

Hermiston HERALD OPINION & READER'S FORUM

Founded in 1906

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2022

A4

OUR VIEW

Of course Hermiston is a beautiful town

This week, we would like to state something that we all know — Hermiston is a beautiful town. This is true, despite what some YouTubers might think of us.

Not a month goes by that we do not hear about it. Someone from our community will reference a video like “10 places in Oregon you should NEVER move to.” This particular video mocks us for our melons, claiming they “might be the only sweet part about living here.”

Further, it rips into us for either not working or not wanting to work, having a low graduation rate and a high crime rate.

All of the numbers used by the YouTuber are off, showing how he does not know about our Hermiston. And if you have any doubt about the guy's ignorance, he mispronounces Umatilla.

It is frustrating to hear people try to shame us for living in a town they have never visited. Likely, they know us by a few pictures of our worst neighborhoods, taken during



Kathy Aney/Hermiston Herald

Hermiston Butte rises from Butte Park in west Hermiston on Monday, May 16, 2022. Hikers who go to the top will get a 360-degree view of the city.

the gloomiest months. They combine those images with some ridiculous statistics, and they think they know us.

They don't.

One needs only walk to the top of the Hermiston Butte on one of our many bright, sunny days. As they take this trip up the landmark, they will witness happy families. They will see green grass and an amazing

playground on one of the best parks anyone will see anywhere.

At the top of the Hermiston Butte, in all directions, one can see our gorgeous home. It is largely a tidy place, devoid of the ugliness that is found in many other locations.

We do not need to, nor should we, compare ourselves to others, especially for the purpose of dunking on



Kathy Aney/Hermiston Herald

The Umatilla River flows past Riverfront Park in Hermiston on Monday, May 16, 2022. The day-use park features a walking and running path, benches and picnic tables.

someone else's town, though. The truth is, Hermiston is a beautiful town, even without insulting someone else's residence.

There are many beautiful places within our town, just like there are good-looking locales throughout our state. And, like those places, there are lovely people. They deserve respect, and we do, too.

COLUMN

Finding another Hermiston a world apart



CAROL CLUPNY
SHAKING HANDS

Local author Ronald E. Ingle wrote “Oasis in the Desert: The Story of Hermiston from Sagebrush to City.” In the early chapters he established that the city of Hermiston, Oregon, shared its name with a tiny hamlet near Edinburgh, Scotland.

My husband, Charlie, and I happen to be visiting Edinburgh as we travel Europe in celebration of our 40 years of marriage.

Charlie was determined to find Hermiston, Scotland. If you know Charlie, you know you don't get in his way when he gets his mind set on something. And we were off to find the place.

A quick internet search correlated with Ingle's research that there is a novel “Weir of Hermiston” by Robert Louis Stevenson. It went unfinished when the author died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage.

Further reading informed us that there is a castle Hermiston still in existence. There was a mansion there at one time.

We found a modern map to show Hermiston Road, Hermiston Motor (a used car lot) and Hermiston Park and Ride. Chatting with some locals we learned there was a new hotel at the old Hermiston site. Gee, we could have stayed there.

Instead, we rode a tram to our Edinburgh airport hotel. It took us right past Hermiston Gait Shopping Mall. We both noted its location so we could return for a little fun.

Brandon Artz, director of the Hermiston, Oregon, Parks and Recreation Department, had sent along a flag of Hermiston



Carol Clupny/Contributed Photo

Carol and Charlie Clupny pose with the Hermiston, Oregon, flag on May 8, 2022, while in Hermiston, Scotland.

ON A BLUSTERY DAY IN MAY, THE HERMISTON, OREGON, FLAG WAS DISPLAYED IN HERMISTON, SCOTLAND.

for a photo opportunity.

With the flag in hand, we found our way back to the Hermiston Gait shopping mall. A woman at the tram stop waited patiently as Charlie explained what we were doing. She was delighted to participate in our plan.

On a blustery day in May, the Hermiston, Oregon, flag was displayed in Hermiston, Scotland. To mark the occasion, we had some coffee, did some people-watching of local Hermiston people and finally got some presents for the peo-

ple we will meet in our future travels.

We now have a story to tell, and so does this woman from Scotland.

It's a small world. And there are other stories to be told, by storytellers we know.

Mother's Day lunch was shared with author and former Hermiston resident Karen Spears Zacharias, her daughter and a friend at an Italian restaurant in Glasgow, Scotland.

Before we left Hermiston, I learned that Karen would be

studying in Scotland and contacted her about the possibility to meet up. She made it happen. Why is it always so fun to meet people from home in a foreign country?

Other small world experiences

We were seated at a restaurant in Oban, Scotland, and heard a familiar accent. It had to be a northern Oregon accent. The couple next to us hailed from the Hood River area, less than two-hour drive from us in our Hermiston, and on a tour bus we met a family from Texas who knew exactly where Hermiston was located.

It really is a small world.

■ *Carol Clupny has lived in Hermiston for 42 years. She is the author of "The Ribbon of Road Ahead: One Woman's Remarkable Journey with Parkinson's Disease."*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

'We have only one good name'

In the planning and formation of Blue Mountain Community College the first President, Wally McCrae, said residents of Umatilla and Morrow counties made it clear that they wanted the college to offer courses that would be transferable to colleges and universities and to provide vocational programs. Over time “old blue” has kept that covenant with our constituents. Blue Mountain is often called a “gem” and “the college”. Much could be written about why Blue Mountain Community College has enjoyed such strong support and has earned that reputation.

I write from the “old blue” perspective that I know best. For thirty years it was my privilege to teach animal science courses at BMCC. Our agriculture department offers courses that transfer to colleges and universities as well as vocational “hands on” classes and labs. Between 1976-1980 the Blue Mountain ag department established transfer agreements with Oregon State University, Washington State University and the University of Idaho. To date, the success of BMCC ag students has earned them Bachelor of Science and advanced degrees from at least 12 universities. Students credit their success to the advising and academic rigor at BMCC in all disciplines including math, chemistry, English, biological and social sciences. There have been thousands of very successful Blue Mountain agriculture students in a variety of careers ranging from horticulture to high school agriculture instructors to veterinarians. Most now live and work in our local communities and help to build the economic base. There have been students selected for the prestigious “who's who among university students”. Some of these local agriculture instructors have gone on to become administrators in their own respective schools.

“We have only one good name” is a truth applicable to colleges and people. As the college board deliberates and makes critical decisions, I strongly encourage members to not lose sight of the directive given many decades ago to maintain core academic courses in tandem with vocational programs.

**Paul Davis
Pendleton**

Hermiston HERALD
VOLUME 115 • NUMBER 20



Printed on recycled newsprint

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Periodical postage paid at Hermiston, OR.
Postmaster, send address changes to Hermiston Herald, 333 E. Main St., Hermiston, OR 97838.

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The Hermiston Herald (USPS 242220, ISSN 8750-4782) is published weekly at Hermiston Herald, 333 E. Main St., Hermiston, OR 97838, 541-567-6457.

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