Kindle noted deposits decreased 0.7%, which she called "a day's swing in activity." She added that the bank opened a Pendleton branch in De-

cember 2024, expanding services in a market where they've had a loan production office since 2012.

Chief Lending Officer John Qualls reported 11.1% growth in the loan portfolio, driven primarily by newer markets. Chief Credit Officer Ed Rollins said lower commodity prices in grains and hay are leading to tighter margins in the ag portfolio. "As a prudent measure, and with realized loan growth, we added \$700,000 to our allowance for possible credit losses," Rollins said. "Cattle prices continue to amaze. The weather has been decent with above-normal snowpack and welcome rains."

Bailey noted that, in addition to paying its highest dividend ever, BEO paid down \$3.7 million in subordinated debt in 2024 while growing capital. "We are quite pleased with the bank's earnings, but the financial stability of our institution is even more noteworthy," he said, adding that 2025 marks BEO's 80th anniversary. "While other banks in our trade area have consolidated or sold out, we are going strong."

Upcoming Events

Jan 24th, Feb 7th, Feb 21st Mar 7th Music by Joe & Andrew Lindsay w/Western Dance Lessons. Dinner is off the menu. Dinner hours 5 to 8 Music at 7:30.

Feb 9th Super Bowl Party. Bring your favorite finger food or snack. Lodge opens at 2pm.

Feb 15th Elks Annual. Ladies Tea 2pm, Lodge 4pm, Prime Rib Dinner 6pm.

March 6th Old Timers Night

March 15th St. Patrick's Day. Cornbeef and Cabbage Dinner 5pm

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

Members and their Guest

BUCKNUM'S TAVERN
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Lunch & Dinner Menu
1/23 - 1/29

Thursday - Open faced chicken fried steak sandwich with mashed potatoes and gravy
Friday - Corn Chowder with a turkey deli sandwich
Saturday - Chicken Dumpling soup with salad & breadstick
Sunday closed
Monday - Teriyaki Chicken Bowl
Tuesday - Loaded Potato soup with grilled cheese
Wednesday - Tuna wrap with fruit

Did you know?

We are still giving FLU shots. February is typically peak for flu season. No appt. needed. We have a drug take back kiosk for expired or meds no longer needed. We have free sharp containers with a prepaid label to ship off for disposal. Medicare Part D has a payment plan for high copay drugs new for 2025.

We are open Sundays for espresso window only 9 am-2 pm

Don't forget the dinner and auction for the Barney Lindsay scholarship Saturday, January 26, 2025 beginning at 5:00 pm

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