



Because if you can't make fun of yourself once in a while, you're taking life far too seriously

Story by ADAM LAPIERRE
Photos by KIRBY NEUMANN-EAR

For regular Hood River News readers, this page should look familiar. At about this time last year we featured an inaugural "make fun of the editor while he's on vacation" photo essay titled "KNR's Greatest Heads." The full-page spread paid homage to the remarkable number and variety of backs-of-heads photos that had secretly been taken and secretly collected during the previous year.

In this second installment, we look back at 2012 in Hood River County, again through the lens of Editor Kirby Neumann-Rea in a piece aptly titled "The Ear in Review."

As if responding to last year's jabbing, KNR did in fact change his approach to shooting news events in the field. Rare are the days of standing behind tall bald men and curly-haired ladies to get photos of things on the other side of the room. Touché, cheers, hurrah, bravo, bravo ... It took public ridicule and more than a decade of practice, but all that hard work is finally paying off.

Of course, there's still plenty of room for good old-fashioned office mockery and testing the boss's sense of humor.

What we see here is the amusing byproduct of trying to correct years' worth of bad habits in a single leap. Change often must come in steps, and it appears in this case the first step is about 90 degrees. To avoid one Hood River News photographic fallacy, we've invented another. We now have inner ear canals to add to the list red-flag-photos along with things like backs of heads, low-cut blouses, double-chins, animal backsides, any kind of eating, nose scratching and comb-overs on windy days.

In secretly cataloguing these gems throughout 2012, there was far too much cartilage for a single page photo essay; so extra points were awarded to images with multiple ears, ears of politicians or local celebrities and certain technical features like blurry ear, flash ear, under/overexposed ear and composition favoring in-focus lobes with the actual subject of the scene blurry somewhere in the background.

And for nostalgia's sake, special County Fair Grand Champion ribbons were awarded in exceptional cases where backs of heads AND insides of ears were captured in the same image.

■ In the spirit of the mantra "If you can't make fun of yourself once in a while, you're taking life far too seriously," *cheers* to everyone, and *ear*'s to a wonderful 2013 in Hood River Canal ... I mean County.



EAR AND THERE: Photos of 2012, top to bottom, are Hops Fest, HRV assembly, high school halftime, wine tasting, City Hall dedication, glacier hike, Shop With A Cop, beer break at Ground, Harry Potter Trivia, Homecoming, waterfront Park, Jackson Park, Chamber Business After Hours, candidates' night.

