



Sept. 7, 2022

## This is my final Science and Digital Briefs column for the Highway Shopper.

We who publish the Shopper are retiring because its ad revenue is no longer enough to pay its expenses.

Very, very sadly, this is the final issue of the Highway Shopper.

The first issue of the Shopper, then named White Pass Shoppers Wants and printed on a Ditto machine, was published March 16, 1976. I have owned it since July 1, 1987.

When I bought the Shopper in 1987, I promised, "The Shopper will serve the Lord." We believe we have done that.

## Thank you, advertisers, readers, organizations, and communities for letting us serve you these past 47 years!

### We will always celebrate the Shopper's accomplishments:

*I'd like to start thanking the thousands of people who have contributed importantly to and thus "are" the Shopper. The Shopper is not me but all of us. However, mainly because inevitably I'd forget some, I won't try listing them. But THANK YOU all of you!! We know you are as proud of the Shopper as we are!*

- We've been told many times by our advertisers that they've made many sales from their ads in the Shopper. To sell their products and services has always been the financial purpose and reason for existence of the Shopper. All our advertisers are our friends, have been our lifeblood. THANK YOU, ADVERTISERS!!

- For most of the 47 years, we've delivered weekly to about 250 businesses from Centralia to Naches. All these businesses have been our friends. We thank them for giving us space to present our Shoppers.

- We've delivered over 1.2 million Shoppers.

- We've delivered the Shopper through over 2,400 weeks.

- If all the Shoppers were stacked in one column, it would stand 19,000 feet or 3.6 miles tall, and would have weighed 120 tons.

- Delivery has not always been easy, but in 47 years we've only been late twice by one day and on those only on part of the route. We have sometimes during floods or deep snows jumped through very high hoops to keep delivery on time.

- We were the first newspaper in Washington State (*other than USA Today*) to send our newspaper to our printer over the internet, a major accomplishment!

- We created the first full-color image printed by our printer The Chronicle in Centralia. They were astounded at our image that came out of their own presses.

- We've paid over three million dollars in wages to our wonderful East County employees, helping to support everything in our communities.

- For the past several years, all our work files have been not local but in a the perfectly backed-up and secure internet "cloud" directly and instantly available to all of us at any time and from anywhere we are.

- Unlike most businesses, we've maintained local hourly backups of all our office computers. We've also maintained an off-site full set of monthly-updated clones of every one of our office computers.

- We've furnished laptop computers to each of our employees so they could work at home or anywhere in case the Shopper office were flooded or otherwise unavailable. At any time, we could have published the Shopper completely without use of our office.

- We have been one of the most advanced technological organizations in Eastern Lewis County.

- We have strongly emphasized advertising of our communities' events, often without charge. Our goal has been to bring people to our communities and businesses.

- Our columns and the crosswords have long been a major and most important part of the Shopper, giving our readers humorous and spiritual

stories, advice and news about life, their computers and phones, and about the incredible science being learned but not otherwise publicized in our rural area. The columns have been for many readers one of their most important reasons to pick up and read the Shopper. THANK YOU COLUMNISTS!!

- We have long published the Recreation Report about all activities in the outdoors, the National Forests and the fishing. In this we have extended the Forest Service, National Park, State, County and many other agencies' information effort out to the public throughout the area. Gathering this news has been one of our major efforts. We are concerned that this public source of outdoor information will no longer be available. However, we recognize that our communities have changed. As recently as 30 years ago, most of the jobs and financial income to east county households and businesses was directly forest related. But following the Spotted Owl shutdown of most of the logging including the closure of the mills and ranger station, most of this local people's close forest relationship and dependency no longer exists. While most residents of east county then knew our surrounding forests well and visited them often, most of the many new residents have little connection or interest in the forests or communities.

- The Snow Report in the Shopper giving snow depths at many elevations in the southern Washington Cascades was totally unique and depended on by many forest users. I was especially proud of our Snow Report.

- Through the 35 years that I have owned it, we have published the weekly Bible Readings of the international non-denominational Lectorary, which goes through the entire Bible every three years. With this, we have provided the entire Bible to you our readers more than eleven times. We have been blessed as you have thanked us for this.

- The many often-quite-complicated systems we've set up to accomplish all the various tasks required to publish each weekly Shopper are a great accomplishment indeed! To relate them would require a book! It is very sad to realize that these wonderful and successful systems are now laid down, of no further value.

- Calling on advertisers, gathering Recreation Report information and delivering the Shopper, we have driven over 1.2 million miles, over 50 times around the earth, with only two minor non-injury accidents.

- Most Shoppers have been printed on recycled paper. All inks used on Shoppers have been plant-based rather than petroleum-based.

- Every issue of the Shopper has been or will have been (after these last ones have been printed) bound into hard-cover volumes. One set is available to the public in the White Pass Country Museum in Packwood and the other will be in the Lewis County Museum in Chehalis. There is very much local and area history recorded in the Shoppers.

- We have always supported churches, political candidates regardless of party, and non-profit organizations with half-price or in some cases lower-priced or free ads.

- We have supported activities of the Lewis County Sheriff, Health, Solid Waste and other Departments with news reports.

- We especially supported the Americorps program that supplied recent college graduates to this area as teachers, counselors and leaders of valuable off-street activities for local youth.

- We have always supported the schools and encouraged students toward education beyond high school.

- We have always supported youth organizations and events honoring youth achievements with free ads.

- We have supported many events such as Food Drives by gathering contributions and sending all contributions without deduction to the fund raisers.

**Read this week's Bible Readings on page 6** which includes David's words: **"The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, their deeds are vile..."**  
*Psalms 14:1 NIV*

*In the future I may sometimes write additional articles that I will post to my blog [daverant.com](http://daverant.com).*

*Dave Bunting, Sept. 5, 2022*

*Credits in links below items.*

*See these columns on my blog*

*[daverant.com](http://daverant.com)*

