

SAVE THESE DATES

Community Council Meetings. Board of Directors meeting every 3rd Monday, 7 pm. HP Community Center. Contact HPCC: PO Box 592, Lyle, WA 98635 or email highprairiebarb@gmail.com

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. P.O. Box 853, Lyle, WA 98635 or email kcfpd14@gmail.com

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

"All the news that's print to fit"



STAY IN THE LOOP!

EMAIL:

Put your name on the HP info list by emailing highprairiebarb@gmail.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 Prairie Community Council

HPCC BOARD REPORT

Sharon Aleckson

The HPCC Board was unable to meet in December and January because of the weather. Two meetings were scheduled in February, as there was a lot of business on the agenda that needed to be addressed and we needed more time to cover all of it. The meeting days were also changed in February and March to accommodate the treasurer's teaching schedule this term. The time and place of meetings remain the same – 6pm at the Community Center.

February and March board meetings:

Feb. 2 Thursday

Feb. 22 Thursday

Mar. 21 Thursday

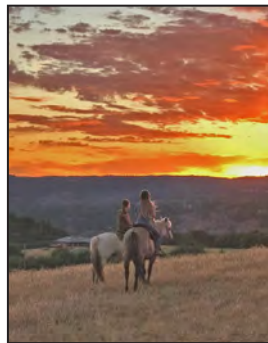
We will return to the regular meeting schedule starting in April – the 3rd Monday of each month.

Business we've discussed so far:

- It's a new year, and committees have been formed to review the by-laws and the building rental agreement.
 - The board reviewed the financial report relating to 2023 fund-raising events, and the results of a public opinion poll that was sent out to the community in December to give input on what events community members would like have HPCC continue.
 - The board decided the events it would sponsor – and that each event would happen only if someone would agree to coordinate the project. See the article elsewhere in this issue, A Place Called Home, by Erin Hartford.
 - The board is working on a calendar of meetings and dates for events (assuming there are coordinators).
 - We are also moving forward with the HPCC Upgrade Project to Enhance Emergency Preparedness at the Struck Road Firehall and Community Center. This project was funded by a state Capital Budget grant, and it takes time as we go through the process.
- Don't forget – TOGETHER WE ARE COMMUNITY STRONG.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Erin Hartford



I want to extend a huge thank you to our HPCC Board Members! As a member of the community, I attend the meetings regularly in an effort to stay current and actively involved in this great place we all call home. I think we can all agree that home is not entirely just a place but tends to rely heavily on the people who are there. These HPCC meetings are no different! The board members and frequent observers tend to be more involved in what is going on and the civic and social needs of our community.

At their most recent meeting, held on Thursday, February 1st, the big topic of discussion was High Prairie events to be held in 2024. These would be one time events and also recurring monthly and bimonthly events throughout the year and are sponsored by the High Prairie Community Council. Some are single day events, while others last several days. The discussion was fascinating as our Treasurer, Todd Meislahn, dissected the numbers of every event held in 2024. Todd presented a very thorough analysis. The board worked hard to weigh the finances versus the value of the event to the community. It seems some events are not necessarily large income generators

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or 509-281-1998

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Winter Morning on High Prairie Rd from JR & Manda Frakes
(p.s. that is the moon!)

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but are more of a community service and provide a time and place for folks around the prairie to come together and engage in true community. Other events are more profitable. It was interesting to see the balance between profit, community value and the need for people to come forward and head up certain events or simply get involved and help out.

As the discussion concluded, a recent poll on social media was presented to see how the People's Choice poll lined up with all of the other information surrounding events. This was an intriguing twist as lower profit events were more popular with the people and the big money makers seemed to have less interest.

The meeting proved productive, and out of it came new energy to take charge and organize each of the following events for 2024. Farmer's Market, Community Clean Up, Mini Fire House Sale, Christmas Bazaar and our annual Firefighter's Appreciation Dinner. While this is exciting news, understandably, the same person or people cannot reasonably take on the task of all of these events year after year. It's healthy to diversify and share the load. It's what makes the High Prairie Community Strong!

The board is actively recruiting a willing community member to head up the ever-popular, monthly Bingo Nights. 2023 was a strong year for this event. However, a lot of work and coordination goes into its success. For whoever takes on this great event, the board states that they will always serve as an advisory group and the folks who contributed to its success in past years can answer any questions that arise. It seems that if a Bingo Night chairperson cannot be found, the board has agreed that Bingo will take a rest this year and our sense of community will have to be enjoyed in the other exciting things happening on the prairie.

If you are interested in more information on coordinating Bingo nights or getting involved in one of the other events listed above, please plan to attend the upcoming HPCC Board Meeting being held at the community center on Thursday, February 22nd at 6pm.

MARCH UNDER THE OAKS

Debbie McDonald

Summarized from Douglas W. Tallamy's book, *The Nature of Oaks*.

By the time March arrives most oak leaves have fallen to create a lovely organic layer under the canopy and are awaiting their turn to be composted by an abundance of little creatures, perhaps millions, that eat dead leaves instead of green leaves and, along with other unseen creatures and their predators, create a complex community of decomposers. For example, in a single square meter of leaf litter you might find more than 100,000 spring-tails or 250,000 mites or 1 million nematodes. While most are not visible to the naked eye in all that leaf litter, you can do a little experiment. Scrape away a top layer of leaves and place a sheet of white paper in the spot. After a few minutes your paper will be dotted with whatever species happen to find the paper in their path.

Oak leaves are full of nutrients derived from the sun and are only made available for new plant growth by recycling all those nutrients, which is the job of decomposers. Oak leaves tend to decay very slowly once on the ground and, because the litter is replenished yearly, there are always leaves in various stages of decay (provided you don't do something to break the cycle such as raking or burning.) Most other deciduous trees have thin leaves that decay quickly once shed by their tree. Decomposers cannot survive for long on or in soil that is not covered by leaf litter. By leaving the oak leaves in various stages of decay, decomposers are provided with housing, food, and humid conditions for up to three years. Any leaf pack with a substantial proportion of oak leaves protects the ground and the diverse inhabitants year round.

Oak forests with deep litter also protect against certain invasive species, both plants and pests. Litter also improves water filtration, acting like a sponge and holding water long enough to seep into the ground replenishing the water table and purifying by filtering out excess nitrogen and phosphorus from fertilizers as well as heavy metals, pesticides, oil, and other pollutants.

Tallamy is convinced that oaks are the most essential native tree in the world, and with each monthly chapter in his easy-to-read book he shares what is happening outside our doors in and under the oaks of High Prairie.

WANNA BE A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER?

Lori Sweeney

Ever open to unique adventures, my ears perked up late last summer when I learned about the chance to spend a week “lighthouse keeping” from another guest while we were sailing on a tall ship (I wasn’t kidding about those unique adventures!). I looked it up as soon as we had cell service and sure enough, it WAS possible to spend a week 5 miles out on a spit near Sequim, Washington, and greet visitors, learn lighthouse history and kick back in the keeper’s house in between low tides. Of course, there were some hitches in THAT giddyup.



The New Dungeness Lighthouse is an icon on the Juan de Fuca Strait and right across from Victoria, BC. The lighthouse is depicted on every tchotchke in shops around the Hood Canal and Sequim. It was the first lighthouse built on the Pacific Northwest coast and has been in continuous operation since, not an easy feat given that fuel and food, not to mention numerous lighthouse keepers and their families, had to be delivered by boat or on horseback. And the history of lighthouses in the US in general is an interesting journey through government agencies, various lens mechanics, storm-watching and shipwrecks as well as regular life which had to be accomplished on a sand spit.

When the keeper’s house was built in 1904, it was built sturdily and thanks to the efforts of the New Dungeness Lighthouse Association, a group of committed volunteers and one overworked paid “director,” the house is in good order, complete with Wi-Fi and smart TV (electricity was laid across Dungeness Bay in 1934). The artesian well drilled in 1930 bubbles over in the massive yard and keeps the lawn green. While the property is well-appointed, the keepers must be driven in every Friday at low tide, a partnership with the Fish & Wildlife folks who manage the reserve that surrounds New Dungeness Lighthouse. So part of the adventure for volunteer keepers is that you are driven out along the beach, whenever low tide is (which might be 2:30 am).

Ever the travel planner, I proceeded to pummel the New Dungeness Association director with communications about our interest and that we could stay, even on short notice (which is sort of a joke, because did I mention I was a planner and my husband likes to be warned of all upcoming activities, most notably conversations or activities that involve money?). Because, yes, you “rent” the keeper’s

house for the week...so as my husband says now that we’ve logged a week, “we paid to water the lawn, greet guests and haul our food out there and cook it.” Maybe he’s not into “unique” as much as I am...

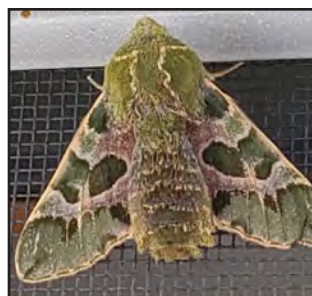
Spousal grumpiness aside, it was a magical week. First we got the call on Tuesday, drove out that Friday with our stuff in big plastic bins and enjoyed several hours in Sequim, a charming town with delightful shops and good restaurants. Just being that spontaneous in our household was a feat! Then we met our drivers and headed out over the sand and to the lighthouse, where the departing keepers gave us a quick orientation and we waved goodbye before the tide started lapping at the wheels of the departing Suburbans.

After a crash course in lighthouse history, and New Dungeness in particular, we greeted 33 guests who either kayaked or hiked in during our week. They often brought a picnic lunch and we escorted them up the 74 steps to the lens and relayed our fun facts about the place. We met interesting people, logged more than 7,000 steps a day and had the magical October mornings and evenings to ourselves. Since it was a last-minute gig, it was just us eating at the table that can host eight or more in the house. We watched the bald eagle pair scour the calm sea for their breakfasts and looked up the freighters chugging by. We drank coffee on the front porch at sunrise and didn’t mind cleaning the lighthouse bathroom (although we did learn how alarmingly easy it is to smudge a recently-polished brass banister!). It was like living in another world and we had the time, inclination and wherewithal to do it, a great combination.

Lori & Jeff Sweeney live “up South High Prairie Road,” a place they love when they aren’t experimenting with other unique accommodations around the world. Learn more about lighthouse keeping at <https://newdungenesslighthouse.com/>

PACIFIC GREEN SPHINX MOTH

Debbie McDonald



As I write this (February 7th) a Pacific green sphinx moth has graced my sunny front screen door. The shape of this fuzzy moth caught my attention and curiosity grabbed hold. The moths are one of the earliest to fly, mid-January to mid-April. With only one generation per year, their larvae pupate under leaf litter in oak woodlands and grasslands like High Prairie. The males are more likely to fly at night, attracted to lights. Adult moths don’t eat, only the larvae in the form of hornworms find nourishment in the ground. Because adults fly so early in winter, they’re rarely seen but I’ve enjoyed discovering one sunning on my door.

POST OFFICES ON HIGH PRAIRIE

Barbara Parrish

The following information was taken from historical documents from the High Prairie Historical Society.

High Prairie was first established as HIGH-LAND, October 20, 1880

Renamed WILDCAT, April 11, 1881

Renamed HARTLAND, July 20, 1881

Post Offices were located in homes

- 1) 1880, Chester Parshall
- 2) 1890, David K. Clark
- 3) 1899, Roena A. Clark
- 4) 1902, John W. Boston
- 5) 1909, William H. Butts
- 6) 1912, William Bridgefarmer
- 7) 1916, Albert E. Majors
- 8) 1919, Emma E. Kelleher
- 9) 1921, Birdie Ann Taylor
- 10) 1923, John A. Taylor
- 11) 1930, Discontinued and moved to Lyle

Post offices changed locations with almost every change in postmasters. Mr. Parshall, who had so much difficulty in deciding upon a name for his post office, conducted it in his farm home, (Section 24), located on the Lyle to Goldendale road which led east through Centerville. The Clarks were known to have operated a store about a mile NW of Parshalls (SE Section 14), with the post office located there. Mr. Boston took it to his farm home situated about 2 miles farther northwest (SW Section 11), but Mr. Butts brought it back to the site which present-day maps show as Hartland (Section 14). Bridgefarmer's home was a short distance west (Section 23), as was Major's.

Mrs. Kelleher had the aid of many patrons in erecting a small post office building beside her farm home (Section 12). The Taylor's moved this building to their home (Section 23), where it is still standing, unused for almost a century. All of these sites are located around 10 miles from Lyle.

Mr. Clark's son, Byrd, was still in his teens when he carried mail for contractor Van Sorensen in a one-horse cart three times per week from Lyle. There was just enough room for the driver, but Byrd sometimes squeezed in a passenger. He would leave his horse and cart at a Lyle livery stable, row a boat across the Columbia to Rowena, Oregon, to meet the night train from The Dalles at 11:00 p.m. Often he went to The Dalles, got the mail, and started his return trip by steamer about 5:00 a.m. Once the boat sprung a leak and began to sink, but it was run onto a sandbar where it rested with the lower deck underwater. In order to keep the mail dry, Byrd took the pouches on his back until a deckhand could get into a lifeboat and row him to Lyle. Sometimes mail was brought to Lyle by the steamer and Byrd had to make a hurried trip to Hartland and back to catch the returning boat at Lyle with outgoing mail. The road was steep, narrow and rough.



This is a 9x12 pastel painting of a view from the Crawford Oaks hiking trail in the Columbia Hills State Park.
Artist: Lita Colligan, High Prairie, Lyle



"Winter" Photo: Chester McLind

SPRING THUNDER

by Mark Van Doren

Submitted by Peg Callendo

Listen. The wind is still,
And far away in the night --
See! The uplands fill
With a running light.

Open the doors. It is warm;
And where the sky was clear--
Look! The head of a storm
That marches here!

Come under the trembling hedge--
Fast, although you fumble...
There! Did you hear the edge
of winter crumble?

A HIGH PRAIRIE FAVORITE RECIPE

Sue Patterson

A real tasty recipe you can place into a crockpot and have ready when needed. I got this recipe from a friend years ago and have just called them Sue's Beans. Serve this with Corn Bread, and you will have a great meal. I am sure you will enjoy!

Sue's Beans

Dice and Cook:

1# hamburger

1# Bacon

1 large Onion

Add: Hamburger, bacon, onion and the following ingredients to crockpot.

2 31oz cans Pork and Beans

1 16oz can Kidney Beans (rinsed)

1 16oz can Butter Lima Beans (rinsed)

1 cup Ketchup, 3 tsp white vinegar, 1 tsp salt, ¼ cup brown sugar, ½ tsp pepper

Cook on low 4-5 hours in your crockpot.
Yum!



Tom McMackin/Chief Sarah Hancock

Your Klickitat County Fire Protection District #14/High Prairie logged 123 runs in 2023 and, to date, 6 runs in 2024. The majority of these incident responses were medical calls. There were no significant wildfire calls of High Prairie or Lyle districts. We provided mutual aid to a few of our neighboring districts. We declined requests for state mobility assistance for major conflagration events in order to keep our resources at home for the protection and support of our communities.

Firefighters Brenda Edin, Chris Roper, Samuel Holman and Gregory Haner have each dedicated many added hours of their personal time to improve the safety and quality of services for your department. Brenda and Chris completed a Firefighter 1 training academy through Mid-Columbia Fire & Rescue (MCFR) on scholarships secured by Chief Hancock through the Columbia Gorge Training Association fire community. This meant 10 weeks of classroom, online, and hands-on practical training modules, covering a range of fire service topics from the history of the fire service community to the practical aspects of fire and rescue response strategies and techniques. They brought those lessons learned back to share with High Prairie's volunteers in order that we all can better serve our neighbors in need – safely and effectively! HP Firefighter Gregory Haner, who is currently an MCFR full-time firefighter/paramedic, participated as a trainer in the academy and is an important member of the training core group for Fire District #14. Samuel Holman is currently enrolled in training to become a certified EMT for KCFPD #14.

Thank you to Brenda, Chris, Greg, and Samuel!

“Thank You!” shout out – For the generous donations received from members of the community. Your generosity is truly appreciated for the support it provides to your volunteers. We received many donations in memory of Fred Henschell – Fire Fighter, mentor, friend and a beloved champion of the community! He’d be quite pleased and humbly honored by your gestures of love and appreciation.

Chief Hancock continues her concerted efforts to keep all elements of your department afloat and on task as KCFPD #14 cruises into 2024's uncharted waters. Safety and the development of professionalism in service and skill sets are key elements for the department. Her philosophy and commitment to progress with those elements makes the department better for us all. Glenna Scott, High Prairie's administrative assistant and secretary for our Fire Commissioners, is a critical presence in keeping everything on course. The synergy these two bring to managing and negotiating the administrative organizational red tape and many other critical challenges supports everything the department requires – while keeping your volunteers' best interests to heart. One such effort secured a WA DNR grant to replace our aging, well-worn and required wildland fire PPE jackets and pants!

Heath Care Note: Medicare now covers the Shingles vaccine for eligible participants. If you qualify, discuss this vaccine protec-

tion with your primary care provider.

If you would like to see the kinds of activities that occupy our volunteers or are interested in joining KCFPD #14, please feel free to stop by the Struck Road Fire Hall at 701 Struck Road on the 1st/2nd/4th Tuesday of the month. Anyone is welcome to come and look at the department's infrastructure and equipment and talk with a volunteer or two about what we do and the types of services we provide. Questions and comments? Please leave contact information with time and date by phone at the Struck Road Fire Hall (509-637-2576) or at either of these email addresses: chief@highprairiefire.com or HighPrairie1489@gmail.com.



Tom McMackin

Special Note: Regarding Evergreen Trees

No New pruning or removal work -- Now until the Fall's first frost! It can attract **Ips Beetle(s)** to your trees and the wider surrounding area and begin an infestation cycle that will spread rapidly, potentially killing your pines and seriously impacting your lovely White Oak/Evergreen Savannah vistas. New springtime damage (such as pruning) attracts beetles, allows easy access for laying their eggs in the 'injured' tree, and exposes all other trees to beetle infestation!

The wildland fire season begins NOW! (The snow, mud, ice, and muck are purely a distraction...)

Fire is a natural component of all of Nature's ecosystems. The White Oak/Evergreen Savannah we live in and call High Prairie is no exception. This coexistence is referred to as a **WUI** -- Wildland (no humans)/Urban (humans) Interface. A wildland fire event in **our WUI** is entirely a matter of 'When' not 'If'. The primary 'if' variable factors are how bad and how long-term any impacts may be!

The Firewise USA® program is a community-based program developed for individuals and communities to bring wildfire awareness, education, and practical resources to humans in their unique **WUIs**. **It is not** a clear-cut and take-no-prisoners horticulture mandate. Following a list of sequential tasks using the Firewise concepts and principles empowers you to create a 'defensible space' zone, which deters wildfire impact on your property and increases fire response teams' ability to safely protect lives and property. The program also provides communities with a framework for reducing the risk of wildfire, encouraging neighbors to work together and take action; and it offers a variety of resources to assist homeowners, program participants, and other wildfire stakeholders.

High Prairie Fire supports the Firewise effort, but it is not a program or function of Klickitat County Fire Protection District 14/High Prairie. If you are interested in learning more about Firewise or becoming involved in developing and participating in this effort for your High Prairie community, please contact me using the contact

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information at the end of this article.

Firewise actions to take now:

First order of business -- Follow up on your checked-off Fall 'Firewise To-Do List'

Begin disposal of your Fall 2023 collected property clean-up material and slash. Gather it into a location or locations that are readily accessible and safe for you to easily prepare the debris for chipping or burning, as you choose.

WA DNR burn pile guidelines specify that only 'natural' -- grass, weed, brush, or tree -- sourced debris are legal. A burn permit is not required by KCFPD #14 at this time; however, adding trash to a burn pile or using a burn barrel are illegal and may result in citations and fines. https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/rp_burn_outdoors_northeast_english.pdf

Firewise -- things to do for this Spring & early Summer:

Survey your Firewise buffer zones. Create a checklist for action(s) you can start, given the weather, etc.

1st: (0-5') Inspect your home and other structures from the top down / from foundation out 5 feet...

- Observe where things like leaves, small twigs, pine needles & cones, etc. accumulated for removal
- Is there anything combustible on or near by that might hold an ember or lead fire to your house ?

**** Clean-up & Clear up these areas** (Now! or scheduled as weather allows)
2nd: (5'-30') From your buildings' foundations out into your surrounding spaces

(30' is a minimum buffer area between structures or other fuel sources for defensive firefighting & protection)

- Create a plan for making this zone 'protective' for your property and a working zone for any firefighters, who are assigned to protect your home and other homes near your property.
- Is there an accessible 'fire lane' around your structures for them to work ?

**** Create and execute a plan in the next 4--6 weeks...** (well before High Prairie's burn ban goes into effect!)

3rd -- (30'-100') From the close in Firewise buffers above -- plan for work in your wild rural environments.

**** Clean-up & Clear up these zones as you can, working from the center outward !**

Resources --

Contact me, Tom McMackin, if you'd like more information on the 'Firewise' and 'Ready, Set, Go!' programs; if you have comments or suggestions; or if you would like to be more involved with the High Prairie Firewise effort. I can answer questions and get you connected with the resources we have available as a recognized Firewise Community. Contact me by email at Firewise.onhighprairie@gmail.com or by phone message by calling 509-365-2786. Please, if you don't receive a response from your email, call me!

Online resources:

<http://www.Firewise.org> or <http://www.Firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness/be-Firewise/home-and-landscape.aspx>

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

Preparedness & Evacuation

<https://www.nevadacountyca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/15855/Nevada-Couny-Evacuation-Guide---2015-PDF>

<https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/go-evacuation-guide/pre-evacuation-preparation-steps/>

MAXIMIZING RETIREMENT INCOME

Jon Hancock

Retirement planning is a crucial aspect of financial management, especially for folks who don't enjoy paying more in taxes than the law requires. With the tax code's unique challenges and opportunities, it's essential to have a robust plan to maximize income and ensure a comfortable and secure retirement. This article explores strategies to maximize retirement income, focusing on minimizing taxes, taking Social Security at the optimal time, and considering guaranteed income from an annuity.

Minimizing Taxes: One of the most effective ways to increase retirement income is by minimizing taxes. This can be achieved through various methods and strategies. Firstly, investing in tax-efficient retirement accounts like 401(k)s or IRAs can provide significant tax advantages during the working years. Contributions to these accounts are often tax-deductible, and earnings grow tax-free. However, withdrawals from this type of account in retirement are typically taxed at high ordinary income rates. Secondly, taking advantage of tax deductions and credits available for healthcare expenses, charitable contributions, and certain investments can also reduce tax liability. Lastly, having the flexibility to strategically withdraw from different types of accounts such as non-qualified, qualified, Roth, and annuity can help you pay much less to Uncle Sam in retirement.

Optimal Social Security Timing: Social Security benefits constitute a significant portion of retirement income for most people. The timing of when you start collecting these benefits can greatly impact the total amount received over time. While you can start receiving benefits as early as age 62, doing so typically reduces your monthly benefit amount. Delaying Social Security until full retirement age (FRA, age 67), or even as late as age 70, can significantly increase the monthly benefit. This strategy can be particularly beneficial if you expect to live a long life, as the increased benefits can really add up over time.

Guaranteed Income from Annuities: Annuities can provide a steady stream of income during retirement. While there are various types of annuities, all offer the benefit of guaranteed income which is otherwise not easy to come by except for Social Security. Fixed annuities, for example, provide a guaranteed income stream regardless of market conditions. Having some portion of your total nest egg not subject to the whims of Mr. Market can provide several benefits. When evaluating the impact to maximizing retirement income it's important to consider factors such as the financial strength of the insurance company and inflation protection when choosing an annuity. It's not appropriate in every situation, but can sometimes be an elegant and powerful tool to put in place.

Conclusion: Maximizing retirement income involves a combination of strategies tailored to individual financial situations. By evaluating these strategies and implementing what makes the most sense, one can ensure the financially secure and relaxed retirement you've worked so hard to achieve. Please note that to understand the best strategies for your specific situation it's a good idea to consult with a trusted financial advisor.

If you want to know more about me and what I do, check out my LinkedIn page at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jon-k-hancock/>.

(This publication is not intended as legal or tax advice. Financial Representatives do not render tax advice. Consult with a tax professional for tax advice that is specific to your situation.)

HUMMINGBIRDS

Mike Mahaffa

I believe there are a lot of residents on High Prairie that feed hummingbirds, including my wife and I. Rita and I find birds, and in particular hummingbirds (or hummers, in the vernacular) to be of special interest for what they do in their daily activities, how they are adapted to their specific life style and their migration habits.

We have three common species of hummingbirds found in the High Prairie area. One species, the Anna's Hummingbird will stay all year, even in January and February when the temperatures drop into the teens or even lower.

The other two species of hummers common on High Prairie are the Rufus and the Calliope. Occasionally Black-chinned hummers can be found on HP.

Some interesting facts:

- Hummers are the smallest species of birds and are only found in North and South America. Imagine if you were a visitor to High Prairie from Europe and watched a hummer do its feats. Hummers can fly forward, backward and straight up and down. Their heart will beat up to 1,200 beats a minute (they used a very small stethoscope!) to supply their muscles with energy to do their remarkable feats.

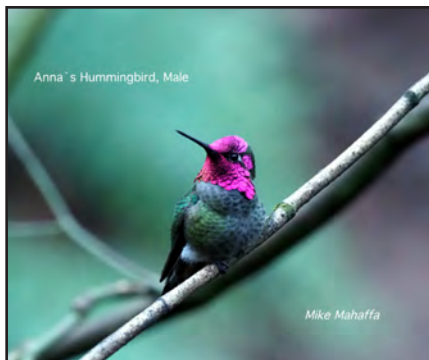
- The weight of hummers can vary but the ones on High Prairie weigh about a penny, for those of us who remember what a penny is. Or in eating terms, about the weight of an untoasted marshmallow.

- For those who feed hummers, the wing beats can vary from 720 to 5400 beats per minute. That is why it is very difficult to photograph the individual wing beats of hummers. This task had to wait for special flashes, film (at the time), and high speed cameras to be developed.

- One of the most fascinating things about hummers is their remarkable travels when they migrate, twice! a year. (As mentioned, some hummers do not migrate, pending reliable sources of food. Most of our resident HP hummers migrate, though Anna's may stay year around

on HP as below). The long distance migrant in Hummingbird World is our west coast bird, the Rufus hummingbird. The name comes from the redness of the hummer (rufous is a shade of red).

- Imagine you weigh a penny or a nickel and you are Rufus hummer wintering in southern Mexico. (Hummers aren't stupid – they



Anna's Hummingbird, Male

Mike Mahaffa



Rufous Hummingbird, Male

Mike Mahaffa

know where to enjoy December/January.) This Rufous decides to head north; but why stop in California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia? Let's go all the way north to central Alaska to breed. And then in August, do the reverse migration back to Mexico. All by a bird that, remember, weighs a penny or two. That is a round trip each year of over 8,000 miles. Unfortunately, the population of Rufous Hummingbirds is in decline; Anna's are increasing because of folks reliably feeding the Anna's in their chosen area.

- Hummers rarely use their two feet to land, but instead use their remarkable flying ability to feed, as you probably notice when you have hummer feeders out and about. Hummers eat very small insects along with sugar solutions primarily for the insects' protein content. Their tongue, flat with ridges to capture their liquid food, is called a bifurcated tongue. The tongue looks like a fine feather and is that way to move the sugar solutions or small insects into the gullet. A well-fed hummer can drink up to three times their weight in one day.

- The typical nest is the size of a thimble (I have never seen a nest) and held together with spider webs and made of primarily lichen. Nests usually have two eggs (in a nest the size of a thimble) which are incubated for 12 to 14 days by the female.

I have found on HP that Rufus and Anna's males are very territorial and will defend a sugar source very aggressively from morning to dark. It's best to have two or more feeders located away and not visible between feeders.

If Anna's hummingbirds do stay in the winter, they could use your help to survive. Feeding needs to be consistent, as their energy needs are enormous considering how small they are. Energy needs in summer can be 6,600 to 12,000 calories per day. If that were me, it would be easy to lose weight.

My next topic will be on tips I have found over the years for feeding hummers on High Prairie, both summer and winter.

AT THE GOLDENDALE LIBRARY

Terra McLeod, Branch Manager

We are hiring! We are seeking a Senior Library Assistant to help support our communities both on the road in our Bookmobile and in the library. Visit our website <https://www.fvrl.org/work-fvrl> for more information and to apply!

Join us at the Goldendale Community Library for these upcoming programs and more!

Children & Families

Wednesdays Family Storytime: 10:30AM-11:30AM

1st Saturday Family Storytime 10:30AM-11:30AM

Wellness Warriors Series:

A series for kids to learn about our bodies and different areas of wellness to live a happy, healthy life. Presented by the Klickitat County Health Dept. For children ages 6-10.

February 20, : Super Healthy, Super Happy 3:00-4:00 PM

March 19, : Grow Your Mind & Body 3:00-4:00 PM

April 16, : Healthy You 3:00-4:00 PM

May 21, : Wellness Warriors 3:00-4:00 PM

4th Wednesdays: Learn & Play: 2:00-3:00PM

For children ages 0-5 and their parents or caregivers. @ Goldendale Primary School.

Teens

May 25, : Bushcraft 101 Workshop 11:00AM-12:00 PM

with Mike Lummio of Bushcraft Northwest

All ages

2nd Mondays: **Welcome To Your Library** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Call for an appointment for yourself or a group for a tour of the building and our physical & online resources.

February 14, : **READ IN** 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Show your love for reading, stories, and the libraries that hold them. Hang out during the day with a warm beverage and baked treat. Various programs are scheduled all day.

March 9, : **Seed Swap** 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Visit the library and give and/or take the perfect seeds for your garden this year. Create your own Egg Carton Seed Starter while supplies last.

Saturday Bookmobile & Crafts

April 6, : Lyle Activity Center 1:30 - 4:00 PM
Join us for our special Saturday Bookmobile & Craft visits where you can browse our collection on the Bookmobile, and enjoy a craft for all ages.

1st Mondays: **One-On-One Tech Help** 10:00 AM -1:00 PM
Call the library for a reservation

3rd Mondays **Book Group** 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Attend in person or virtually

February 17, : **Community Screening & Discussion: Hiding in Plain Sight: Youth Mental Illness** by Ken Burns.
Light lunch provided. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM In partnership with CPAKC, WAGAP, and Wellpoint.

February 29, : **Infant Feeding Class** 10:00 - 11:30 AM
Join us for a breastfeeding and infant feeding workshop presented by certified lactation consultants and local WIC staff. Learn about breastfeeding, bottle feeding, pumping and baby behavior. Will

feature a Q&A session with resources available. Partners and siblings welcome! Spanish translation available.

March 2, : **Growing Seeds & Other Gardening Tips** 1:00 - 2:00 PM
Learn how to grow plants from seeds, best practices in planting, and further care with former Master Gardener Lorraine Fritsch.

March 26, : **Introduction to Social Security** 5:30 - 6:30 PM
Learn Basic Rules and Claiming Strategies about Social Security benefits and how to maximize what you are legally entitled to receive. Presented by Jon Hancock of Hancock Advisors LLC.

Women's History Documentary Series:

11:00 AM

March 7, : **Big Dream: Young Women Entering STEM Fields**

March 21, : **Skate Dreams**
5:30 PM

March 14, : **Miss Representation**

March 28, : **Barbie**
*sponsored by the Soroptimists of Goldendale and Friends of the Goldendale Library

May 19, : **Washington Humanities presents Hunting, Fishing, and Native Sovereignty** 5:30-6:30

FVRL Bookmobile Schedule

LYLE Every other Wednesday (opposite weeks from Centerville)
Jan 10, 24; Feb 7, 21; Mar 6, 20; Apr 3, 17; May 1, 15, 29
Lyle Community School.....9:30-11:30
Lyle Market*11:45-12:30

CENTERVILLE Every other Wednesday (opposite weeks from Lyle)
Jan 17, 31; Feb 14, 28; Mar 13, 27; Apr 10, 24; May 8, 22
Centerville School.....9:30-11:30

ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY

Peter Rowe

I live on Mt. Budmore, off Centerville Hwy, close to the High Prairie Community Center (I can see the center from my house). All of the three attached astrophotographs were taken from our house within the past week. Here is a little about each of them in case they are of interest to you:

1) Andromeda Galaxy

This is our nearest Galaxy and contains over 100,000 million stars. It is 2.5 million light years away which means the light we photograph today has been traveling to us for 2.5 million years. Our Milky Way galaxy and the Andromeda galaxy are expected to collide in around 4-5 billion years. The Andromeda Galaxy is visible to the naked eye as a faint smudge close to the W-shaped constellation Cassiopeia. It is the furthest item that the human eye can see.

2) Rosette Nebula

The Rosette Nebula is in our Milky Way Galaxy at a distance of 5,000 light-years from Earth. The blue, yellow and red colors use what is called the 'Hubble Color Palette' and come from the radiation of approximately 2,500 young stars. It is not visible to the naked eye. Fun fact: in 2019 the Oklahoma Legislature passed HB1292 making the Rosette Nebula as the official state astronomical object.

3) Horsehead Nebula

The Horsehead Nebula is a small dark nebula with a red background of hydrogen dust and gas. It is an easily identifiable nebula because of its resemblance to a horse's head, which you can see if you zoom in. It is 1,375 light-years away and was discovered by the Scottish woman astronomer Williamina Fleming in 1888. Another (male) astronomer named E. E. Barnard described it and so it was named 'Barnard 33'. The Horsehead Nebula is not visible to the naked eye but it is located right next to the left-most star in Orion's belt, named Alnitak.

