

~ 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.

MOM

I lost my mom when I was 22. I wasn't prepared for that. She hadn't been feeling well for a year, but they told her it was just menopause, and she'd get over it. Well, it wasn't, and she didn't, at least not how they meant it. It was an abnormally small aorta that was causing years of heart damage and somehow, nobody noticed.

I don't remember being angry, but I do remember feeling cheated. She was 52. The older I get, the younger that gets and I still feel cheated, especially when I see others who still have their moms sitting at the restaurant chatting about their days, kids, and lives. Those gals have something I don't. They have the person who would die for them or is supposed to at least... no questions asked.

Had she lived, would we be having lunch together today? I don't know. At 22, even though I had been married a few years and already had a child, I really hadn't been an adult long enough to move from mom vs daughter to woman vs woman. I like to think we would.

Even though her life mainly consisted of raising five kids, my mom was no dummy. She had a wit that often went unappreciated and right over my young head. Due to quick reflexes and an Irish temper, there were a few other things that thankfully went right over my head, too. She wasn't a touchy-feely person. I didn't hear "I love you" too often. I wish I had. Maybe that's why I try not to miss an opportunity to tell my kids I love them. When I go, I may leave a lot undone,

but I don't want there to be any question about that.

So, am I angry at God for taking my mom? I could be. But then I'd have to be angry at Him for taking my two brothers, my dad, and my young brother-in-law. None of it seems very fair. But there are a lot of other people out there who have lost loved ones. Being mad at God because he took the ones, I loved doesn't make much sense. It's like being fine with the guy throwing rocks...until one hits you.

Is God up there randomly throwing rocks at us? I don't think so. One thing he's shown me in no uncertain terms is that He's there and loves me... even when I don't love him back. If He loves me, then He loves everyone else. He's taken from this life. He doesn't take death lightly and he knows what it's like to grieve.

Losing someone cuts deep into the heart. But blaming God doesn't help. What helps is trusting that God knows what he's doing even when we don't. He's got a plan...and its way better than anything we could come up with... because He's God, and we are not. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts". Isaiah 55:8,9

And why do I have hope? This.....

- "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

By Susie Crosby

Plan ahead for MS Walk April 26

Spring is a busy time for south Morrow County folks. Residents are inundated with spring sports—baseball, track, golf and softball—St. Patrick's activities; Easter activities; May Day activities; and all the frivolities that go along with them.

Here is a reminder for

another: The Heppner MS Walk on April 26. The walk will begin at 10 o'clock at Hager Park. The route is an easy mile walk through Heppner with stops along the way. This event ends with a special no-host meal at Bucknam's Tavern.

More information will follow closer to the date.

Heppner City Council meeting

-Continued from PAGE ONE meters, responded to three water leaks, did updates on GIS and master meter list, conducted an emergency water shutoff on Church St., raised three fire hydrants and burned a slash pile.

The sewer department cleaned contact basins, did four septic dumps, completed a recycled water report and submitted it to the DEQ, and checked a possible illegal sewer at a property.

The streets department removed Christmas decorations, fixed potholes behind the post office, fixed the May St. sidewalk and installed a small retaining wall, trimmed overhanging trees and fixed potholes on Morgan and Church streets

The parks department removed lights from Heritage Plaza, fixed one sink and replaced the other at the city park restroom, winterized the Hager Park

restroom and hauled away grass clippings. They also continued to help take care of the therapy pool for the park district.

Other departments hauled spoils, joined a walkthrough of the senior center to see if the city can help fix some minor problems, attended a meeting with the county courthouse architects on the location of water and sewer, replaced burned-out lights and attended the annual chamber luncheon.

City Manager John Doherty reported that he attended several meetings, including Port of Morrow, Heppner Housing Authority, GEODC, CHIP, LP-SCC and League of Oregon Cities. He also told the council he had held calls regarding housing development in Heppner, including infrastructure development, cluster homes, mass-timber projects and 3D print homes.

Camarillo at 100 A life of horses, hay, and hard work



Alex Shoeing



Alex and Mardelle



Alex with Mother and brother



Alex showing horses



Four generations of the Camarillo family were at Willow Creek Terrace for Alex Camarillo's 100th birthday. L-R: Ryan Mathieson, Tiana Mathieson (granddaughter), Sharon Camarillo, Clint Camarillo (son), Jennifer Adams (granddaughter), Stella Adams (great-granddaughter), Mike Adams. Front center: Alex Camarillo holding great-grandson Asher Mathieson. -Contributed photo

-Continued from PAGE ONE cept for a two-year interruption for World War II.

"Everybody at a certain age had to go," he said.

Drafted in 1944 at the age of 19, Camarillo was sent to basic training at Camp Hood in Killeen, TX. From there, he went to Boston and then Plymouth, England, before being sent on to Germany.

"That's where the main war was," he says. "We helped southern Russia for a little while, because they needed some help."

He was a truck driver in the army, mostly because he told the military that was something he could do.

"I told them I drove trucks, so I did. I wasn't very good at it," he quips. Even so, he drove in all kinds of situations, from carting groceries to feed to the troops to transporting ammunition to the front lines.

He was also stationed in La Havre, France for a time. There was some question about whether he would be sent to Japan, where his brother served as a paratrooper, but instead he was sent home, leaving the military in 1946 after a two-year tour of duty.

In fact, five of his older brothers also went overseas, all of them returning safely by the end of the war.

He returned to Santa Monica Cattle Ranch for a

oped what would become his lifelong career, shoeing horses.

"I always wanted to get into something," he says. "I learned from other guys. When they came to shoe horses, I'd shoe one foot."

His move from California to Oregon came in 1948. It wasn't meant to be a permanent move. He and some buddies were up north for a rodeo in Molalla, OR.

"I did not come here to stay. I ran into a nice guy who must have liked my work," Camarillo says.

That man was Raymond Bilyeu, and he convinced Camarillo to stay in Oregon and break horses for him. Camarillo stayed in Sheridan, OR for several years. He returned to California for a couple of years, but then returned in 1957 to settle in Carlton, OR.

It wasn't all horses and work during those decades, though. Camarillo married his first wife, Shirley Blanchard, and the couple had two children, Ed and Karen.

Later, Camarillo married his second wife, Mardelle Hancock. He adopted her two children from a previous marriage, Tom and Jeannie. The couple also had two children of their own, boys Clint and Neal.

Since that time, the family has grown to include three granddaughters and four great-grandkids.

It was Mardelle and their children who formed the soul of the Camarillo home and business. Camarillo grew a horseshoeing service that would eventually serve more than 2,000 customers around Oregon.

Mardelle did the book-keeping and paperwork, making appointments and laying them out for Camarillo every morning. Meanwhile, their sons recall being dragged out of bed and into a cold pickup at four in the morning to help their father heat the

forge.

"My dad was always a hot shoer," says son Clint. "He shaped them to the foot."

Camarillo stayed in the horseshoeing business for 48 years. He didn't give up his business and ranch in Carlton until after the passing of Mardelle in 2001. Even then, Clint says, his sons had work lined up for him in Ione when he moved here to be near family. He kept at it for another couple of years before finally hanging up his hammer and nails.

That was when he was in his 80s. Now, at the century mark, he doesn't seem to feel much older than he did then.

"I don't feel like I am," he says when asked how it feels to be 100, but then admits, "I'm falling apart little by little."

Camarillo says he never knew he was so famous, but his birthday wishes have been coming in from around the country. A note in the *Ruralite* magazine saw birthday cards pour in by the hundreds—along with a small gift from the Area 51 Birthday Groupies in Nevada.

And why not? While Camarillo may not feel famous, he's lived a famously quiet life that most can only dream of, with little room for artificial intelligence, but plenty of room for horse sense.

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Open Bottle Calf Showcase
Morrow County's
Littlest Cowpokes
 Calf Show: Calves must be under 5 months old
Sunday, March 9th, 2025
 Registration opens at 9:30, the show begins at 10:30 at the Morrow County Fairgrounds.
Itty-Bitties: Ages 2-5 Years
Little Cowhands: Ages 6-8 Years
The Hands: Ages 9-12 Years
Cow Boss: 13-16 Years
A time to enjoy good food, better company and foster the next generation of, cowpokes
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