

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

# Helpers abound

Over and over again, the people of our area remind me they are amazing helpers. The kindness I have seen lately has been so great, I hardly know where to start.



**Erick Peterson**

Let me begin with the people I encountered while I was trying to find help for a friend. A friend came to my office looking for help obtaining a job. This sent me down a rabbit hole of helpers.

People at the Hermiston Public Library said they could assist my friend with a resume. The director of a local employment center said she could help my friend, too. A local employer even said he would be happy to receive my friend's resume. And this was not the end.

Based on the willingness of the people with whom I have spoken, my friend soon will receive help. She will be back on her feet, employed and headed in the right direction. I feel optimistic for her.

There are many helping groups in our area. Look around at signs in parks, on buildings and beside trails. They include Lions, Kiwanis and Rotary; they are just a few. Other volunteer groups are devoted to serving schools, libraries and more. Churches are also involved in helping. And this is just the amateur helpers.

Think of all the people who help others as part of their profession. Professional helpers, including firefighters, mail deliverers, police officers and road workers. An entire army of people exist to help. Also, there is the literal Army. Our armed service people help, too.

In my work at the Herald, I encounter many people who are working to help others. Much of my job is bringing attention to them. I think it is important to let people know of their service. So when a parks and recreation director or a city attorney retires, I will do my best to let you know about it. Sometimes, they will be offering help that you can use. Perhaps, you will be inspired to also help. Or maybe you will take note of their service and compliment them for it.

If you encounter helpers who are not receiving the credit they are due, I hope you will reach out to me. Give the newspaper a call. I love to do stories about helpers. Frankly, stories about helpers are my favorite stories to do.

This is not to say that all goodness will be recognized. Most of the kindness I have seen around me is not exactly newsworthy. For instance, a friend recently helped me dispose of a couple of couches. He came to my home, helped me lift them into his truck, and we tossed them in the dump together. This friend even tried to pay the dump fee.

This amazing friend would ordinarily go unnoticed. He only gets a mention here in this newspaper because I wrote this entire column to thank him.

When he and his wife welcomed me and my wife to join the Lions Club, we saw another way we could help others. We look forward to being part of the club very soon.

As a reporter and editor, I will continue trying to tell the stories of the helpers around our area. As a Lion, I will be joining other local residents to be a helper (ROAR!). And as an individual, I will be trying to be a good neighbor.

If I can help you, please let me know.

*Erick Peterson is the editor and senior reporter of the Hermiston Herald.*

## OUR VIEW

# Child care center a source of pride

At least recently good news can seem hard to find but for those looking for a story that showcases what community and business can do tighter one needs to look no further than the Families First Child Care Center in Boardman.

Last month, U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden visited the center and was suitably impressed. So are we and so should area residents.

The center serves 53 children between the ages of six weeks and 12 and provides a viable outlet for parents who must work.

The center is more than a daycare and provides educational opportunities for youth.

The program succeeds on a limited budget, but it also is a triumph because it secured the support of some key, local businesses. The Port of Morrow, Boardman Foods and Threemile Canyon Farms are key supporters of the child care center.

Businesses provided financial support while the Port of Morrow created a place for the program at its new facility.

Wyden vowed to bring the Families First Child Care Center concept to the attention of other lawmakers in Washington, D.C. We hope he does.

That's because this program is clearly a success and represents the best example of private businesses and concerned residents uniting in a common goal to help youth.

Sometimes such a venture doesn't work, or it is only partially successful. Not this program. The primary reason, we believe, is the dedication of the business owners who saw a need and decided to step up and make it successful.

The program is also a great example



Ben Lonergan/Hermiston Herald

**Sen. Ron Wyden, center, waves to students at the Families First Child Care Center during a tour Aug. 31, 2021, of the Neal Early Learning Center in Boardman.**

of local people solving a local problem. Often it can seem easier to let state of federal agencies take on a particular hometown challenge but that isn't always a good idea either.

Finding child care for workers and other parents isn't just an area problem, either. It is a nationwide challenge that

grows worse by the year. The COVID-19 pandemic hasn't helped either.

We do hope that Wyden can highlight this wonderful program so that other states in the nation can review it and create a similar agenda.

All that were involved in this program deserve a thanks from the community.

## COLUMN

# Education corner

We all have busy lives filled with activities from the moment we wake up until our head hits the bed. Yet quite often, at some point in the day, you might hear "I'm bored" or "I don't have anything to do" from one of your kids.

Some child-development specialists say we often fail to teach our children one important life skill, dealing with boredom. In addition, children's days are filled with activities planned by others and can find it difficult to direct themselves to an activity of their own interests.

In her research, Sandi Mann from the University of Central Lancashire looked at what we often associate with boredom, lack of something to do. When we view boredom from this lens, it allows children to depend on others for their activities, and restricts their creativity. This is not just at home but in our educational system as well. Our schools have cut students recess times greatly over the past 20 decades. This has impacted children's abilities to develop friendships, work with others, and create activities with others independently.

Who would have ever thought making sure that our kids always had activities and events to attend or do might be harming them? Developing and learning how to create their own interests and fill their downtime is a life skill we expect our children to execute. Yet, as adults, we often experience frustration when our children face downtime. The child hasn't learned or developed the skills to fill this unknown time. Instead, they become dependent on others to fill their day with activities, and when faced with unplanned or free time, we hear, "I have nothing to do, I'm bored."



**Scott Smith**

Providing a "downtime" where a child has to spend time on their own is not free time for the parents at first. Learning not to be bored is a process and takes time. You cannot start with 60 minutes of "downtime." You have to build up to 60 minutes. Start with 10 minutes and provide a couple of choices, such as reading a book or drawing a picture. When you hear those beautiful words, "I'M DONE!" All you have to say is, "You still have more time to choose something else." This is where the learning takes place, so be ready for the pushback. Stick to the 10 minutes. After a bit, you'll be able to increase by five-minute intervals. Just as you cannot run a marathon the first time out and must build your endurance, the same is true in learning how to deal with boredom. By providing your child with downtime, you can teach them how to engage in activities independently and not depend on others to create activities for them.

Some schools have cut their recess times during the school day because of the demands on instructional time and to avoid dealing with student misbehavior. They found that cutting recess time cuts down students' misbehaviors, yet is that best for them? Instead of using this time as a teaching/developmental time, schools shorten the time to run and play, shortening the time to practice these developmental skills.

We so often assume children can use free time for productive things when it is a skill that parents and teachers need to foster. Take the time to guide children out of boredom and model and share what you are doing during your downtime.

*Scott Smith is a 40-plus year Umatilla County educator and serves on the Decoding Dyslexia Oregon board as its parent/teacher liaison.*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Saturday was a great day for veterans

You should have seen their faces! Nearly 100 veterans and professional river guides from throughout the Pacific Northwest took to the Columbia River on Saturday, Sept. 11, for a day at "Fish'n the Brave."

The smiles on their faces said it all, as each boat, proudly flying the U.S. flag, returned to Umatilla Marina in the early afternoon.

Those smiles were proof that it doesn't get much better for a vet than spending the day with fellow veterans and with guides, who are honored to donate their time, boats, equipment, fuel and door prizes for this annual free event for veterans.

Tony Fisher, of Fisher's Catch Outfitters, Tri-Cities, initiated the adventure six years ago. Today, more sponsors are coming alongside including the city of Umatilla, its chamber of commerce, the American Legion & Auxiliary and a multitude of businesses and groups throughout the Columbia Basin and the Pacific Northwest.

The next Fish'n The Brave won't be until Nov. 11, 2022. Our veterans organization salutes this program and proudly supports its mission. If you know any veterans who would love a day of fishing on the Columbia next year, I urge you to get their names on the roster at 509-727-7137.

Every freedom we enjoy in this country was purchased by the sacrifices of veterans. Please, always honor the fallen and support the living.

**Cathy Stolz  
Hermiston**

### It's time for an intervention

Why, why, why haven't the Trump children initiated an intervention by now for the sake of our democracy?

**Janet Boyd  
Hermiston**

## 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) 278-2673 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 photos. 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.