



The High Prairiean

"All the news that's print to fit."

Volume Twelve, Number One

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March 2012

NOTICES

Firehouse Sale May 19th and 20th

Fire Volunteers meet the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center/Fire Hall for equipment maintenance and the 2nd and 4th Tuesday for training.

Fire Commissioners meet the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center/Fire Hall.

High Prairie Community Council meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Community Center.

Lyle School Board meets the next to last Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Boardroom, Lyle High School.

High Prairie Book Club meets the 4th Monday at 7:00 p.m. Contact Lozetta Doll for location and book recommendations, 365-0010.

High Prairie Needlers meet every Monday at 10:30 a.m. to work on projects and crafts, swap ideas and "network" over a sack lunch. Contact Judi Strait: 365-5288 or Lozetta Doll: 365-0010.

Belly Dancing, Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

Zumba, Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. at the Community Center.

When requesting medical assistance or reporting a fire CALL 911

COMMUNITY CENTER USE

Audrey Bentz

It is important that our Community Center be used, both for the benefit of High Prairie's residents and also to provide financial support for its ongoing maintenance. If you know of anyone who might need a beautiful place (the kitchen is "state of the art"!) for a large group meeting or celebration, please contact Audrey (365-3600) or any Board member for a "Rental Packet," which describes the costs and procedures should they decide to reserve the center.

FIREHOUSE SALE DATE SET

Sharon Aleckson

If you haven't heard yet, this year's Firehouse Sale is scheduled for May 19th and 20th — the weekend after Mother's Day. This is the 13th year that High Prairie has had a Firehouse Sale. It has become a notable event not only in our community but throughout the county and the Greater Gorge area. This year it's bound to be the best one ever!!!! You won't want to miss it, so mark the date on your calendar now. A special edition of *The High Prairiean* dedicated to the Firehouse Sale will be published in April and will give more details about the sale. Until then, be sure and check your e-mail for more news and opportunities to take part.



RETIRED FIRE CHIEF TO SPEAK ON MARCH 22

Barb Parrish

On Thursday, March 22, at 7:00 p.m., the High Prairie Community Council will present Bill Casey, a retired Fire Chief who lives in Lyle, as our guest speaker. With Mr. Casey's background and experience, it promises to be a lively and interesting presentation. Here's what he says about himself:

"When I began my involvement in wild land fire suppression in the early 1960's as a temporary summer employee for Weyerhaeuser Timber Company in Springfield Oregon I had no idea that it would become a passion and eventually be my life's calling. As time passed and more and more opportunities in fire suppression came my way, I eventually went to work for the federal government, and held the Fire Chief position for one of the Bureau of Land Management's largest fire suppression programs, in Boise, Idaho. After 40 exciting years assisting in the management of fires nationwide, I ended my career as a full-time employee and now work as a contractor through the summer months. I have been involved in wildland fire suppression activities in all of the Western states, with assignments to the southern and eastern United States as well as Alaska. I have worked with thousands of firefighters on hundreds of wildfires, in numerous positions. I particularly enjoy working with the local departments and assist with training on a regular basis." —Bill Casey, Lyle Washington

RECORD BREAKING STORMS OF PAST YEARS

Doug Taylor

We have had ice storms in the past. 1964 had lots of snow, then rain washed out roads on both ends of Centerville Highway. People could not get in or out. We picked up mail at Palmer's by tractor. Mail got that far and was transferred to us volunteers for distribution. Cows were fed for Lyle Woods of Centerville as the road was washed out between Kemp's and Parr's. 1969 was another bad year—snow, then ice on trees, sounding like a war zone with tree limbs breaking. Electricity was off 3 days or so. In the 1998 snow, there were road closures due to ice throughout the Gorge, electricity off 3 or 4 days. We have had incredible winters (such as 2012!) but less snow than earlier years. There were years with some snow staying on from November to March and some winters when we were able to ski over top wires on fences with no trouble. I try not to predict the weather—just think what happened.



IT'S HAPPENING... AT OUR HIGH PRAIRIE COMMUNITY CENTER!

Audrey Bentz

Some thoughts on exercise: All of us, but especially Senior Citizens, are vulnerable to so many health issues that can be prevented by regular exercise. For example, regular exercise is proven to (1) improve bone density, (2) boost heart health, (3) improve immune function, (4) improve balance and decrease falls, (5) counter winter depression, (6) relieve anxiety or stress, (7) reduce pain from conditions such as fibromyalgia, etc., (8) improve joint function such as knee (9) improve mental function and (10) enrich social connection with friends and neighbors.

FUN and FITNESS:

Wednesdays at 6 p.m.: "Belly Dancing" led by Fern Johnson. \$6 per session

Thursdays at 9 a.m.: "Zumba" led by Audrey during March just \$1 per session.

Beginning on Saturdays in April, Sarah Thompson is willing to lead weekly sessions, but we then need to have a commitment from ten participants in order to cover costs.

TAI CHI may be scheduled with Janet Essley IF we have at least ten registrants willing to pay \$30 for six sessions. Contact Audrey (365-3600) or email (amsong@gorge.net) — we have two so far. Thursdays at 10 a.m. are a possible time.

BREAD BAKING CLASS, led by Judi Strait on Saturday, March 31. Cost will be minimal, to cover ingredients and Community Center costs. We suggest that you call Judi at 365-5288 for further information and to

indicate your interest in attendance.

IDENTITY THEFT is getting more nefarious by the day. We have a great solution for you and any friends or relatives you'd like to bring—a class to help us identify and prevent such activity in your personal life, your bank account, etc. Chad Peterson (Thrivent community service) will be leading a one hour presentation, allowing comments or questions as he gives us many important hints on safeguarding our monetary security. Put Wednesday, April 11 on your calendar, probably about 5 p.m. Call (365-3600) or email (amsong@gorge.net) Audrey to get your name on the list, as the presenter needs to know approximately how much material to bring, and for a light "supper" to follow. There will be just a minimal charge to cover Community Center costs.

BALLROOM DANCING will be resuming on Monday, April 2, 7:30 p.m., led by Don Slusher. This segment will feature "Simple Swing," so if you want to learn this basic step, get good exercise, have fun with your honey and a cool group of other couples, please sign up by contacting Audrey (see above). The charge (maybe just \$6 a couple) will be determined by the number of registrations.



WATCH OUT FOR SCHOOL BUSES

James Amery

School buses are picking up and dropping off our children twice a day during the week. Many bus stops are over hills and around corners.

Many ask, What do I do when I meet a school bus on the road with flashing lights?

Yellow upper flashing lights (back and forth) means the school bus is approaching a bus stop to load or unload children. Kids could be standing alongside the street or road ahead of the bus at this time. It is legal to go by the bus at this time but beware of kids along the road.

Red upper flashing lights (back and forth) means the bus is at the bus stop and is loading kids on the bus or crossing kids across the street or road. There will be a stop sign on the left side of the bus with red flashing lights on it at this time. It is unlawful to pass or go by the bus at this time in either direction!

Bus drivers try to use pullouts when possible to pick up kids, install or pull off tire chains, or let people driving to work go by. We will completely pull off the road using our turn signals and/or 4-way flashers (lower yellow lights) only. It is fine and legal to pass the bus at this time.

Sometimes drivers are forced to install tire chains in the middle of the road, due to conditions. Again 4-way flashers will be used. It is legal to pass at this time but please be careful of the driver who is probably under or alongside the bus.

We do have many bus stops on the route and some are with limited visibility. Keep it safe.

DEATH NOTICE

Ted McKercher

Well not quite, BUT, you could be witnessing the last gasps of a prominent "High Prairian." THE *High Prairian*, a fun rural newspaper/gossip column/informational/history-recounting few pages that has been coming to you four times a year.

The *High Prairian* starts with meetings of local volunteers who decide on articles that may be fitted into the number of pages allotted. Anyone can contribute. From there the stories are routed to an editorial team, who may check spelling and punctuation, but try not to lose the style of the writer. Cindy Henschell formats the paper and fits the four-to-six hundred maximum word essays into a reasonable package.

It used to be when all of those local volunteer phases were completed, our package was sent to the "County Economic Development" where the paper, printing (by county staff), bulk rate postage and any additional postage was paid for by the county. NO MORE! Klickitat County Economic Development is no longer able to support community newspapers due to cutbacks in finances and staff.

This edition is being financed and brought to you by the funds from the High Prairie Community Council and a generous donation from Rick and Rachael Carlson, but it is a ONE TIME ONLY edition. From this time forward the volunteers must find a way to finance our quarterly presentation.

The circulation is nearly 1,200 copies, some sent coast to coast and Canadian to Mexican border. Each printing requires nearly \$600 to get it to you; paper, printing, postage. We need to know who reads and wants the paper copy, who reads it on line (no charge) and who uses it for "fire starters" without reading.

Are you willing to pay for a subscription? How much? Is it worth \$10 per year? OR?
Without help this Death Notice could be real. The *High Prairian*—may it rest in peace?

FUNDRAISING AND FUN RAISING

Debbie McDonald

Wine Basket Raffle

Tickets went on sale for a Wine Basket Raffle at the February 23 HPCC meeting and will continue through March 22. The Wine Basket includes two bottles of Cascade Cliffs (Wishram) wine and a gift certificate for a winery tour. The gift certificate entitles four guests to a private tour of the vineyard and winery, concluding with a private tasting in the winery's clubroom. Appetizers will be included. The drawing for the basket will be held at the March 22, HPCC meeting and the winner will be notified.

Pie Auction to Support the Newsletter Fund

Bakers, bring your favorite pie in a disposable tin to be auctioned off at the March HPCC meeting. Everybody else, bring your checkbook or cash to bid on a delicious pie you will take home that night. All proceeds from this fun auction will go toward supporting The *High Prairian* newsletter fund.

The purpose for these raffles is to help offset the costs involved in publishing a March edition of The *High Prairian* Newsletter as the county funding for community newsletters is no longer available. Writing and production are already underway. We've economized as much as possible, and a generous donation plus support from the

HPCC are allowing us to plan a full 8-page issue. The raffle is one of the things we're doing to raise additional money. More information regarding our newsletter will be forthcoming.

Tickets are \$1.00 each and may be purchased from Sharon Aleckson. Call 365-4429 or email her at sharlen@centurylink.net for ticket purchases.

Ed. note: If you missed Debbie's March 11 workshop on how the Community Kitchen works and would like to talk about your interest in the kitchen, give Debbie a call — 365-6813.

UPDATE ON SOME HIGH PRAIRIANS

Audrey Bentz

We extend our sympathy to **Joe and Roxie Bird** on the loss of their son this past month, and to **Rosada Nolan** on her husband's death. Rosada is temporarily living with family in California.

Ben Parrish is slowly recovering from a severe back injury due to a bad fall on the January ice. We suspect there are several others who had ice mishaps and we hope all are recovering okay.

Jake Jakobosky is making good recovery after a heart attack and bypass surgery. **Cindy Dickinson's** son, **Clinton**, had gall bladder surgery. **Judy Strait** had hand surgery the day of the storm and **Pat Parr** had knee surgery.

The **Straits** also have a new granddaughter!

FUNDING CUTBACKS RISK ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Lyle School District, Skyline Hospital Budgets in Crisis

Gwen Berry

Two local organizations that Lyle/High Prairie residents have counted on over the years are the Lyle School District, for providing the area's children with a good education, and Skyline Hospital, for health care and emergency medical response. Now both organizations are facing funding cutbacks that leave them wondering how they can continue providing the services we've come to expect.

Lyle School District

Washington State has a constitutional responsibility to provide basic education for all the state's children, so a large percentage of the funding for public school districts in Washington comes from the state. Due to the economic devastation of the last few years, the state itself has had to make difficult budget decisions. Both state and federal money for school districts has kept shrinking, and school districts have tightened their belts each time. This year is no exception.

The state may also be ending an important program that makes up for differences between schools in more affluent areas and schools in poorer (often rural) areas. This program matches money raised by local levies in disadvantaged school districts, to help ensure similar educational opportunities throughout the state. If the program ends, another crucial piece of the Lyle schools' funding will disappear. To top it off, the 4-year local Maintenance and Operations levy that the school district has been operating under expires this year.

Former School Board member Dave Thom explained the urgency, writing, "This is a rather important levy for the schools as the district unexpectedly lost \$176,000 in state funds this year with the expectation that this amount or more will be an ongoing reduction over the next few years. The proposed levy will not go into effect until 2013, so by then the district will be down by at least \$352,000 which this levy would then begin to make up. And finally, since this is a replacement levy for the current one due to expire, the failure of this levy would in 2013 further reduce district funds by an additional \$377,000 per year - on top of the above described reductions [totaling \$729,000]."

Lyle School District Superintendent, Martin Huffman, also points out that in addition to repeated budget cuts, a history of low levy rates has already taken a toll on school district operations. "[The new levy] is required to keep the district financially solvent with academic programs that will allow kids to succeed. Continuing to underlevy would compromise either or both of these fundamental objectives," he said.

Faced with this serious situation, the Lyle School District asked local residents to help the schools weather this funding crisis by supporting a new Maintenance and

Operations levy of \$738,000 @ 2.75 per \$1000 assessed value. This would replace the one that's expiring, plus bring in badly needed additional funds. To keep residents from being locked into the higher rate as circumstances improve, they asked for only a 2-year levy.

On February 14 the new levy request was put to a vote. Of 157 school levies across the state, only 5 didn't get enough support to pass. Lyle's was one of them, falling short by less than 3-1/2 percent. (High Prairie actually approved it by about the same percent.)

According to Superintendent Huffman, at their February 16 meeting the Lyle School Board made a commitment to not settle for a substandard program. Members of the community also urged the School Board to try again and re-run the levy request at the same rate as before. Those who spoke felt the issues were too crucial to ask for less.

A new election date has been set for April 17. There will be an informational meeting at the Lyle High School gym on March 17 at 5:00 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to become informed about the situation with our schools and send in their vote.

Skyline Hospital

On January 27, an email forwarded through the High Prairie email list created a stir when it announced that the Skyline Hospital Board of Commissioners had voted to cut back ambulance service to our area. Skyline's second ambulance, stationed in Dallesport, would no longer be available through the night hours, beginning March 1, 2012. Residents were concerned that there could be emergencies and no ambulance. Some thought they remembered Skyline promising full-time ambulance service as part of the EMS levy in 2007.

Mike Madden, Skyline Hospital CEO, confirmed that the Dallesport ambulance would be cut back. "You will continue to have coverage in all areas," he wrote. "There will be two cars staffed for 14 hours per day [Skyline and Dallesport] and one car for 10 hours through the night [Skyline only]. 95% of all emergency calls are during the 14-hour double coverage time."

The unpleasant financial reality behind this decision is that, like the school district, Skyline Hospital is also facing a budget crisis. Ben Mitchell, writing in the White Salmon Enterprise, stated it succinctly when he said, "A large coverage area with low population density, looming budget cuts and little to no profits are putting a strain on Klickitat County hospitals, which must adapt to a changing economic landscape or perish."

Last year the hospital kicked in approximately \$450,000 to keep the ambulance service going, on top of \$400,000 from the EMS levy and reimbursements from Medicare. Mike Madden explained that the drain on the hospital's budget is unsustainable. He said the Skyline Board of Commissioners got the message that the voters expected them to cut costs when a Maintenance and Operations levy failed twice last year. Every department is facing

cuts, some more serious than the ambulance service. The Skyline Board of Commissioners is pursuing other options which they hope will allow them to reinstate full-time ambulance service. One promising possibility is to form an independent EMS district by combining the Skyline Hospital and Klickitat Valley Hospital ambulance services.

In the meantime, Fire Chief Doug Hutchison of High Prairie Fire District #14 encourages residents not to panic or feel that they'll be without emergency care. There have always been times when ambulances were busy and emergencies were handled by the fire districts. Both the Lyle and High Prairie Fire Districts have members with emergency medical training at various levels. Klickitat Valley Hospital, Hood River, and The Dalles all have mutual aid agreements to send backup cars. In a pinch the High Prairie and Lyle Fire Districts can both transport patients in their aid cars. "So don't worry," says Fire Chief Hutchison. "There is still a high level of emergency care available in the High Prairie/Lyle area."



DUMPSTER DAYS

Penny Rutledge

Dumpster Days are set: April 14-15, 8:30 to 5p.m. We will have the large dumpsters at the old fire station on Centerville Highway. They will drop the containers on Friday, April 13th, and pick them up on Monday, April 16th. We will have people to help you with your "donations" on Saturday and Sunday.

Steve DeHart will have his truck there for metal recycling. He was kind enough to do it last year and we twisted his arm and he agreed to have his truck on site this year. If you have "white goods" (household appliances) you can leave those in Steve's trailer.

Just in case you have forgotten what can't go in the dumpsters... no concrete or dirt, no hazardous material, i.e. insulation, no batteries, propane bottle, paint or household chemicals (in the containers). There are only to be 5 car tires per container load. That is really only 10 tires altogether.

So come early, and leave a big tip in the tip jar. If you figure the distance to the dump, add in the price of gas (at \$3.79 a gallon) and the charge at the landfill, you can cough up a few bucks for High Prairie. Cash is good, or you can write a check made payable to HPCC. We are helping you save gas, time and money. So pay it forward and fill up the containers. And if you need to do service time for the community, then we can sign you up to man the table at the dump site. We'll make sure worker bees get refreshments.

So call Penny at 365-2700 to volunteer or to donate drinks or food...even money. See your neighbors this year at the Dumpster Days.

See you at the site. Thanks

SHOULDA COULDA WOULDNA

Jocelyn Weeks

I blame myself for much of the discomfort, embarrassment, helplessness, and fears experienced during the height of the "January Stormageddon." While part of my brain was fighting off a state of shock that we'd been so naive and unprepared, another part was riding the rails on the Shoulda Woulda Coulda Express:

(1) Should have put our two snow shovels (and nearly everything else on this list) in a place we could easily get to. We needed a shovel to get to our shovels.

(2) Could have had more backup sources of heat. We had a small propane "Mr. Heater" that warmed the front rooms in our house up to the low 50s during the day, but had to shut it down at night, due to the danger of suffocation.

(3) Should have refilled all of our five gallon propane tanks last summer.

(4) Would have traded cellphone numbers with family, friends and neighbors. This is the first time since we moved here, that the land line phones have gone dead during a long power outage. Doug and Dona Taylor have started an excellent cell phone and emergency service list. If you wish to be included and have a copy, their e-mail is: highprairie@gorge.net

(5) Should go to an electronic gizmo store and do some research on emergency cell phone power extenders. After just a little online study, I see that besides the regular battery powered models, there are reasonably priced solar powered chargers. While this would be no substitute for a long term charger, it would work when all other charging options were gone.

(6) Would have stored more water! We were in serious trouble here. It could have become critical if the power had been out any longer. The formula is four drops of bleach to a gallon of tap water. (Definitely put water where it is easily accessible.)

(7) Could have stocked up on more chicken feed.

(8) Should keep this list ongoing and ask other folks what they would add.

(9) During those long dark nights, lying under multiple sleeping bags, clothed in sedimentary layers of long johns, waiting for the morning light, I would think of all those other folks out there dealing with similar problems, and even worse. I'd wonder how they were doing, hoping they were okay? Also, how just a few generations ago, this was the way it was for my family in the winters. Although they were usually much more prepared. Then I would go from depression to resolve and know I should try to get some sleep.

Doug and Dona Taylor have started an excellent cell phone and emergency service list. If you wish to be included and have a copy, their e-mail is: highprairie@gorge.net

EXPANDING FIRE PROTECTION

Fred Neth

On February 11th Fire District 14 commissioners provided a chili feed at the High Prairie Community Center to present to the community the need for more fire protection for the eastern part of High Prairie. Fire Commissioners advised us that the Washington Survey and Ratings Bureau (WSRB) rates a district on a scale of 1–10, with 1 being the best and 10 being no fire protection. District 14 is currently rated at 8. The WSRB rules that any property outside of five road miles from an approved fire station is rated at 10. There are at least 36 homes that feed off of Schilling Road that have this 10 rating (no fire protection). Obviously the higher the rating the higher the insurance premiums.

Fire Commissioners reported that they have as their top priority an additional fire hall on Schilling Road. The land for this fire hall was donated to the District several years ago by Mr. Olin. The next steps call for getting an adequate water supply and building a 40' x 60' hall, enclosed and heated, with a pumper truck to meet WSRB requirements. Trucks now housed in the old fire hall would be moved to the new station. Further, WSRB requires that there be at least 6 fire-fighters living within five road miles from each station. At the very least 2 more volunteer firefighters are needed who live within the 5 mile limit of the proposed Schilling Road hall.

Cost for the building itself is estimated by the Fire Commissioners to be \$40 per square foot.

Building costs plus \$3,000 for equipment for additional firefighters would total about \$154,000. This figure does not include the \$10,000 grant money previously spent on site preparations. Fire Commissioners have earmarked \$20,000 for this project currently held in a reserve account. This reduces the estimated total to \$134,000.

Fire Commissioners explained that the \$134,000 could be raised by a bond issue if approved by the voters this next November. This would require an additional \$15,931 per year at an added \$0.25547480 per thousand. This would go away once the building was paid off. They further explained that there will need to be an increase in the fire levy to cover the ongoing operations and maintenance of the new fire hall. This would be an additional \$0.21976547 per thousand, generating \$13,704.

Subsequent to the February 11th meeting, the Fire Commissioners formed a committee to search out grant monies that might be available to help cover the costs of the Schilling Road fire hall. If you have helpful comments or know of possible funding sources, please contact one of the Fire Commissioners. If you have had experience in procuring grants, please share that with the committee.

The chili feed on the 11th gave us in the community an opportunity to express to the Fire Commissioners and the many volunteers our profound thanks for all they do on such a tight levy and for the countless hours they invest in training and being available to respond to community emergencies.

FIRE DISTRICT #14 NEWS

Jake Jakabosky

DO AS I SAY, NOT AS I DO!

You may remember my article in a previous High Prairian where I cautioned everyone to be aware of the symptoms of a heart attack and, if you have those symptoms, to call 911 immediately. On January 7, 2012, I had them! At 7 a.m. I awoke to unusual, mild, chest pains that radiated down my arms. That continued for 45 minutes and then returned twice again for a short time. My wife Gwen looked up the symptoms and, rightly so, insisted on a trip to the hospital.

"But I can't be having a heart attack!" I exclaimed. There was no family history of heart attack, I'd never smoked, I drank little, my cholesterol was controlled with statins, I'd always eaten lots of veggies, taken an omega 3 fish oil supplement, used olive oil, ate venison, poultry and other lean meat in moderation, and avoided red meat. It had to be something else! So I didn't call 911. Gwen drove me to the hospital, and that could have been a very serious mistake if my symptoms had worsened. It turned out it was a heart attack, serious enough that I went by ambulance to the hospital in Portland and ended up having quadruple bypass surgery!

The point of all this is DO AS I SAY. "But," you say, "I don't want to bother the local boys, especially if it turns out it's something else." Remember, your High Prairie volunteers are here to be bothered. They maintain a high level of training and are standing by to help us all when the need arises. So be sure to recognize those symptoms and even if you only suspect it, make that 911 call. It's very important to get that local emergency aid ASAP. Your High Prairie Emergency Medical Responders can get you on oxygen to deliver the maximum O² to relieve the workload on your heart, relieve shortness of breath, and reduce anxiety. They will also administer aspirin that can make clots less sticky and more likely to disperse. Also, all the guys will be there to help with CPR if your condition suddenly gets that serious.

Our Fire Chief and paramedic, Doug Hutchison, using the LifePak 12 device, can capture on tape the actual heart attack in progress and determine if the heart is damaged. He can also speed up or slow down a person's heart as needed on the way to the hospital. Then 30 to 40 minutes can be shaved off the hospital admittance time as the patient can bypass the emergency room and go directly to the catheter lab.

So what are the symptoms of heart attack? Well, like many aspects of the sexes, they are different in men and women. In men, heart attack manifests as unusual chest pain usually radiating down one or both arms, pain or discomfort in the neck, jaw, back or stomach, and shortness of breath, lightheadedness, nausea or sweating.

Women on the other hand, may have symptoms a month before the actual attack and not experience chest pain at all. The most common symptoms early on are unusual fatigue, sleep disturbance, shortness of breath, indigestion and anxi-

ety. Major symptoms during an actual attack include, again, shortness of breath and unusual fatigue. In addition, one can often expect weakness, a cold sweat and dizziness. In both men and women it is important to recognize the symptoms early and make that 911 call. It can save your life or that of a loved one.



LIFE AFTER A HEART ATTACK

Jake Jakabosky

In my other article in this issue I described my heart attack and urged everyone to know the symptoms and call 911 to get that all important, life-saving medical assistance. Now I would like to describe my time in the hospital, what Gwen and I have learned since and what the future holds for folks like me, and possibly you.

Gwen drove me to The Dalles hospital where a blood test confirmed a mild heart attack with some damage to my heart. I was then sent to OHSU in Portland by ambulance. An angiogram showed that I needed quadruple bypass surgery, which was scheduled for January 11. Two days later more chest pains and the team of doctors installed an aortic balloon pump to reduce my heart's workload. I spent 6 days in ICU and 7 days in the Cardiac ward. After release, we spent 5 days in Vancouver with my daughter as there was no power at home and the driveway was impassable due to deep ice-encrusted snow. We finally made it home with the help of Ben Parrish and his 4-wheel drive, after Phil Haner and Fred Henschell were able, with some difficulty, to bust out our driveway with their plows. (Thank you all!)

So now I know I inherited the propensity for cardiovascular disease, the accumulation of artery-blocking plaque in my heart and many other places in my body. That means in 5 to 10 years I may need a second bypass surgery using the rest of the veins in my legs, as has already happened to a few of our High Prairie neighbors.

What options do I and some of you have? My cardiologist sent Gwen and me to see a documentary movie, "Forks over Knives," about research on the relationship between diet and disease ("Forks over Knives" is available from Netflix, the library, and many other sources.) That movie and my doctor convinced us that just cutting back on various meats, fats, oils, dairy, etc. —even going vegetarian—was just not going to be enough to prevent a future heart attack. We are committed to going all the way – vegan! That means cutting all animal products out of our diet.

Now this diet is not what you think. Gwen has found in books and especially online many very tasty and satisfying meals. We've been vegan for a month, and we're very happy with our new diet and doing just fine. We are content in the knowledge that we have entered a new era in our lives where we are adopting very healthy eating habits. In fact, this diet has been shown to even reduce the damaging

effects of the existing plaque buildup. My doctor had us do a full panel of tests before we started this diet and we'll repeat it after 30 days to see what effect the diet may be having. We may even be able to get off the statin drugs.

Now you're probably thinking, "That is a really radical diet!" And you are right! But which is more radical? That, or having your chest cut wide open, having your heart and lungs shut down, leg veins grafted to heart arteries, sewed and wired back up, many days in the hospital where you're hooked up to all kinds of wires and tubes (and where you can get very little rest), months of pain and discomfort, and at a cost of well over \$100,000? I urge everyone to view that movie, look at their own cardiac risk, and decide for themselves what kind of life changes they might want to consider.



THE COLUMBIA HILLS

Jennifer Jefferis

Nestled against their foothills
I live and rest at their feet
Buffeted by a silent strength
Sheltered with a quiet grace

An anchor in the storms
Protector of all who wander her slopes
Through centuries of storms and floods
She withstands

Through the winds of time
Her faithful hills remain sentinels of courage
She holds on through roots that stretch deep into the earth
I can only gaze at her in wonder

The trees and grasses cover her in a blanket of color
Each season bringing fresh texture and splendor
The animals live and are sustained by her
A constant reminder of her gifts and vigilance over the land

In my mind's eye I can envision her wherever I go
She serves to remind me of an eternal spirit
And in the breadth of her arms as they stretch across the sky
She enfolds and sustains

I have only to recognize her devotion
And as the clouds drift across her shoulders
Stand in awe
Inspired by all that rises above

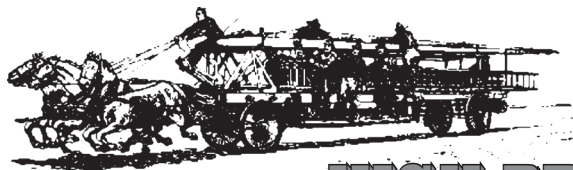
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*****ECRWSS****

Local Postal Customer
Lyle WA 98635

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL BEST EVER



HIGH PRAIRIE FIREHOUSE SALE

Sat., May 19: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sun., May 20: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Location: Aleckson's Hay Barn
783 Centerville Highway

NEW AND USED HOUSEHOLD &/GARDEN ITEMS, ANTIQUES, FURNITURE,
PLANTS, CRAFTS AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

PLUS:

QUILT RAFFLE

By the High Prairie Needlers

SILENT AUCTION

Bid on Donated Treasures

FOOD BOOTH

Myrin's Famous Bratwurst
Homemade Baked Goods and
other baked treats

Proceeds support the High Prairie Community Council, Community Center and Fire District 14

FOR INFORMATION CALL: 365-4429 or 365-2700