

COLUMN

The holidays aren't happy for everyone

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
NEWS EDITOR

When I was in college, I stopped liking Thanksgiving.

Growing up, the holiday represented time off school to spend with my family. We watched the Macy's parade, played our annual game of Monopoly and pigged out on a delicious spread of turkey, mashed potatoes and homemade rolls. After pie, we could officially start decorating for Christmas.

When I chose to go to college hundreds of miles away, things changed. Plane tickets were expensive and I didn't own a car, not to mention the roads between Utah and Oregon can be pretty sketchy in late November. So I stayed at school.

It was always my most homesick week of the year.

The first year, my aunt and uncle were visiting cousins who lived in town, and they graciously adopted me for the long weekend, but it was still difficult knowing that my parents and all of my siblings were together, celebrating our first major holiday apart.

The next year I didn't even have extended family in town, and I spent the break from classes on duty as a resident assistant in the mostly-empty freshman dorms.

Since then I've come to enjoy Thanksgiving again, but my time in college has helped me remember that for some people, the holidays are not a joyous time of year.

Some are temporarily separated from their loved ones by college, incarceration or military deployments. For others, the holidays make a lack of family painfully obvious. Some cry over the

Christmas presents they wish they could give their children but have no money for. Others are surrounded by family but feel dead inside as they grapple with grief, postpartum depression, abuse or physical pain.

Members of our community have stepped up to help people who struggle during the holiday season, from delivering gifts through Christmas Express to offering free community fellowship meals on Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Instead of arguing over whether to wish each other a "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Holidays" this year, let's all put that effort into actions that help make either sentiment true.

If you're blessed with people to share a holiday meal with, look around your church congrega-

tion or workplace to see who might be grateful for an invitation to join you. Think outside the box — you might be traveling on the actual holiday but maybe you know someone living alone who would enjoy the opportunity to help bake Christmas cookies or go see a concert.

If you're blessed with enough money for an abundance of gifts for family members, budget to buy items to donate to a local giving tree or a program like Good Shepherd Health Care System's 12 Days of Giving.

If you're blessed with a family to create holiday traditions with, consider traditions that spread happiness outside your family, such as delivering plates of goodies to neighbors or caroling at a nursing home.

If you're blessed with friends,

ask for their address and send them a handwritten Christmas card, or even just a nice text message telling them how much they mean to you.

And if the holidays are a really hard time of year for you, take care of yourself. Don't be too proud to accept an invitation or gift that will help. Know when to say "no" or "not this year," even if it means going against tradition.

Volunteer. Treat yourself. Exercise. Get some sun. Work extra shifts to keep yourself occupied. If spending the holidays visiting family actually makes you feel worse, not better, tell them you're not going to be able to make it this year. Only you know what will be best for your own mental health this time of year.

Here's to a happy ... whatever it is you're doing this time of year.

Historical society launches new heirloom-quality book

HERMISTON HERALD

A new hardcover pictorial history book, published by the *East Oregonian* in cooperation with several local partners, is being officially released this weekend.

The Umatilla County Historical Society will host a book launch for "Umatilla County Memories: A Pictorial History of the mid-1800s through 1939." The free event is Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Heritage Station Museum, 108 S.W. Frazer Ave., Pendleton.

"This book is beautifully put together and I'm so honored to have been a part of the project," said Kari Brooks, executive director of Umatilla County Historical Society. "The release date is so perfect to pick up as many copies as you need for Christmas gifts."

The heirloom-quality coffee table style book features a glimpse of Umatilla County from the 1800s to 1939 through stunning historic photos — many of them never before published. The book features historic photos from the Umatilla County Historical Society, Athena Public Library, city of Echo, Milton-Freewater Area Historical Society, Pendleton Round-Up, Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute, as well as from local newspaper readers.

Copies of the limited edition book will be available in the Heritage Station gift shop the day of the launch. The 10% off November Sale in the museum gift shop gives members an additional 10% off through Nov. 30. For more information, call 541-276-0012 or visit www.heritagestationmuseum.org.



Courtesy Milton-Freewater Area Historical Society

Automobiles in front of the Milton Garage, circa 1915. A book launch for "Umatilla County Memories: A Pictorial History of the mid-1800s through 1939" is Saturday at Heritage Station Museum in Pendleton.

Holiday savings so good, you'll jump for **JOY**

The perfect holiday gift is available now!

BOOK DETAILS: Hardcover, 144 pages • Historic photos of Umatilla County
Limited time offer — discount expires Dec. 31, 2019!

\$34.95
reg. \$44.95
plus shipping

Just released!

Pick up your books locally, including pre-orders
East Oregonian
211 SE Byers Ave., Pendleton (Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.)

Order online and save with flat-rate shipping
Umatilla.PictorialBook.com
Expedited shipping available for Christmas delivery

Order by mail now (discount expires 12/31/19): Postmark by 12/5/19 for Christmas delivery!
Ship my order to me: \$34.95 plus \$6.95 shipping and handling per book. Order will be shipped to the address below.
Quantity: x \$41.90 = \$ total

Payment method: Check/Money Order Credit card orders can be placed online: Umatilla.PictorialBook.com

Name
Address
City State Zip
Phone E-mail

EAST OREGONIAN
Send form and payment to:
East Oregonian
211 SE Byers Ave.
Pendleton, OR 97801
or call 800-522-0255

From the archives of the Athena Public Library, City of Echo, Milton-Freewater Area Historical Society, Pendleton Round-up, Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute and Umatilla County Historical Society

DOWNLOAD OUR FREE NEWS APP TODAY!

Our new app offers access to the latest news as it happens with customizable features for mobile and tablet devices:

- Scroll through the latest headlines while on-the-go.
- Personalize your news feed with the stories you want.
- Receive breaking news alerts on your phone.
- Explore photos, videos and more.
- Easily save articles for reading later.
- Share articles with the tap of a finger.
- Content can be viewed offline when out-of-service or in flight.
- Customizable settings allow you to enlarge type and choose how often content refreshes.

Hermiston Herald

Download on the **App Store**
GET IT ON **Google Play**

To subscribe, call 1-800-522-0255 or log on to www.hermistonherald.com/subscribe-now/