

Upcoming Kettle Falls School Levy

by Susan Urhausen

There will be an election on April 26th, 2011 to determine the fate of a replacement levy for the Kettle Falls School District. Simply put, the current levy is coming to the end of its four year term. It will cease functioning in October 2011. Something has become clear to me after discussing the finer details of this levy with Michelle Thomas (Chair of the levy committee), and discussions with KFSD Superintendent Greg Goodnight; there is nothing simple about this levy or the funding of a school district.

It is not simple to the novice. I'm sure it is like many other issues or situations, while it seems difficult at the onset, knowledge and information have a way of shining light into dark corners. For that reason, I think (and this is my opinion) it is imperative for voters to educate themselves on all the details of this levy. I consider myself fairly well-informed on many issues and discovered in my meeting with Thomas that I had some huge misconceptions

about a number of issues concerning this (and any) school district. For that reason, I urge the Kettle Falls Focus readers to not just walk away from this article about the levy and think that you are informed. Attend the levy committee meetings; ask some questions and learn a few things. They are there in support of the levy, but they are also there to inform and educate.

Michelle Thomas has chaired the last few levy committees. This will be the third time she has done so. Her efforts on behalf of getting levies passed goes back some eight years. Thomas, a 1992 Kettle Falls High School graduate, has two children in this school district now. Her interest in her children's education (and others as well) spurred her to chair the levy committee the first time. That experience sparked her interest in the bigger picture so much that she ran for and was elected to the Kettle Falls School District Board. While

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Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge Sponsoring Evening Program Featuring A Locally Based Wildlife Expert

Do you ever wonder about the cats that live in the woods where we hike or hunt? Other than the fat tabby that curls up by your woodstove, Northeastern Washington is home to several species of bigger cats.

The Friends of the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge are sponsoring an outstanding evening program featuring a locally based Wildlife expert. April 1st at the Colville Community College at 7 pm, biologist Scott Fisher will present an informative presentation on Canada Lynx Recovery in Washington State.

Scott Fisher has been conducting wildlife research in Washington since 1990. After completing his education at Humboldt State University, he began his career working for the US Forest Service on northern spotted owl issues on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. He was hired by the Washington Department of Natural Resources as the Region Fish and Wildlife Biologist in Northwest Region in 1998, where his work focused on northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet conservation on state lands. In 2003, he transferred to Northeast Region, based in Colville, where he has changed his focus from feathers to fur, working primarily on Canada lynx, grizzly bears, and now wolves. He is a lead investigator on the current lynx habitat research project in Okanogan County, a member of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone Technical Team, and recently discovered the second breeding pair of gray



wolves in northeastern Washington.

The doors will open at 6:30 pm for refreshments and displays in the lobby of the Community College located at 985 S. Elm Street. Members of the Friends group will be on hand with information about becoming a member, upcoming events and t-shirts will be on sale. The Friends of the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge is a non-profit support organization, specializing in environmental education for area school children, trail building and advocacy for the protection of wildlife refuges nationwide.

The Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge is located 13 miles southeast of Colville in Stevens County. It is the only mountainous, mixed-conifer forest refuge in the lower 48 states. It was established in 1939 to provide a refuge and breeding ground for wildlife. Besides wildlife observation, activities on the Refuge included fishing, hunting, camping, hiking and non-motorized winter sports sports.

Time Heals

contributed by Pat Reneman

David Bull, who has left Kettle Falls, wrote the third of a three-part article about finding his birth mother and siblings which was published in the January 2011 Focus. In it he spoke about grief during the holidays, most specifically Christmas. I can truly empathize with how he feels. I feel badly for him and that he did not get to see his mother before she died.

My family has experienced this twice in the last ten years. In 2000, I arranged for my daughters, son and their families to travel to San Diego to be with my parents. Dad was 92 and Mom was 91. Neither felt they could travel to the East Coast any longer. Their last trip was in 1998 to celebrate their 90th birthdays at a party hosted by my sister and I. Dad became ill on Christmas Eve during the night but still insisted on going to Mass on Christmas Day. After brunch, it was evident we had to call 911 to take him to the hospital - he died that night in the emergency room with my mother and all the family there with him. It was so sad for all of us, and not how we planned the holidays.

In 2010, on December 12, my grandson, Alex, 17, was in a severe automobile accident and suffered diffuse extremely serious brain injury. He was in a coma for about 3 weeks and died at hospice on January 7, 2011. This tragedy was even harder to bear as Alex was a wonderful young man. He was a star athlete and student and a friend to all who knew him. There were over 48,000 hits on his

Caring Bridge site and over 2,000 people attended his funeral.

Grief is a pain - both figuratively and literally speaking. The pain is in our thoughts and hearts. To have to endure this intense sadness at the holidays makes us wish the holidays were not there. For years, after Dad died, I could hardly get my head and heart into celebrating and now it will even be worse since Alex died.

David Bull explained it well in stating it is "excruciating". This grieving affects all areas of our lives and some days it is hard to cope with the ordinary parts of living. We all grieve in different ways and none is perfect or right. It is trite but the phrase "time heals all wounds" is most apropos.

I write limericks for my family and friends and this is one I wrote about Alex:

*The words he came up with were foreign to me.
When I asked about them, he's say, "Tee-Hee"
I begged with might
For the name of the site
It took Hanukkah threats for him to give it to me.*

Alex always said, "Use the resources you have on hand." This, too, is what we can do when grief strikes us, be it any time or at the holidays. Family and friends extend their hands to help and one should let them. I thank all my new friends here in Kettle Falls and Colville for their sympathy and support.

The Drowsy Chaperone - A musical within a comedy

This creative new classic and winner of 5 Tony Awards will be performed by our very own Woodland cast and orchestra in Kettle Falls the first three weekends of March. This story is told by "The Man in the Chair", who happens to be a big fan of old Broadway musicals. The man in the chair is feeling kind of blue. And so to lift up his spirits, he decides to play one of his favorite cast recordings - "The Drowsy Chaperone". That show tells the story of a famous Broadway star who wants to get married and leave the show business forever. Her producer doesn't want to lose his big star, and he is willing to try everything to stop her marriage. So he hires a narcissistic gigolo to seduce her, with unpredictable results. While this plot unfolds on stage, the Man in the Chair makes his comments and tells us stories regarding the stars of that musical.

The "Drowsy Chaperone" actually started as a spoof of old musicals, written by friends for the wedding of Martin and his wife, Janet. Something that began as a wedding present has become this fabulous love letter to musical theatre. The Man in the Chair character is a brilliant concept and Woodlands is sure a lot of people will see part of themselves in that character. It's this Man that takes us for a journey to a time where musicals were simple entertainments with catchy tunes and plenty of laughs. More than the musical that unfolds around him, he's the heart and soul of this show. The music takes us back to a time of great songs and hummable tunes. The ensuing plot incorporates mistaken identities, dream sequences, spit takes, a female aviator, an unflappable English butler, an absent-minded dowager, a ditzzy chorine, a harried best man, and a "Topsy" chaperone. If you've ever sat in a dark theater and thought... "Dear Lord in heaven please let it be good show"...this is the musical is for you!

This musical will be presented at Woodlands Theatre in Kettle Falls, WA, March 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, & 20, 2011. Thursday, Friday, & Saturday night are 7:30pm, Sunday shows are at 3pm. Remember, we often sell out, so be sure to purchase your tickets early! Tickets for opening night Friday March 4 & Thursday March 17 are \$10 (any age). All other performances ; Adults \$15, Seniors (65+) and students/kids \$12. Tickets available at Main Street Floral, 104 North Main Street, 684-9096 beginning February 15. Visa and MasterCard accepted. For more information about this show or Woodlands please check our website woodlandproductions.org.

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