

EDITOR'S DESK

A new chapter begins for Herald editor

Next week's Hermiston Herald, on June 30, will be my last as editor.

I am moving to Salt Lake City to start a new career path in advertising, after nearly eight years of reporting on Hermiston. I do not yet know who will replace me as editor, but I do know the company is working hard to find the best possible candidate. In the interim, I hope you will be patient with the East Oregonian staff as they pitch in to keep the Herald running.

When I was a kid, I always said I wanted to be an author. By high school, I had decided that I might pull a steadier paycheck by channeling my love of reading and writing into journalism. I headed off to college with the intent to test the waters with a couple of journalism classes and, well, the rest is history.

It turned out journalism was about more than just getting paid to write. For a teenager who loved learning and had always been a bit of a know-it-all in school, a job where you're expected to know everything about everything and tell everyone about it was the perfect gig.

I delighted in my time at the school newspaper, known as the Daily Universe. It didn't matter that my very first published article was about research on worms in Antarctica — watching students browsing



Jade McDowell
NEWS EDITOR



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald, File
News Editor Jade McDowell, center, can be seen taking notes at a Umatilla City Council candidates' forum at Umatilla City Hall on Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2020.

the paper with my byline in it as they waited for class to start was a thrill.

Since then, journalism has taken me on some strange and wonderful journeys. My summer internship for the New York Daily News involved everything from covering a failed car bomb attempt in Times Square to showing up to the townhome of famed director Spike Lee to ask him a question about the Boston Celtics (he wasn't home, but his wife said she would give him a note from me with my editor's contact information, and he did call).

During my two years at The Dalles Chronicle and my career in Hermiston afterward, I have gotten to meet

all sorts of people and cover interesting events or exciting breaking news. I have sat with people as they have tearfully described to me the very best and the very worst days of their lives.

Much of the work has been incredibly fulfilling, and given me a way to — I hope — improve the world around me. I am grateful for each of you who trusted me with your stories over the years.

But journalism is also a difficult job. It's a high-stress position that gets more stressful with each passing round of cuts that place more work on the dwindling crew remaining. There is an emotional toll to

reporting on tragedies and being so immersed in the news. Salaries are low, the personal attacks from members of your community are high, and the news does not stop for evenings or weekends or holidays.

And so, like so many journalists right now, I'm taking a step back from newspapers to try something new. The venture is one I'm excited about, with a company that specializes in representing nonprofits and public health and safety campaigns, and I'll get to be closer to family and friends in Utah.

I've poured my heart and soul into keeping the Hermiston Herald going this year through pandemic cutbacks, and it is a wrench letting it go. But I also know that the paper can benefit from a fresh pair of eyes with new story ideas, a different writing style and schemes to revamp some features that might be getting stale.

Please, please, please don't take this paper for granted. The reason you see fewer reporters' bylines in the Herald and EO, and the papers print fewer days a week, than when I joined the staff in 2013 is because of declining financial support from the community. If that trend continues, someday there won't be anything left to cut.

Advertise. Subscribe. Donate. Let the journalists you like know that their work is appreciated. Those things matter to the future of the community.

COLUMN

Malgesini pack offers howling good time ... when separated

With dog ownership, there's a learning curve.

A friend recently shared about things her puppy destroyed. Raising several dogs over the years, John and I understand her situation. I told her cuteness goes a long way in our pack. However, we found the chewing of our belongings decreased significantly when we began crate-training from puppyhood.

As a dog owner, you have to anticipate possible situations and puppy-proof your environment. It's a given that you have to allow young dogs time to learn things — and even then, they're going to test the limits.

And sometimes, no matter how much training you think has been provided, that delicious-smelling human food that's sitting within reach is going to be too tempting. So, part of the learning process is changing my behaviors, too. After Biko helped himself to my La Palma leftovers, I now push things to the back of the counter.

We're still trying to figure out Biko's little idiosyncrasies. A 9-month-old German shepherd/Siberian husky mix, my doctor likened him to a German shepherd with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

During a recent pack outing to the river, I was entertained by Biko's exuberant energy. While the General, my nearly 9-year-old German shepherd, constantly vocalizes his excitement in a high-pitched yelp, Biko runs like lightning from one end of the shore to the other — periodically taking a dip in the river and hopping like a

gigantic jackrabbit.

A real head-scratcher, though, is Biko's howling. Yes, I mean full-on, nose-to-the sky howling.

I first noticed the behavior when John left Biko roaming freely downstairs by himself. Normally, John would put the little guy in his crate while taking the General for a morning walk. However, as Biko has gotten older, he began testing his level of trustworthiness.

While I was still lounging on the daybed, Biko suddenly appeared in the middle of the room, sat down and proceeded to howl. I tried to reassure him that Papa and brother would be home soon, but the piercing sounds continued. I finally put him in his crate where he was quiet and content until John and the General returned.

I then did a Google search about howling. I learned that one of its purposes is for a pack member to communicate their location to packmates.

John tested Biko a couple more days and then waited a few weeks before doing it again. Each time the result was the same — Biko came trotting upstairs, plopped in the middle of the floor and began howling.

Biko appears to feel more secure in his crate when his Papa and brother are gone. Even though we don't fully understand why, we'll follow Biko's cues to help him feel comfortable — that's part of being a pack.

Tammy Malgesini, who recently returned as a Hermiston Herald community writer, enjoys spending time with her husband and two German shepherds, as well as entertaining herself with random musings.



Tammy Malgesini

COLUMN

More foster homes needed

One harsh reality of the pandemic often goes unnoticed: the continued need for foster parents.

Similar to many regions across the state, Eastern Oregon faces a critical shortage of foster homes for youth in need. Unlike many other areas, however, these rural and frontier communities have a history of joining together to address complex challenges facing their most vulnerable populations. We don't see it as an "agency" problem to fix but rather find support through community collaborations and from the care of foster families.



Adam Rodakowski

In Oregon, an average of 7,345 children are in foster care on a daily basis, according to state data from 2019. Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. has a Foster Care program that provides homes for youth in local communities involved in the Child Welfare system or for those youth being supported by their local community mental health program.

Our agency certifies foster families and works in partnership with the Oregon Department of Human Services Child Welfare to provide additional support services to youth and our foster families.

The ongoing need for foster families is well known. However, the pandemic has increased uncertainty for both youth in foster care, and foster families. Despite this challenge, the people caring for foster youth are making remarkable accomplishments in the lives of youth every day.

These families make lifelong positive impacts on the youth they serve, and are crucial to the success of our communities.

I'm honored to work with and support our foster families. Whether the child they serve stays with them for a few days or becomes a permanent member of the family, foster families have the unique ability to be the stable, supportive, adult during a challenging time in the life of a child. That leads us to the common question: How does the system work?

GOBHI is licensed by the state of Oregon to certify and provide homes for

youth in local communities who are involved in the Child Welfare system, or are receiving care from their local community mental health program. We certify homes for children and teens ages 4 to 17. In 2019, we certified 54 homes in 18 counties.

The positive impact that a foster parent can have on a child lasts a lifetime. We often hear stories of children who may have spent less than six months in a foster home but later in life contacted their foster parent to express their gratitude.

If you have wanted to find a way to help children — especially children in your own community — this is a way to do so. You will be ensuring that all kids in Eastern Oregon know they are wanted and safe during a very scary time in their lives.

If you have even considered fostering, please reach out. Everyone can help in ways small and large. We welcome anyone who's ready to make a change.

Adam Rodakowski is the director of GOBHI's Therapeutic Foster Care program.

CORRECTIONS

It is the policy of the Hermiston Herald to correct errors as soon as they are discovered. Incorrect information will be corrected on Page 2A. Errors committed on the Opinion page will be corrected on that page. Corrections also are noted in the online versions of our stories.

Please contact the editor at editor@hermistonherald.com or call (541) 564-4533 with issues about this policy or to report errors.

SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letters Policy: Letters to the Editor is a forum for the Hermiston Herald readers to express themselves on local, state, national or world issues. Brevity is good, but longer letters should be kept to 250 words.

No personal attacks; challenge the opinion, not the person. The Hermiston Herald reserves the right to edit letters for length and for content.

Letters must be original and signed by the writer or writers. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Writers should include a telephone number so they can be reached for questions. Only the letter writer's name and city of residence will be published.

OBITUARY POLICY

The Hermiston Herald publishes paid obituaries. The obituary can include small photos and, for veterans, a flag symbol at no charge. Expanded death notices will be published at no charge. These include information about services. Obituaries may be edited for spelling, proper punctuation and style.

Obituaries and notices may be submitted online at hermistonherald.com/obituaryform, by email to obits@hermistonherald.com, by fax to 541-276-8314, placed via the funeral home or in person at the Hermiston Herald or East Oregonian offices. For more information, call 541-966-0818 or 1-800-522-0255, x221.