

THE NEWPORT MINER

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We welcome letters to the editor. Letters should be typed and submitted to The Miner and Gem State Miner office no later than 5 p.m. Friday for publication the following Wednesday. No letter will be published unless it is signed by at least one individual, even if the letter represents the view of a group. The letter must include a telephone number and address for confirmation of authenticity. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. The Miner reserves the right to edit to conform to our publication style, policy and libel laws. Political letters will not be published the last issue prior an election. Letters will be printed as space allows.

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CLOCKS A BETTER HOBBY FOR NEWPORT MAN

BY DON GRONNING
OF THE MINER

NEWPORT – Terry Little likes clocks. It's his hobby.

"I was in my 60s before I knew I could have a hobby," Little says outside his Newport apartment building.

For a good part of his life, his hobby was drinking. He hasn't had a drink in nearly 20 years now.

"When you have a bad habit, it takes over everything," he says.

A couple years ago, long after he'd quit drinking, he was winding a friend's grandfather clock in Newport and broke it. When he went to find a clock to replace it, he also found a cuckoo clock he liked in a second hand store in Priest River.

"They wanted \$75 for it," he says. "I offered them \$50 and they said all right."

He bought it and the next thing he knew he was researching the cuckoo clock. He found out it was made in the 1950s in West Germany. "It's older than I am," he says from his tidy apartment in Newport, where every hour, the cuckoo makes a sound.

The clock brought back memories of his grandmother, who had a cuckoo clock. When he was a youngster in Spokane, he used to stay in Hillyard with his grandmother on

'I'd be at my grandmother's and listen to the train whistle in the distance and the cuckoo clock. "I'd always wanted one.'

Terry Little

Clock afficionado

weekends.

"I'd be at my grandmother's and listen to the train whistle in the distance and the cuckoo clock," Little remembers. "I'd always wanted one."

He decided to keep buying clocks. He discovered one of the clocks he acquired was made by Gustav Becker, one of the most accomplished West German clockmakers of the mid to late 1800s. Becker won the "Medaille d'Or" for design at the 1852 Silesia Trade Exposition in Silesia, Germany. His clocks became known for their quality workmanship and hand carved cases. Little has a couple Becker clocks.

"At first I thought the West Germans made the best clocks," he says. "But it's really the Swiss who are known for making the best."

After getting the cuckoo clock, Little kept buying clocks he liked. He probably has a half dozen of them now. He has some on his wall, some in the closet, some in the kitchen. Some are in great condition and ready to sell, if he wanted to part with them, like the \$1,500 desk clock he has in his bedroom.

Others he's working on restoring. He doesn't particularly care if he sells them or not, he just likes having them and working on them.

Little came to Newport



MINER PHOTO/DON GRONNING

Terry Little winds one of his old clocks. Little started collecting and repairing clocks as a hobby about two years ago.

more than 20 years ago from Spokane. He had grown up in a family with seven children, a middle child. He had trouble sitting still in school, what would be called attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) now. He left school in the third grade, before learning to read.

"I taught myself," he says.

When he was about 14, he used to go hang out with the hobos in Hillyard.

"They would drink wine and pass it around," Little says, including to him. It was his first experience with drinking.

Little, 66, has worked at a variety of jobs throughout his life, from taking people horseback riding, to janitorial work to gardening. He worked for the City of Spokane for a while.

But eventually, alcohol addiction took over. He became estranged from his siblings, lost jobs and

more.

"Drinking led me to be homeless," he says. "I was basically a transient."

He was still drinking when he first arrived in Newport.

"I was running from myself and a drinking problem," he says.

In Newport, he started to come to grips with the problems alcohol had caused him and his loved ones.

"Drinking like that doesn't just affect you, it affects your family," he says. "For 20 or 30 years, my brothers wouldn't talk to me."

So he decided to quit.

"Basically, I was tired of all the pain in my life," Little says. He says quitting alcohol meant realizing he had to take responsibility for his actions, that they had consequences. Once he fully realized that, he decided to quit.

It wasn't exactly a straight line to sobriety but close.

After he quit drinking, he would still find himself at the store buying beer.

"I would go buy beer and bring it home and think about it and end up pouring it down the sink," he says. "I did that for a couple of weeks."

That was nearly 20 years ago.

He considers himself spiritual, although not steeped in religion.

Little is a survivor. He was diagnosed with lung cancer several years ago and after undergoing radiation treatment, has been in remission for a number of years.

He can be seen in Newport riding his bicycle around town.

He was willing to tell his story for this article, to talk about and show his clocks, of course, but also to let people know they can change, that it is possible to recover from addiction. He's living proof of that.

FRANCHISE:

FROM PAGE 1

typical for a franchise agreement to be written for longer terms, but the council can review it whenever they like. And it can be written so the city can research other options and ask voters if they want the city to start its own utility.

The council reviewed the current contract, approved in 1996, that expires in August. McAloon said she would like to start a new contract from scratch, as much of the verbiage is

outdated.

PUD Attorney Tyler Whitney has also been working on revising the current franchise agreement.

Sears asked what issues the city has had with the current agreement with the PUD.

"As far as I know, it's been fine," McAloon said.

Mayor Shirley Sands said there hasn't been a problem, that the city and the PUD work jointly on a lot of things.

PERSONNEL:

FROM PAGE 1

the next couple of weeks.

Zorica asked what the procedure is to hire a city employee. North explained that full-time positions are advertised in the local newspapers, including The Miner, The Beacon and the Spokesman-Review, on AWC Job Net and in the case of wastewater treatment employees, a wastewater system job board.

The city has hired four people in recent months, one of which was councilwoman Jami Sears who replaced Christian Meador when he moved out of the area. Two were full time positions that were advertised as explained and one was a part-time summer position. North said part-time

or summer positions are filled on a first-come, first serve basis by word of mouth, or through Rural Resources or a teenager looking for work. Those positions are not advertised, but often times the city personnel knows of someone who would be interested.

Zorica asked if the city has a Human Resources Department, which North explained was her. If someone has an issue with her, they are to go to the city administrator. Since there isn't one now, issues are to be taken to a direct supervisor.

When Pelleberg became city administrator, he asked the city attorneys to review the employee handbook and update it to comply with

state, federal and the city's policies. McAloon explained to Zorica that Pelleberg was expected to bring the handbook revisions before the council for final approval, but he didn't.

At the prior council meeting, held in June, the council, including Zorica requested a "red line" of the employee handbook, which would illustrate the changes that were made since the last time the council approved the handbook in November 2020.

"When we discovered the most recent updates were not sent to the city council as required," McAloon explained, Froese was asked to create the "red line" which will be given to the council

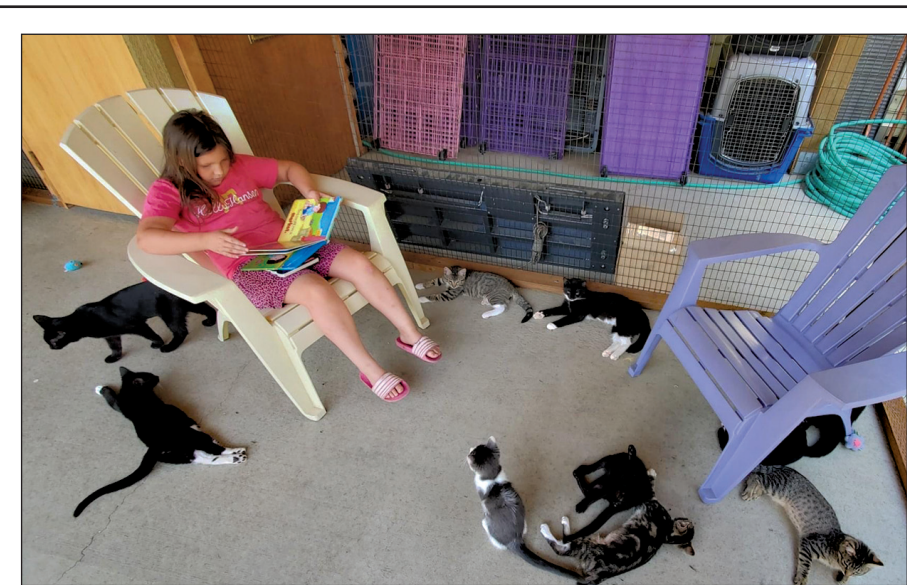
members this week.

Zorica asked to see the changes Pelleberg had made to the handbook, questioning why those changes were not readily available. McAloon explained that Pelleberg did not make any changes to the handbook; instead he asked for the attorneys to update the handbook to comply with state, federal and local laws. Those updates were made and approved by Pelleberg, instead of going before the council as required.

"There have been multiple revisions to the handbook (since November 2020)," McAloon said. "What we realized is that not all of the edits went before the council. That is what Kendel is working on."

At the last council meeting in June, Froese was directed to deliver a red-line version before the second meeting in July, which will be held on July 19. McAloon said the red-line was expected to be in council members' hands by July 7.

Zorica's final question was regarding personnel reviews. North said the previous city attorney, Tom Metzger, did away with regular personnel reviews. Zorica asked why Pelleberg was given an evaluation. North explained that during the probation period of any new employee, reviews are given at 30 days, 60 days and one year, as explained in the employee handbook, approved by the council.



COURTESY PHOTO

Ready for a story?

Shianne Mason, 8, reads to cats at Priest River Animal Rescue (PRAR). Mason volunteers at the shelter with her mom, Chelcy, and reads to the cats and socializes them while Chelcy works. "She knows everything about every cat there," Chelcy says. "She's actually helped with quite a few adoptions because she can give people lots of details on individual animals." For more information about PRAR, go to www.pranimalrescue.org.