

High Prairie Community Council

Gwen Berry

SAVE THESE DATES

Community Council Meetings, 4th Thursday of the month, starting at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

Needlers Mondays, at 10:30 a.m. Call 365-5288 for more information.

Fire Volunteers, 1st, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

Fire Commissioner Meeting, 3rd Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m.

Visit the community website (www.highprairie.us) for additional scheduled events and meetings.



STAY IN THE LOOP!

EMAIL:

Put your name on the HP info list by emailing bbparrish@embaramail.com

WEBSITE:

Check us out at www.highprairie.us Calendar, blog, High Prairian, history, and lots more!

FACEBOOK:

Stay up to date with community happenings and join the discussion:

www.facebook.com/groups/180735785338230/

Don't forget to *like* the page.

HP DIRECTORY:

Trade contact info just with friends and neighbors. Add or update at:

www.highprairie.us/general-information/community-directory/

(We can't invite you if we don't know how to reach you!)

HIGH PRAIRIANS ENJOY DELIGHTFUL CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

The annual High Prairie Community Christmas Dinner has become something of a tradition over the last several years. Delicious food, a festive setting, and friends and neighbors enjoying each other's company – it all adds up to a great start to the holiday season. This year was no exception, though this year's gathering, on December 3rd, was a special brunch instead of a dinner.

Carleen Kemp volunteered to create the brunch, and she outdid herself, providing an appealing and delicious buffet with the help of her dedicated helpers. Especially notable, by all accounts, was the sliced ham; though it had to share its glory with cinnamon rolls, egg strata, cheesy hash-brown casserole, pan-fried steel cut oats, and fruit compote. No one could have gone hungry. There were even vegan selections for those so inclined, and five different beverages to choose from.

Over 70 people came to enjoy food and friends. The party mood was helped along by the cheerful Christmas Jazz Band inflatable playing just outside the door as it has in previous years. Decorations on tables and walls gave the space a festive holiday feel. A slide show of High Prairie people and events ran on the screen at the front of the room.

Sixteen special desserts, all the table centerpieces, and two beautiful evergreen wreaths were auctioned off to guests to help fund the event. HPCC wants to thank everyone who participated in the auctions and those who made other donations for their generous support.

Special thanks are also due the people who made the brunch such a successful event – especially Sharon Aleckson, who made sure it happened and acted as chairperson, and Carlene Kemp, who generously committed her time and expertise. Big thanks go to everyone who helped. The brunch would not have come off so nicely without the combined efforts of many people.



LOOKING FORWARD

- * 12/18 & 1/15 – Board Meetings, 7 p.m. – Under discussion: Scholarships, Rental policies/documents, Fundraising, Community Center topics and more – Everyone Welcome
- * 1/25 – General Membership Meeting, 7 p.m. – Speaker to be Announced
- * Late Winter/Early Spring – Firefighter Appreciation Dinner (with High Prairie and Lyle Fire Districts)

THE HIGH PRAIRIAN

"All the news that's print to fit"

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HOW TO MAKE BIRDSEED ORNAMENTS

Debbie Chapman, <http://onelittleproject.com/birdseed-ornaments/>

Ingredients

2.5 cups Birdseed (such as "Outdoor Songbird Mix")
 2 Packages Unflavored Gelatin (2 Tablespoons total)
 2 Tablespoons Corn Syrup
 1 cup Water
 12 Cookie Cutters
 3 Drinking Straws, cut into 2" long pieces
 Twine

Instructions

1. Add ½ cup cold water to a large bowl.
2. Pour the 2 packages of unflavored gelatin on top of the water.
3. Add ½ cup boiling water to the gelatin mixture and stir until the gelatin is completely dissolved.
4. Add the corn syrup and stir until combined.
5. Add the birdseed and mix well.
6. Place the bowl in the refrigerator for about 10 minutes until the liquid firms up enough that it won't leak out from under the cookie cutters.
7. Set your cookie cutters onto a parchment lined baking sheet and fill them with spoonfuls of the birdseed mixture. Using the back of the spoon, press down the birdseed mixture firmly to fill in all the gaps. Fill the cookie cutters to the top.
8. Press the drinking straws into each of the shapes leaving at least ½" of space between the hole and the edge of the shape.
9. Place the ornaments in the refrigerator overnight.
10. To remove the cookie cutters, gently pull the metal away from the edges on all side then gently push the birdseed ornaments out of the cookie cutters. Gently pull the straws out.
11. Thread a piece of twine through the hole and tie the ends in a knot.
12. Hang the birdseed ornaments from tree branches, leaving room nearby for the birds to perch on while eating.



REMEMBERING SUMMER DAYS

Carol Shuster

In July of this year we took our grandkids to Disneyland, Sea World, Legoland and Safari Land. The first character all of us saw was Chewbacca from the Star Wars movie. He hugged all of us and we got a picture with him. The kids loved all the rides and wanted more. We traveled into space on Space Mountain. We were in a car race, and our race car was Lighting McQueen. Yes, we won the race. Then we got wet on Splash Mountain and on Grizzly River Rampage. We took a very fast train ride on Thunder Mountain Railroad and went Soarin' Around the World on a hang glider. One night we saw the Electric Light Parade and the fireworks over Cinderella's Castle.

Sea World was fun too. We saw a porpoise show and a whale show. During the whale show all of us got soaked when the whale splashed his tail. But it was hot, so it felt good even though we got a mouth full of salt water.

We visited with relatives in Bakersfield, California and in



San Diego. They both have new little ones.

We also took the kids to Safari Land where they saw lots of animals. All in all we had lots of fun.

ACCIDENT TAKES JOE BIRD

Audrey Bentz

High Prairie is saddened at the loss of Joe Bird to a tragic ATV accident. Joe and Rozie moved to High Prairie in the late 90's and have spent most of their time here with horses and alpacas. Over the many years, they have spent many hours training and showing their special horses, winning many awards at shows. Joe stated that he even taught one of his horses to count! There will be a memorial service for Joe at 2 p.m. on Sunday, December 17, at the High Prairie Community Center.



A BOY'S FEET

Edward A. Guest, 1923

Contributed by Barb Parrish

I got a cowllick, an' it stands
Up straight, an' I got dirty hands,
An' if it shows a single speck
I have to go an' wash my neck,
An every day Ma squints an' peers
To see if I have washed my ears;
But I ain't ever really neat
All on account of havin' feet.

These feet of mine are always wrong,
I mustn't shuffle 'em along
Or kick a stone that's in the way,
Or if I do someone will say:
"I wish you'd lift your feet a bit;
The way you walk gives me a fit!
Those shoes were new a week ago
An' now you've busted out the toe."
They're always peckin' at me, too,
For standin' like the fellers do.
An' just because my toes turn in,
The teacher makes the pupils grin
By tellin' me ten times a day:
"Please turn your toes the other way!"
An' even when I'm in my seat
She kicks if I just swing my feet.

If I get nervous an' I put
One shoe upon the other foot,
Or scrape the floor, they say: "My land!
Is that the way a boy should stand?"
An' if I rest 'em on a chair,
Ma says: "Don't put your feet up there!"
An' if I sit on them they roar:
"Please put your feet upon the floor!"

I'm getting' tired of all this talk
About the way I stand or walk,
An' anyhow it seems to me,
At least as far as I can see,
My feet aren't any different than
The other fellers 'round her, an'
Some day my temper will explode –
It ain't my fault I'm pigeon-toed.

CHILDHOOD WINTERS IN MANITOBA

A Conversation with High Prairian Helen Kearns

High Prairian: Helen, I know you had a very different childhood than many of us. Where did you grow up?

Helen: I grew up on the plains of Manitoba, Canada (just north of Minnesota/North Dakota). The times I'm remembering must have been in the mid-to-late 1940's. We lived about a mile outside a tiny, tiny town called Norgate. All it had was a mercantile store, a one-room school, a post office and a church – a United Church, which was similar to Anglican. On Saturday nights we'd "go to town," to the larger community of McCreary, eight miles away. McCreary had homes, at least a couple of stores, and much more activity. We'd shop for supplies, and do other things. My dad often brought back 5 pound cans of Sunny Jim strawberry jam, which we all loved. Funny what memories stick in your head like that.

HP: What was your home like?

Helen: My family lived in an old, old Sears house – it came in a kit. It was a great big house that my grandfather had built. It had seven bedrooms. We used an outhouse in summer. In winter we kept a bucket with a seat on it in the basement. (And yes, our t.p. was scrunched up catalog pages – they were free, after all.)

We didn't have electricity then, but later my clever oldest brother rigged up electricity for us through batteries. Periodically he'd have to run some kind of a generator, to charge them up again.

HP: Who all was in your family?

Helen: My father and mother. My mother died of cancer when I was ten. I had a brother and sister who were much older and who left home before I was very old; so most of my childhood was spent with the three brothers close to my own age. There were two years between each of us four.

HP: How did your family make their living?

Helen: My father was a farmer. He grew grain, mostly. One year he even won a watch and a special medal for having the best quality grain. We also kept a few pigs, cattle, and chickens. We always killed a hog in fall or winter. We didn't eat much beef because the cattle were worth more to sell. We drank skim milk and sold the cream to the creamery. In the summer we grew a garden and did a bunch of canning. Still, meals were pretty meager. The farm kept us going, but we didn't have much.

HP: Tell me about going to school in winter.

Helen: I went to a one-room school, grades 1 through 8. We walked a mile to get there, sometimes in very cold weather. If the weather was especially wicked, we'd hitch the horse to the sleigh or, if the snow was too deep, to the toboggan. The horse got to wait in a shed at the school. The school room would be freezing. Usually the teacher arrived at the same time we did and turned on the furnace to heat the room. We wore our mittens until it warmed up enough to take them off. A highlight of every year was the Christmas play the teacher had us put on at the church.



HP: Brrrr! Norgate sounds like a really cold place.

Helen: I was always cold in winter. The house wasn't insulated. The only room that was reasonably warm was the kitchen, because of the cookstove. The frost on the inside of the windows got so thick we could draw pictures in it. We melted snow in a double boiler for washing, and we would scoop snow into cups and pour syrup and other things on it for a treat.

Our beds were icy. When we climbed under the blankets at night my mother would tell us, "Start your engines!" Then we'd scrub our feet and hands together and move our arms and legs.

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That was supposed to warm up the bed.

My brothers and I would go sledding if there was enough snow, or we'd ice skate and play hockey when our small pond froze over. We didn't have the right clothes, really, but we did OK. I wore heavy, warm bloomers. Men wore those long johns with the back flap.

HP: How did your family celebrate Christmas at home?

Helen: I don't remember very much about Christmases before my mother died. Afterward, it fell to me to make Christmas happen. It felt like such a huge undertaking, I remember feeling pretty stressed.

We had only deciduous trees, so we'd gather branches and tie them together for a Christmas tree. I remember we had glitter, and we made ornaments at school.

My dad would give \$5 to each of us younger kids for buying Christmas gifts. Even though \$5 went a lot farther in those days, it wasn't much to spend. We'd order inexpensive things like socks or scarves out of the Sears or Eaton's catalogs. We wrapped our gifts in newspaper or comics, and tied them with yarn.

HP: Thanks, Helen! I'm sure we've just scratched the surface of your experience growing up in Manitoba, but I've enjoyed this little peek into what your life was like.

I HEARD A BIRD SING

Oliver Herford

I heard a bird sing
In the dark of December
A magical thing
And sweet to remember:
"We are nearer to Spring
Than we were in
September,"
I heard a bird sing.

MISSION OF MERCY

Rebecca Sonniksen



Top: Setting up the clinic in Mexico:

Middle/Bottom: Some of the animals that were cared for.

Thanks to High Prairie resident, Elke Neubauer, along with Jen Schwab and Sherry Ervin, the people of Troncones, and Pantla, Mexico, sleep better now at night.

Flying in late October to Ixtapa at their own expense, this trio of volunteers brought food, animal carriers, kennels, medication, collars and leashes. They teamed up with local veterinarians from Zihua and Mexico City, and with the help of local people, set up spay/neuter clinics in the two Mexican villages. The clinics were made possible by Gorge Kitten Project, which was organized five years ago by Jen Schwab to help people care for their animals where the cost of care is prohibitive.

"It's not that they don't care about their animals," Elke explains, "It's that they have no resources or medication. The cost to spay is over what they will make in half a month and they need help with the cost of food."

Beginning with Troncones, where the results of past clinics can be seen by the lack of stray animals, local people helped to set up the open air clinic. Ordinary folding tables raised up by bricks served as surgery tables. There was a refrigerator to keep the medications cool, and lighting was improvised for surgery.

Elke assisted by preparing the animals for surgery, giving vaccinations, clearing ears, combing out knots, and treating for fleas and pulling ticks. She and Sherry also helped by donating a supply of food for the dogs.

The second clinic of the trip was held for the first time in Pantla, where villagers were waiting in line patiently. With the promise to turn no animal away, this team of volunteers spayed/neutered in both villages a total of 130 dogs and cats.

"I plan to be there next year, and I need to learn Spanish," says Elke. "I saw how people watched us, how we treated their animals. A man watched me kneeling next to a mama with a broken foot (she really touched my heart.) He said – You really love animals."

"Yes I do. It's a good feeling to know we helped not only the animals, but the people, too. They care about their dogs and cats."

In addition to helping with the recovery of the animals in the clinics, local residents helped rescue dogs off the streets including three female dogs with a total of 18 puppies.

According to Jen, who stayed longer in the area to help with the rescues, "They were in very bad conditions and starving. One of the dogs had her ears cut off. Thanks to the local people, a healthy dose of vaccine and lots of hugs and kisses, she looks a million times better now."

"We'll bring the puppies back here in a couple months for adoption and foster care."

Elke and Sherry also assist in our local spay/neuter clinic in the Lyle Activity Center for homeless cats and kittens, Columbia Gorge Cat Rescue.

If you'd like to help either by donating money for medication and food, or by providing a temporary or permanent home to a Mexican puppy, contact the Gorge Kitten Project at, the gorgekittenproject@gmail.com. You can also contact Elke at elkenu@gmx.com.



FIRE DRILLS SHIFT TO STRUCTURE PROTECTION

(Part 2)

In my previous Fire Lines article (October 2017) I wrote about one of our recent Fire Department drills where we practiced responding to a structure fire. At the end of the last article, the first fire engine on scene had laid a 4" supply line with a 3-port Siamese fitting for water tenders to connect to. The engine had then been positioned in a safe place facing away from the house and one or more smaller hoses run to the door of the structure.

After a hose line is laid to the door, four entry-qualified firefighters assemble there. Two of them pull on their face masks, pull up their hoods, strap down their helmets, turn on the air on the SCBA tank (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus), and put on protective gloves. They then cautiously open the door and crawl in on hands and knees, staying below the worst of the smoke and dragging the hose in search of the fire.

The two other volunteers are a Rapid Intervention Team (RIT). They stand by with a RIT bag containing an air cylinder with hose and face mask. If the first team gets in trouble, the second goes in to rescue them by following the charged hose.

As more engines arrive there will be additional entry-qualified personnel with SCBA's to back up the original four.

Meanwhile, other firefighters may be opening a hole in the roof and ceiling to vent the smoke and access fire in the attic. Additional hoses might be used to pour water onto or into burning areas of the house. Other actions will depend on the nature of the structure and the fire activity, such as accessing fire in concealed spaces, forcing smoke from the building with a positive pressure, and continued mop-up of smoldering embers until the fire is dead out.

Next time I'll discuss more fully the firefighters' personal protective equipment, radio use, and everything that happens between page-out and arriving at the scene.

A WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST RECRUIT

HPFD is proud to announce we have a new recruit on board – Carleen Kemp. Carleen's whole family volunteered for a local fire department where she grew up in California, and she has always wanted to do the same. Home was in a very rural area where they had lots of farm animals and her father kept large numbers of honeybee hives. Later she moved to Centerville, the largest town she had ever lived in, and more recently to High Prairie.

Carleen calls herself a "Jill-of-All-Trades." She has extensive catering experience, as she and her family, along with their neighbors, catered weddings, anniversaries and other parties. Over the past 20 years she has been a long-haul trucker transporting exotic things like rocket fuel, explosives, and vintage cars. Lately she has been renovating wildland fire camp bunk trailers, kitchens and showers and is also pumping septic systems. In her spare time she studies for her Mining, Safety and Health Administration certification for operating a rock pit. In between, she expertly managed

the very successful 2016 High Prairie Firehouse Sale.

Asked about her experience as a new recruit, she said she found the department volunteers to be very welcoming and encouraging and is enjoying the camaraderie. Her advice to the High Prairie and Lyle communities is to join your fire department. Also, "be sure to have your septic pumped before the drain field is ruined."

Welcome aboard, Carleen!

FLUE FIRES AND CLEANING YOUR CHIMNEY

Make sure your chimney has been cleaned to avoid potential disaster from a flue fire. The fire district treats flue fires like incipient house fires. Flue fires can reach temperatures in excess of 1,100 degrees F., damage the structural integrity of the chimney and set wooden members on fire. For information on what to do in case of a flue fire and details about cleaning your chimney, see articles previously published in the High Prairian (December 2011, p.7). http://www.highprairie.us/%21oldSite/high_prairian/v11n4/v11n4.pdf

CHIEF TIM'S TIPS & REMINDERS

Beware of the icy roads. We responded to two injury accidents within 14 hours of each other this week.

Snow is coming. Remember, if your road isn't well plowed and you can't get out, in an emergency we can't get in. At best, any response will be delayed. Reflectors along your snow-covered driveway can be a big help. We learned some folks drove off their own driveway last winter.

All our volunteers wish to thank Sabra Snow for the tasty cookies, fruit and other goodies she delivers before each drill. It is great to be remembered and appreciated in this way.

Your fire department needs you! You don't have to go into a burning building or climb up onto a smoking roof. You can be the volunteer that flags traffic at an accident or the person who comforts a frightened child whose mother is injured. There is a lot to do in emergencies. The fire departments and your communities need your help. Please join.

Also be aware there is more than one way to help out in your community, if not as a first responder. The annual Firehouse Sale raises thousands of dollars, a goodly portion of which goes to help the fire department. There is also the High Prairie Community Council, with its annual Christmas gathering, Firefighter Appreciation Dinner, and other community activities.

Please join in, make friends, and help make your community a great place to live.

HPFD RECEIVES ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Once again HPCC held its annual Firehouse Sale, and once again that sale provided needed funding for the fire department. The \$6,000 cash influx will pay for two more sorely needed sets of turnouts (protective apparel) for safely fighting structure

and vehicle fires.

Fire Commissioner Arlen Aleckson sought out and secured a grant from Northwest Farm Credit Services recently. The \$2,500 award will be used to purchase our own Thermal Imaging Camera. The TIC is a type of camera that converts infrared radiation into visible light, allowing firefighters to find heat sources through thick smoke and inside of walls. It is especially helpful in finding hot spots after chimney fires.

These are in addition to a Legends Casino grant received earlier in the year. Their \$3,000 grant went to buy one complete set of turnouts.

A big thank you to Arlen, NWFCS, HPCC, and Legends Casino!



WINTER PLANNING FOR SUMMER FIRE THREAT

Tom McMackin

On any given day at any given moment...



...Pictures are worth a thousand words...

Beginning in early October the wine country regions of Sonoma, Napa and Santa Rosa, California, suffered under the ravaging forces of wildfires. The most recent toll exacted by this calamity stands at 14,000 homes and structures destroyed or severely damaged. Forty-two residents lost their lives. The costs calculated to date have pressed beyond \$3 billion considering the expense of fighting the fires, the lost properties and the initial impact to the region's economics.

The Thomas fire and the Creek fires in Southern California are nearing 150,000 acres burned with 7,500 structures destroyed, and there's no end in sight. It's a drought-parched area of grasses, live oaks and mixed Manzanita and Chaparral ladder fuels on steep slopes, fanned by steady, strong Santa Ana (or 'Diablo') winds gusting to 80 mph...



...Mixed White Oak savanna; the beauty of rugged and steep topography changing seasonally with curing grasses and other fine fuels; dependable wind sports conditions – these are just a few of the splendid natural features that have brought us to our own region. Being east of the Cascade range makes these desired elements possible. It also gives us eco-environments not dissimilar from the Napa area or Ventura County in California.

If you've taken advantage of the FireWise presentations earlier this year, you've heard my comparison of our enchantment with living in this spectacular natural place to the understanding that every rodeo bullrider has when settling onto a ton of incredible, force-of-Nature, real-deal, horned hamburger in a bucking chute: "It's not IF you're gonna get clobbered... it's a cold comfort reality of when and how bad it's gonna HURT!"

The 49,000 acre Eagle Creek fire at the western end of the Gorge is one of those 'getting



Maybe It's Time To Add A New Suit To Your Wardrobe



To see how you can help your community, stop into your local firehouse and ask how do you become a volunteer firefighter

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clobbered' moments we all need to reflect on since it happened right on the crease between the east and west Cascade ecosystems. We all saw the news reports, or drove through smoke-shrouded congestion, or were inconvenienced by the disruption of our usual everyday routines and easy expectations of living here in the Gorge. The Inciweb website is an excellent resource to find official information on fire events nationwide and regionally. Here are a couple links on the Eagle Creek fire for more to consider :

<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/5584/#>

http://www.oregonlive.com/wildfires/index.ssf/2017/09/eagle_creek_fire_by_the_number.html

FireWise principles and the FireWise program's developing support base of materials, services and volunteers are available to each of us and for our High Prairie community, to assist in understanding the force of Nature that fire is in the place we've chosen to live. There are active concepts and real actions we can utilize, individually and together, to protect our lives and properties in any serious natural event that packs the potential to disrupt our lives and destroy the things we've worked hard to create where we live.

You don't have to wait for warm weather to take any action. Here are 3 items you can put on your 'to do' list as Fall moves through the solstice into Winter:



1. Action !: Clearly post your address at the junction of your driveway and your primary road. These blue reflective signs can mean that in an emergency, responders will be able to find your home to help. Otherwise time may be wasted puzzling through where they're needed!

2. Look & List: Now that most of Fall's effects have settled, take a walk around to survey Mine + 5'... all your properties, house, shop, shed, fences, barn & critters, driveway and 5' around these 'structures' that could be threatened by fire. List the work you can do through Winter into the Spring.

3. Look & List: Do a 30' Scan & Plan all around home, barn and shop, etc., on your Mine + 5' list, to keep fire at a defensible distance with these investments of your time, energy and cash. Make note of those listed items you might need help with... because you have neighbors or other resources who are willing to assist in making your home safe and our High Prairie community stronger and resilient in the



Start actively creating a defensible or standalone island for the waves of a wildfire's formidable energy to pass around when the storm blows our way!

face of any challenges Nature might bring our way.

For more information on the 'Firewise' & 'Ready, Set, Go!' programs contact Tom McMackin by email at firewise.onhighprairie@gmail.com or by phone message by calling 509-365-2786.

Online resources:

Firewise – <http://www.firewise.org> or <http://www.firewise.org/wild-fire-preparedness/be-firewise/home-and-landscape.aspx>

Ready, Set, Go! – <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org> or <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Resident>

RECYCLING DESPITE CHINA'S BAN

Gwen Berry

You've probably heard that the Chinese government has put their foot down and banned the import of some common types of recycled items because of too much contamination in the shipments. Maybe you've read about the result – sudden upheaval in the recycling market. There are reports of overflowing recycling centers with nowhere to send the recycles. Dire voices say it's likely some of it will end up in landfills. But how about here in Klickitat County? What's the status of our recycling system?

The County says, "Nothing's changed." The company that processes recycled stuff from Klickitat County has found new buyers in Southeast and Southwest Asia, so keep on recycling!

They do want people to recycle more carefully, though. Make sure that what you're putting in the bin or bag is really on the list of accepted items. No more "wishful recycling" where you throw a questionable item in, "hoping" it can be recycled. If in doubt, call Klickitat County Solid Waste (509-773-4448) and ask, or just throw it away. The County also has a detailed YES/NO list on their website, www.klickitatcounty.org/436/Recyclable-Materials. Get familiar with it; it's really helpful. Also, pay more attention to the condition of the items you're recycling. They need to be empty, clean and as dry as possible.

Here are some things you may not know:

Lids to plastic containers are recyclable, but they don't sort correctly. Replace the lid on the original container before recycling.

Metal lids of any kind are recyclable, but only if they are larger than 3" in diameter. That means most can tops that come off with a can opener are not recyclable. Again, it's a sorting issue.

No matter what kind of container, if it held an oil-based, caustic, or poisonous product it is not recyclable.

The Holiday Season. This brings up specific recycling issues. Is tissue paper recyclable? (Yes, as long as it doesn't have glitter in it or a metallic pattern printed on it.) How about other wrapping paper? (Yes, if it's just paper, not paper with a plastic finish or with metallic/foil elements.) No bows or ribbon. No gift bags, which usually have a plastic layer. A simple test is: does it tear cleanly? If you can see the paper layer and a separate layer, it's a no-go.

Many of our holiday traditions and activities generate unusually large amounts of waste: shopping bags, shipping boxes and packing materials, merchandise packaging, batteries, gift wrapping, greeting cards and envelopes, broken light strings, dried-up Christmas trees, wasted food, and more. So here are some suggestions:

Think of ways to avoid generating that waste in the first place, like taking along reusable shopping bags, sending e-greetings instead of paper cards, or using 100% recycled shipping boxes.

Avoid purchasing items with excess packaging.

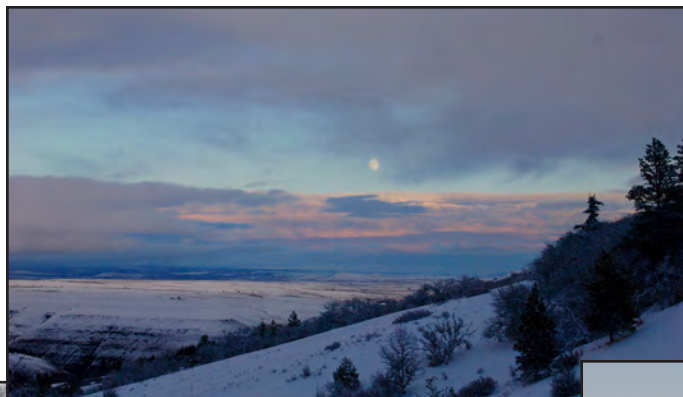
Reuse or re-purpose anything you can, and recycle as much as you can.

Seek out alternative recycling opportunities – for example, www.holidayleds.com. You can mail them your old broken light strings. They'll recycle them and send you a coupon for 15% off your next purchase of holidayleds.com LED Christmas light strings.

The High Prairie
P.O. Box 592
Lyle, WA 98635

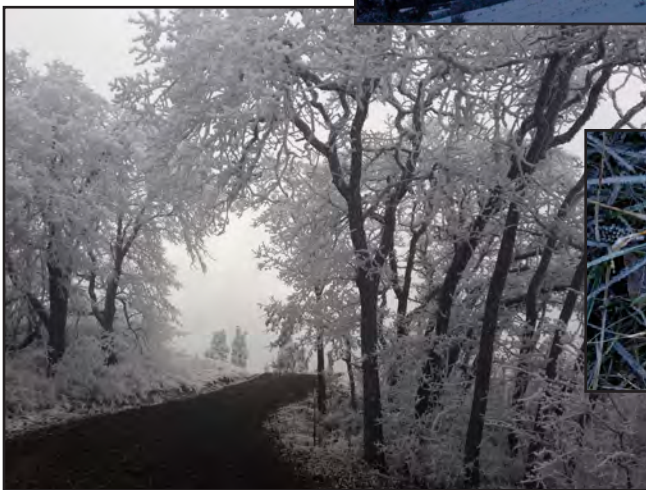
EARLY WINTER ON THE PRAIRIE

Photos: Peg Caliendo



Full Moon above Swale
Canyon

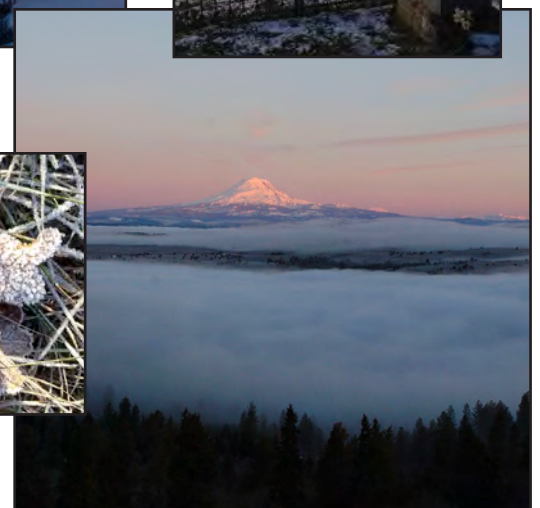
Lone Pine Cemetery with dusting of snow



Hoar frosted trees



Oak Leaves with Hoar Frost



Mt Adams morning alpenglow and clouds below