



# A look back: Slice of local life

The Hood River News set out to interview 52 people (and sometimes couples) for our weekly Slice of Local Life column this year. Having written two-thirds of these columns (or so says Kirby; math was never my strong point), I can tell you firsthand that Hood River is filled with remarkable people.

I know, I know. That's sounds like hyperbole. It's not. No matter whom I spoke with—whether they were in school or at

retirement age, whether they were born and raised here or newly arrived, whether they were business owners or public servants—I was constantly amazed by the enthusiasm everyone had not only for what they do, but for our town. People simply love being here.

It is interesting — and quite fun — to talk to people who enjoy what they do. The only downside I found to writing these features is that I had to cut so much from my interviews for space reasons. I had to

remind myself a few times that this is the Slice, not the Book, but it was still painful.

For 2014, we have a twist planned for the Slice: Every month, we will focus on a particular theme.

I, for one, am glad the Slice isn't going away — there are so many more stories to tell.

Here are our 2013 subjects, continuing on page B3.

— Trisha Walker

### Adopt a Dog and Linda Vanderburg



Linda Vanderburg

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times ..."

For ownerless dogs at the Adopt a Dog program of the Hukari Animal Shelter in Odell both images were accurate to describe the lives in the room full of adoptable canines.

Linda Vanderburg would know. She is the executive director of the nonprofit pet adoption program.

### Joe Silliman cooks up 'community'



Joe Silliman

Joe Silliman wants "community" to be the common ingredient in everything served at Cooper Spur Mountain Resort restaurant.

Since taking over as chef of the Meadows-owned restaurant in December 2011, Silliman has seen business steadily increase.

### Kevin Long straightens things out at Apple City



Kevin Long

This time of year, cars are sliding into each other, into guardrails and into ditches. And that means plenty of work for Kevin Long.

Long, 24, works as an auto body technician at Apple City Auto Body, on the Heights in Hood River.

### Hood River Organics: From the field to your door



Hood River Organics

Take a quick picture of Hood River agriculture in your mind.

Got it? Good.

What a bout a box of kale? No?

Brian Shaw and Nate Thall would like you try that picture again.

### Heidi Huskey, Parkdale School secretary

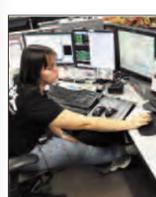


Heidi Huskey

"I love every minute of every day."

Heidi Huskey has said that for 40 years as secretary of Parkdale Elementary, a school where she also attend-

### 9-1-1 dispatch: Ready for anything



Tammy Hughes

Hood River County 9-1-1 Dispatch commander Marita Haddan is blunt about one of the most basic qualifications to be a dispatcher: "If you can't multitask this job is not for you."

She's not kidding.

At the dispatcher's station sit three computer mice for controlling five different screens.

### Library's family programs plant many seeds



Jana Hannigan

What's happening at the library these days?

The answer is: singing, crafts, reading aloud, snacks, movies, drama, trivia events and more, to go with the usual reading, listening and research.

The list of programs and activities for children, teens and families, is a long one.

### A warm welcome awaits at the 'troll bridge'



Peggy Towery

Friendliness is more than idle talk for Peggy Towery.

"Hey, doing fine, how about you?"

Towery has a warm expression for everyone as she puts the cheer into high gear as motorists stop to pay the toll at Bridge of the Gods in Cascade Locks.

### Tammy Hall: A blooming business



Tammy Hall

Tammy Hall began her love affair with flowers when she was just 16. That's when she took on the mantle of floral delivery person for her parents' flower shop on the Heights. She's taken a few detours since then...

### Kelly Beard: A principal's principles



Kelly Beard

Loaded up with a flourish of specialized equipment and moving with the speed of a gazelle, May Street Elementary Principal Kelly Beard heads briskly toward the cafeteria and playground to share some face time with his students.

### Dave Koebel: Passion for river and sky



Dave Koebel

This week has been mostly cold, windy and rainy; not exactly the kind of weather that makes you want to go flying.

But Thursday at Ken Jernstedt Airfield in Hood River, Dave Koebel is doing his pre-flight check.

### Becky Bugge serves among friends of FISH



Becky Bugge

Bugge has been volunteering with the program since 2004, when then (and now) FISH Food Bank President Marianne Durkan asked Bugge to help.

"She said, 'You're retired now, want to do this?'" says Bugge.

### Rhea Hergenrath: Good news for your garden



Rhea Hergenrath

As delicate scents waft on softening spring breezes, a stroll through the life's work of Rhea Hergenrath will bring most visitors a deep sense of wonder and calm.

Good News Gardening has been brightening

### 'Spoonng out goodness and spring cheer'



Marcia Spooner

The sweet aroma of delicious dark purple berries bubbling on the stove. Vibrant patterned fabric aprons and purses hanging gaily from antique wooden racks. Delectable pies of every variety calling out,

### Wy'east chief Greg Borton: Here to help people



Greg Borton

Wy'east Fire District Chief Greg Borton wears only one firefighter's helmet these days, but it wasn't long ago that he wore two.

Borton has been in the fire service for 35 years, spending the majority of that time with the Pine Grove Rural Fire District.

### Nathan DeVol: Coffee service on a first-name basis



Nathan DeVol

Walk into Dog River Coffee, and there's a good chance you'll be served by owner Nathan DeVol.

DeVol describes himself as a hands-on business owner with an official title that reads something like "owner, manager, barista, light bulb changer ..."

### Horizon's Jim Brown: teaching in many ways



Jim Brown

Jim Brown is a great example of never giving up until you find your niche in life.

He has experienced many different career aspects over his lifetime; from being a pro-league baseball hopeful, to applying for dentist school, then teaching science and math.

### Helping people play safely at the water



Liz Whitmore

One year ago, Liz Whitmore read an employment listing in the newspaper, an opportunity that truly struck chord of interest.

Whitmore is the water-front coordinator for the Port of Hood River.

### Larry Wyatt: Hands-on approach to music



Larry Wyatt

There's an enthusiastic tone in Larry Wyatt's voice as he demonstrates a unique wooden instrument that sits on the floor in the front of his May Street School music classroom. "These are 'Studio 49' German-engineered xylophone bass boxes ..."

### Coral Worth: Twenty-four years and counting



Coral Worth

Hood River Sports Club manager Coral Worth has witnessed a lot of changes during her 24 years with the business. She's seen owners, managers, day-care and front desk staff come and go.

### Tammie & Kaitlin Eckert: Still learning



Tammie & Kaitlin Eckert

Every Thread Counts — ETC to locals — celebrated its one-year anniversary May 1 under the new ownership of mother-daughter team Tammie and Kaitlin Eckert.

The business will celebrate its one-year anniversary at its new location ...

### Molly Clarke knows the scoop at Mike's



Molly Clarke

Molly Clarke, Hood River Valley High School senior, has been employed at Mike's Ice Cream for the past three years, and she can't think of one downside to working with ice cream all summer long.

### Yong Cho: Serving the Odell Community



Yong Cho

Yong Cho has been commuting to Mid Valley Market, the store he purchased in Odell from John and Kathy Alley in 2007, from Portland for the last six years. He makes a 180-mile round trip every day, taking only one day off per month—if that.

### Rick Routson: Orchardng 'is in my blood'



Rick Routson

Rick Routson's earliest memory takes place in his family's orchard: When he would venture into the orchard with his parents as a child, he was usually placed in one of the big wooden fruit bins for safe-keeping.

# A look back: Slice of local life

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#### Belinda Ballah: Positive about prevention



Belinda Ballah

You may have seen the tobacco and alcohol prevention stickers, posters or ads, but do you really know who is behind Health Media Club and all these ads? Tobacco Prevention Coordinator Belinda Ballah works with youth from Wy'east Middle School, Hood River Middle School and Hood River Valley High School.

#### Lifeguard Leo Dorich keeps watch



Leo Dorich

Swimming involves vivid verbs and despite the understated manner of lifeguard Leo Dorich, many of those verbs apply to him. He jumped right in as a toddler, made a splash at it, dove into his lifeguard class, and this fall he will plunge into international travel.

#### Muir Cohen: Keeping books in Hood River



Muir Cohen

Muir Cohen wanted to open a bookstore after he retired. It didn't quite work out the way he planned. Muir and his wife, Jenny, purchased Waucoma Bookstore from Charlie and Sally LaVenture on April 1, 2008.

#### Fairgrounds are a year-round joy for Clara Rice



Clara Rice

Clara Rice, Hood River County Fair manager, is retired. Well, sort of. She retired from Sprint in 1994, but quickly became bored. So when the fair manager position opened up two years later, she decided to apply.

#### Dave McAlister enjoys his work, expressly



Dave McAlister

Dave McAlister has done every possible job in his 15 years with the Postal Service. He started as part-time Christmas help (that doesn't count toward his 15-year total), working his way through the ranks as a mail processor, carrier, clerk and postmaster.

#### Brooke Pauly finds her place in Hood River



Brooke Pauly

When Brooke Pauly and her husband, Mike, were married almost 11 years ago, they bought a travel trailer, quit their jobs, and toured the United States. The trip, while fun, had a purpose, too: The Paulys wanted to move to a small town, and they were looking for just the right one.

#### Belialdo and Reyna: Picking and planting together



Belialdo Galves and Reyna Gomez-Larios

Reyna Gomez-Larios and Belialdo Galvez have always worked in the field. In Mexico, they owned a ranch where they planted 50 acres of maize. They even tried planting rice one year. When they came to the United States in January of 1999, they started working in the orchards.

#### Tammi Packer keeps it fresh



Tammi Packer

This weekend (Aug. 16-18) is the Fruit Loop's Summer Fruit Festival, and Tammi Packer is ready. Packer Orchards and Bakery, located along Highway 35 in Odell, has a host of goodies ready for hungry customers, including apple pie, apple cinnamon rolls and applesauce.

#### Caroline Mead: Surrounded by beautiful art



Caroline Mead

Caroline Mead, gallery manager at Columbia Art Gallery, loves being part of a community art center. "There's always something fun happening down here, whether it's an exhibit or a production or a presentation," she said. "I love being part of an organization that provides that."

#### The Woods give Rivertap new light



Holly and Tim Wood

The long hallway at Hood River's "speakeasy" is now a matter of choice. Owners Tom and Holly Wood of Rivertap have just completed an extensive expansion project, after just over a year in business. Fold-out doors tie directly to the sidewalk and give the restaurant a connection to Oak Street.

#### Eighth-grader Adrian Toche strives, and leads



Adrian Toche

Wy'east Middle School student Adrian Toche started eighth grade this week, but he's already mentoring sixth-graders. "Lots of kids need help," Adrian says, and his teachers see him as just the elder student for the job.

#### Kim Estey creates meals with care



Kim Estey

Kim Estey wants more work. As head of the kitchen at Hood River Valley Adult Center, she prepares and oversees weekday breakfasts and lunches. It is a job she loves, for several reasons. "Cooking. I just enjoy it. And meeting all the people. You get all kinds of people."

#### Bowling alley owner in league with community



Patrick Olson

Patrick Olson, proprietor of Orchard Lanes Bowling Alley, has owned the Heights-area business since 2009, but he's no stranger to the industry. Since the age of 15, Olson has held jobs in bowling alleys, continuing through college.

#### Alfredo Elisea works, runs and cooks



Alfredo Elisea

Alfredo Elisea took a break from work Thursday afternoon to run up and down with a bunch of 14-year-olds. The orchard foreman and referee was that age when he came to the United States in 1974 from Michoacan, Mexico.

#### Garrit Stoltz makes wines of influence



Garrit Stoltz

"I make wine in the oldest house in town, down in the old mortuary," said Garrit Stoltz, a 1998 graduate of Hood River Valley High School who has charted a global path to where he is now, crafting unique wines, one barrel at a time.

#### Ashley Huckaby: Planning's a pleasure



Ashley Huckaby

Ashley Huckaby, event coordinator for Hood River County Chamber of Commerce, has a lot on her plate these days. In just a couple of weeks, the 31st Annual Hood River County Harvest Fest gets under way at the Event Site on the waterfront.

#### Lucy Marquez serves as a strong school link



Lucy Marquez

Lucy Marquez, secretary II at Hood River Valley High School, is a 15-year employee of the Hood River County School District. Having lived in Hood River since the age of 5, she has a unique perspective on the local school system — and on what has changed, and what has stayed the same.

#### Josh Beckner knows the firefighter's life



Josh Beckner

Josh Beckner, West Side Fire Department lieutenant/training officer, has only been in his position since July 1, but his fire experience dates back to his junior year at Hood River Valley High School. He began as a student firefighter in 2002.

#### Sgt. Rau values family, calls Hood River home



Sgt. Andrew Rau

Andrew Rau, patrol sergeant with Hood River Police Department, did not plan to go into law enforcement. But, with 22 years of service, he's the senior-most member of the department, having been hired in July 1991. He's spent nearly his entire career in law enforcement in Hood River.

#### Nannette Mortensen: Cutting with care



Nannette Mortensen

Surviving cancer helped Nannette Mortensen craft a new mission statement for her life. "How do you give back to someone who has everything?" said Mortensen, who is back at work full-time as a hair stylist.

#### HRV junior Caitlyn Fick: A girl who's up



Caitlyn Fick

Caitlyn Fick, a junior at Hood River Valley High School, believes in helping others. She started early — as a 4-year-old, she helped her mother, Carolyn, with a lemonade stand after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., to raise money for victims.

#### Karen Lewis helps elders stay active



Karen Lewis

Karen Lewis received a hearty round of applause when she began her job as activities coordinator at Providence Down Manor this September. Literally. "My first day of work, I walked in here and my picture was on the front door," she said.

#### Library's Harley Judd connects with youth



Harley Judd

A brand new teen area is up and running at the Hood River library branch on State Street, and with it, new Teen Services Assistant Harley Judd. Judd began the position in May after several months as a substitute library employee.

#### Flaggers Betsy and Cheryl: Safety with a smile



Cheryl Rohan and Betsy Keith

Betsy Keith and Cheryl Rohan are friends who really, really enjoy what they do. The two are flaggers for Crestline Construction Company, which is based in The Dalles. The past couple of weeks have found them at the intersection of State and Sixth streets.

#### Gavin McAlpine: Forging ballet bonds and more



Gavin McAlpine

You might say Gavin McAlpine is a professional volunteer. "I love doing the charitable things I do," he said. "People keep asking me to do stuff and I keep saying yes." McAlpine volunteers with numerous agencies throughout Hood River.

#### Antonio and Joyce, a Yule décor team



Antonio Alvarado, Joyce McCarty

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in downtown Hood River, but nowhere is quite as Christmassy as the Oak Street Hotel. The hotel changes its holiday décor with the seasons, but its Christmas display is what really wows.

#### Barman Jimmy Dey savors the conversation



Jimmy Dey

"Dark and Stormy" might be Jim Dey's favorite drink, but this barman's way is just the opposite: calm and peaceful. Dey, the Jimmy of "Jimmy's Bar" at 3 Rivers Grill, looks forward to talking to his customers, learning and swapping notes and stories about surfing, motorcycles, carpentry, etc.