

Speaking out ... it's #NotOkay

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
COMMUNITY EDITOR

I started writing this column last fall after the #NotOkay posts went viral on social media.

However, I never finished it. After seeing the recent #MeToo posts, I decided to pick up my pen again.

Both simple statements, they highlight issues surrounding sexual assault and sexual harassment. Mostly women have shared about their personal experiences as a way to show how prevalent the issues are and to empower themselves.

I've read recent reports that indicate one in three women have experienced sexual harassment at work. And, CBS news recently reported that an American is sexually assaulted every 98 seconds.

I don't think much about my personal experiences regarding sexual harassment. Even as a young girl I had a strong sense of self and felt comfortable in speaking up. I knew what was happening was wrong and immediately took action. Fortunately, the people I talked to listened — and responded appropriately.

When I was in college I did a paid summer internship in personnel man-

agement at J.C. Penney in Coos Bay. I worked in multiple departments, including the automotive/sporting center annex.

I was working at the sporting center when one of the automotive center employees, who was about my same age, came over and was talking to me. As he walked away, he grabbed my butt.

Shortly afterward, I headed up to the main store to talk to Bill, the store manager. As I shared about the encounter, I told him I wasn't even dressed provocatively.

That's the thing with inappropriate encounters, sometimes people want to blame the victim for what happened. However, Bill immediately said it didn't matter what I was wearing, it wasn't appropriate for the employee.

And that wasn't the first time I recall being faced with an inappropriate encounter.

That happened when I was in junior high. We were living in Phoenix, Oregon, and I was up the street visiting a friend.

My friend's step-dad had just had knee surgery and was sitting on the couch with his leg stretched on a footstool. My friend had gone into the kitchen to help her mom with dinner when her step-dad exposed himself to me. My

response was to give him a swift kick in the knee.

I recently had arthroscopic knee surgery and can't even imagine the excruciating pain that would cause. It's bad enough when one of our German shepherds accidentally bumps my foot or leg.

I understand sometimes people don't always feel comfortable in talking about inappropriate situations. While it wasn't related to sexual harassment, shortly after graduating from college I worked for an employer who had some questionable policies. I questioned a particular practice. However, it didn't change.

I needed the job at the time, so I continued working there but didn't follow the policy. While that wasn't the best way to deal with the situation, I did report it later.

As unfortunate as it is, sometimes we overlook things or remain silent due to the potential consequences. It is my hope that as more people speak out it will effect change — whether in Hollywood, our statehouses or hometowns.

Tammy Malgesini is the community editor. Her column, Inside my Shoes, includes general musings about life. Contact her at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539.



Tammy Malgesini
INSIDE MY SHOES

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1
"WHAT'S IN A LABEL: THINKING ABOUT DIVERSITY AND RACIAL CATEGORIES", 1 p.m., Oregon Higher Education Center, 975 S.E. Columbia Drive, Hermiston. Ann Su will conduct the conversation asking questions related to stereotypes, race as a form of labeling, and using language to increase understanding and connection. Free.

KIDS CLUB, 6:30-8 p.m., Hermiston Christian Center, 1825 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston. For ages 5-12. Includes open gym, games, prizes, snacks music, puppets and more. Transportation available. (Joanna Hayden 541-561-5573)

TOUR OF KNOWLEDGE, 7-8 p.m., Eastern Oregon Higher Education Center, 980 S.E. Columbia Drive, Hermiston. Discussion of public hearings, meetings and events relevant to the area, and reports on sites and facilities that impact natural resources and places of historical interest. Free and everyone welcome. (Eileen Laramore 541-303-3872)

OREGON TRAIL LIBRARY DISTRICT 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AND BOOK SIGNING EVENT, 7 p.m., SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. Celebrate the library district's 25th year and get signed copies of local authors' books. Free. (Stefanie Swindler 541-481-7243)

AN EVENING WITH RINKER BUCK, 7 p.m., SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. Buck will discuss and sign copies of his memoir "The Oregon Trail: A New American Journey," a recreation of a 2,000-mile covered wagon trip on the Oregon Trail in 2011. Copies of the book will be available for purchase. (Kathy Street 541-481-3365)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2
BOARDMAN SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Boardman Senior Center, 100 Tatone St., Boardman. Cost is

\$4 for seniors 55 and over or \$5 for adults. (541-481-3257)
HERMISTON SENIOR MEAL SERVICE, 12 p.m., Our Lady of Angels Catholic Church parish hall, 565 W. Hermiston Ave., Hermiston. Cost is \$4 for adults, free for children 10 and under, \$4 for Meals on Wheels. Extra 50 cents for utensils/dishes. Bus service to parish hall by donation. (541-567-3582)

SENSORY STORY TIME, 12:30 p.m., Boardman Public Library, 200 S. Main St., Boardman. For children from birth to age 4. (541-481-2665)

YARN CLUB, 5:30 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

THE ARC UMATILLA COUNTY BINGO, 6-10 p.m., The Arc Building, 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., seats may be held until 6:30 p.m., then all seats first come, first served; games begin at 7 p.m. Proceeds benefit Umatilla County citizens with developmental disabilities. 18 years or older, must have proof of age and photo I.D. Basic pot \$20, prizes range from \$20-\$750. (541-567-7615)

FIDDLERS NIGHT, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Brookdale Assisted Living, 980 W. Highland Ave., Hermiston. Enjoy light refreshments, listen to some favorite oldies or join in the jam session. All ages welcome. (541-567-3141)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3
FREE FRIDAY MEDICARE MADNESS, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Good Shepherd Medical Center, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. Get answers to Medicare questions and assistance with prescription plans and open enrollment. Oct. 27 and Nov. 10 session in conference rooms 5-6; all other dates in conference room 7. (541-667-3507)

STORY TIME, 10:15 a.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)
STORY AND CRAFT TIME, 2 p.m.,

Echo Public Library, 20 S. Bonanza St., Echo. (541-376-8411)
VFW BINGO, 6 p.m., Hermiston VFW, 45 W. Cherry St., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., games begin at 7 p.m. Everyone welcome. (541-567-6219)
"GAME OF TIARAS", 7 p.m., Hermiston High School fine arts auditorium, 600 S. First St., Hermiston. A combination of "Game of Thrones" with "King Lear" will leave you in stitches. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for senior citizens and \$5 for students, available at the door or in advance at the high school's bookkeeping office. May not be appropriate for younger children. (Beth Anderson 541-667-6100)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4
BREAKFAST, MINI BAZAAR AND QUILT SHOW, 7 a.m.-3 p.m., Stanfield Community Center, 225 W. Roosevelt, Stanfield. Breakfast including breakfast tacos from 7-10 a.m., cost is \$5 for full breakfast/\$3 for light meal. Bazaar and quilt show from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. (541-449-1332)
YARN CLUB, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

ECHO/STANFIELD FFA AUCTION AND DINNER, 5-9 p.m., Stanfield High School gym, 1120 N. Main St., Stanfield. Doors and the silent auction open at 5 p.m., program and dinner begin at 6 p.m., live auction begins at 7 p.m. Proceeds benefit Stanfield and Echo FFA students. (Brooke Vanderveen 541-376-8436)

NAVY BAND NORTHWEST IN CONCERT, 6:30-7:30 p.m., SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. Brass band will perform a diverse repertoire including jazz, New Orleans standards, funk and an assortment of popular cover songs arranged for these instruments. Free. (Stefanie Swindler 541-481-7243)

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