



State tournaments
coverage
In Sports

Homedale councilman
defends embattled land deal

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Uhaldes take home Jordan
Valley Big Loop title

Page 16B

Wednesday, May 24, 2006

Established 1865

The Owyhee Avalanche

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 21

HOMEDALE, OWYHEE COUNTY, IDAHO

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

Primary 2006

OWYHEE COUNTY
100 percent of precincts reporting
Commissioner
District 1
Jerry Hoagland (R) 1,262

Commissioner
District 3
Richard Freund (R) 453
Nick Ihli (R) 422
Dick Reynolds-I (R) 391
Chris Collett (R) 275

Clerk
Charlotte Sherburn-I (R) 864
Sherry Olson (R) 549

Treasurer
Brenda Richards (R) 924
Linda Charters (R) 554

Assessor
Brett Endicott-I (R) 953
Gene Winchester (R) 539

Coroner
Harvey Grimme-I (R) 1,170

— Full precinct report, 10A

Freund wins; Homedale gets bonds



Homedale voters pass bond issues

Homedale Police Chief Jeff Eidemiller casts his vote at City Hall during Tuesday's election for water and sewer bonds. Both issues passed by roughly the same margin. *Story, Page 10A*

In a heavily contested race for Owyhee County commissioner in District 3, Dick Freund upset incumbent Dick Reynolds by a count of 453 votes to 391 in Tuesday's primary election.

In the District 3 commission race, Nick Ihli came in second with 422 votes. Christine Collett, who received 275 total votes, was fourth.

In another election, Homedale voters passed bonds for improvements to both the water and sewer systems. The water bond passed 105-41, and the sewer bond was passed, 103-43.

In other county races, incumbent Brett Endicott won the battle for county assessor over Gene Winchester with

— to page 10A

Avalanche closed Monday; classifieds deadline changes

The Owyhee Avalanche office will be closed to observe the Memorial Day holiday Monday.

Because of the closure, the Avalanche's classifieds deadline will be 10 a.m. Tuesday.

All other deadlines will remain the same, and the Avalanche will publish on its usual day, Wednesday.

Homedale community copes with loss of girl



Remembrance

Sometime during the night after a deadly fire took the life of Carolina Davis, an unknown person placed a memorial plaque on a tree near the site in the King's Court Mobile Home Park. Neighbors said they did not see who brought the metal memorial, which states that Carolina is now "one of God's angels."

Bank accounts, benefits planned to help mother

The tragic loss of a 6-year old Homedale child on May 15 has sent the Homedale community into a spin of emotions as it tries to understand how such a tragedy could happen so close to home.

At 4:15 on the morning after Mother's Day, emergency crews were dispatched to a mobile home fire at King's Court Mobile Home Park in the 500 block of Main Street (originally incorrectly reported in The Owyhee Avalanche as the Sunset Village Mobile Home Park). When emergency personnel arrived, they found a

fully engulfed singlewide mobile home with Carolina Smith trapped inside.

Now friends, family, community members and even complete strangers are pulling together to help Carolina's mother Patti Smith, 29, who was hospitalized in Boise with burns, a severely broken arm and many lacerations. Smith was released from the hospital Wednesday night and will be staying with her mother, Lorraine Felty.

Two banks have set up accounts for donations to Smith: U.S. Bank at 112 S. Main St., Homedale, ID 83628, and Zions Bank at 315 A Ave., Wilder, ID 83676.

— to page 5A

— More on fund-raisers, 3A



Carolina Davis

Melba schools seek levy extension approval again

Patrons have failed to give enough ‘yes’ votes in two elections since August; next election is May 30

Melba School District officials are hoping the third time is the charm Tuesday when they ask patrons once again to approve a 10-year extension to the district’s plant-facilities levy.

Voters in the district, which encompasses parts of Owyhee, Canyon and Ada counties, have rejected the extension twice in levy elections in August 2005 and February.

Superintendent Bob Larson has been very open about his frustration in not getting what he says is a much-needed extension approved by a super majority of the electorate.

Low voter turnout has been recorded each time the levy has been on the ballot with 21.7 percent of registered voters showing up at the polls on Feb. 28 and only a 17.7 percent turnout in August. And, although there were more “yes” votes than “no” votes each time, the necessary 66.6 percent majority of the vote wasn’t achieved to pass an extension of the \$200,000 levy that already is in place.

“I’m not able to effectively get the message out,” Larson said. “... gets passed.

It’s very difficult to understand the low (voter turnout). When you have an estimated \$13-15 million worth the buildings, it just takes a certain amount of money to keep it safe and updated.”

Melba district voters passed the \$200,000-per-year levy in 1999, and time and again Larson has said that passage of the extension will prolong the original levy already in place on patrons’ property tax bills, not add to the burden.

In fact, a press release issued by the district last week says that with the burgeoning cumulative property value in the district, the tax rate for the levy will decrease each year.

Approval of the levy will generate \$2 million for the school district during the next decade. The district said that money will be used to upgrade facilities, complete projects that are in limbo now because of a funding shortage and help the schools maintain contemporary computer technology for students.

Larson said members of the school board, the parent-teacher organization and plants-facilities committee are working hard to make sure that the levy finally

gets passed.

“They certainly understand,” Larson said. “Anyone who has been close to this certainly understands the necessity of having these dollars available.”

Polls will be open from noon to 9 p.m. Tuesday in three locations. Patrons in Owyhee County will vote at the Owyhee County Historical Museum in Murphy. Canyon County voters will cast ballots at the school district office at 520 Broadway Ave., in Melba. Ada County patrons will vote at the residence of the Rev. Russ Steiner, 7979 Initial Point Road in Melba.

Absentee voting is available daily from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the school district. The absentee voting deadline is Friday.

Voting by absentee mail ballot is available by calling the district office at (208) 495-1141 and requesting a ballot. Ballot applications also are available at www.melbaschools.org.

Larson said in February that the school district is reaching a critical stage in keeping up with the wear-and-tear on the buildings and grounds.

“I really feel the people will scream if buildings start to deteriorate,” Larson said last week. “And in a couple years, people will start saying, ‘Who’s taking care of the place?’”

— JB

Veterans to mark Memorial Day with local ceremonies

Homedale Legion to lay wreathes; Bruneau plans program

Owyhee County’s American Legion posts are poised to commemorate Memorial Day with a series of wreath-laying ceremonies and other services throughout the area on Monday.

American Legion Post 32 in Homedale will conduct four wreath-laying ceremonies between 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

The auxiliary for Marsing American Legion Post 128 will be on hand at Homedale-Marsing Cemetery from 9 a.m. to noon to help people locate the gravesites of veterans. The auxiliary recently completed an inventory of veterans buried in the cemetery to compile a map of gravemarkers.

Post adjutant Phil Ferguson said that the legion always welcomes the names of veterans — both peacetime and wartime — who may rest at the cemetery.

“There will be a flag on every veteran’s grave,” Ferguson said.

He said loved ones of veterans can call (208) 870-5065 or (208) 896-4855 to alert the American Legion of any veterans who may be unknowingly buried in Homedale-Marsing Cemetery.

Homedale’s series of wreath ceremonies begins at 9 a.m. at the Wilder cemetery, according to adjutant James Gammett. He said a ceremony for the Navy will be held at the Homedale bridge over the Snake River at 9:30 a.m. Another wreath-laying for all servicemen will take place at 10 a.m. at the Marsing-Homedale Cemetery. The final wreath-laying to honor prisoners of war and servicemen missing in action will be held at the memorial in Homedale City

Park at 10:30 a.m.

The military honors at the ceremonies will be handled by post sergeant-at-arms Dan Maple, Gammett said.

The Homedale American Legion also will serve a free breakfast from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the legion hall at 14 E. Owyhee Ave.

Gammett said that the Homedale American Legion post is under new command. Art Trogdon is the new post commander. He was installed to replace outgoing commander Dan Cain at the post’s meeting May 3.

The Homedale American Legion Auxiliary also will be placing poppy canisters in local businesses. The poppy was chosen in the t as the official flower to honor fallen soldiers. Donations for the poppies are used for the Nurses Scholarship Fund, a rehabilitation fund and the Children and Youth Fund.

Bruneau American Legion Post 83 adjutant Bill McBride said the post will conduct a Memorial Day service at 11 a.m. at the Bruneau cemetery.

McBride said the legion will place flags at each veteran’s grave Friday in preparation for Monday’s ceremonies.

The Monday program includes speakers, a singer and a 21-gun salute. A bugler will play taps, and the names of all deceased veterans from the area will be read aloud. McBride estimates there are between 70 and 75 veterans buried in the cemetery.

Local historian Tom Hall will give a brief presentation, and American Legion Post 83 member Joe King will give a patriotic talk.

The Bruneau Boosters sponsor a potluck meal at the new shelter in Bruneau’s city park after the ceremony.

Robert Swenson from Grand View American Legion Post 134 said members will be decorating the Grand View cemetery with flags and crosses for fallen veterans Friday.

The local Veteran of Foreign Wars chapter’s Buddy Poppy fund-raiser will continue Saturday in front of Parma’s M&W Market. Marsing resident Dick Burman, a member of the local VFW chapter, said donations given for the poppies are used for veteran and dependent welfare programs.

The Buddy Poppy program was started by the VFW in 1922 and recalls the poppies immortalized by Col. John McRae’s World War I-era poem “In Flanders Field.”

According to the national VFW Web site, needy and disabled veterans in Veteran’s Administration hospitals construct the poppies that can be worn on the lapel to show support for veterans.

— JB

Write-in candidate wins Bruneau-GV trustee election

Marie Robertson will be sworn in as Bruneau-Grand View School District’s newest school board trustee for Zone 1 after she defeated Russ Erwin by 37 votes during a May 16 election.

Erwin received 34 votes and Robertson got 71 votes. Robertson was a late filer, giving the district a race with her write-in candidacy.

Officials from the district said Thursday that 220 voters are registered in the Bruneau area district and 105 voted. District clerk Cathy Sellman said the 50 percent turnout is good from the district.

Robertson will be sworn into office July 20 during a regular board meeting. She replaces Stacey Buckingham who was appointed to the position after a successful recall election ousted Russ Turner in 2005. Buckingham

did not file to seek re-election.

No other school board elections were held in Owyhee County last week. Tim Quintana will be sworn in to replace Allen Hays in Zone 2 of the Homedale district; incumbent Joe Usabel was the only candidate filed for Zone 1 in Marsing; and Joan Hebison was unopposed and retained her seat in Zone 2 in Pleasant Valley.

— CAB



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— CAB

In an article published May 17, it was incorrectly reported that Owyhee County commissioner candidate Dick Freund had four children. Freund has five children, Scott, Tiffany, Lori, Michelle and Brandi.

The Owyhee Avalanche

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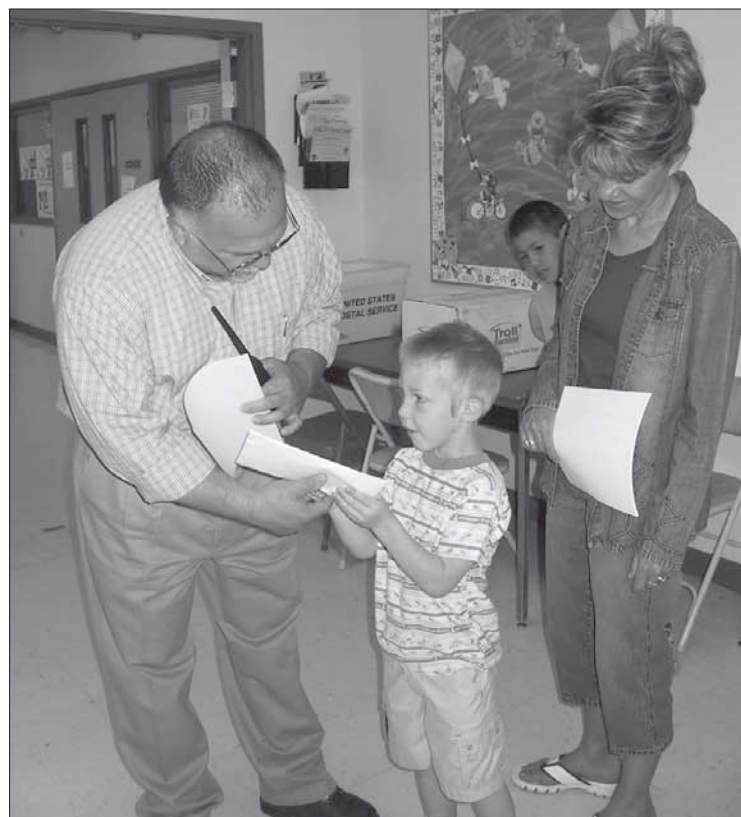
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Member



Community support

Top: Luke Beck hands an envelope full of money he collected for Patti Smith to Homedale Elementary School principal Scott Freeby, left, as school counselor Randee Garrett looks on.

Left: Flowers and gifts have been placed at the scene of the mobile home destroyed in the May 15 fire.

Bottom: Homedale Police Chief Jeff Eidemiller donates with Margo Vaughn's help in a KHTI radio booth on May 16.



√ Loss

A classmate to Carrolina, Luke Beck, raised more than \$100 from senior citizens at the Homedale Senior Citizens Center the day after the fire.

An impromptu fund-raiser during an appearance by personalities from Boise radio station KHTI at Paul's Market on May 16 resulted in more than \$500 in donations for the single mom. Other benefits are planned in the next several weeks.

"I am so overwhelmed that I really have not enough words to say, 'Thank you,'" Felty said during an exclusive interview Wednesday with The Owyhee Avalanche. "We will never be able to tell these people who have helped enough times how much we appreciate them and their generosity."

Community pulls together

Friends, neighbors and school officials spent most of last week consoling each other and working to support those who grieve the loss.

Samantha Anderson was one of the first neighbors to hear Smith's cries for help. She said last week that she looked out her bedroom window and saw Smith trying to

get back into the engulfed home.

"I yelled at her to wait for me," Anderson said. "She tried to go back after Carrolina, but it was so hot. The whole trailer was on fire."

"She had so many cuts on her arms. She told me they didn't even hurt."

Homedale Fire Department was immediately dispatched to the scene, but even with a record response time of 6 minutes, fire crews could only try to control the flames.

Donna Bernard, of Donna's Day Care, said she had babysat Carrolina since the young girl was 3. Bernard said the loss has left an empty hole in the lives of so many people.

"She was a beautiful young girl. She was always smiling," Bernard said by phone Tuesday morning. "My husband is an EMT, so when he got the call, we knew who it was. All he could do was respond and try to help."

"We have tried to help some of the kids understand what has happened, but it is hard when you are dealing with your own grief at the same time. We will miss Carrolina so much and want to do anything we can to help Patti get her life back to some kind of normalcy."

Helping children cope

Officials at Homedale Elementary School also have battled with how to assist young children with the loss of a classmate and a friend.

Principal Scott Freeby and counselor Randee Garrett said Wednesday morning that they didn't address Carrolina's death immediately Monday to protect the privacy of the family and the children who may not have known what happened before school.

"We struggled with addressing it with the kids and not allowing their parents to address it with them at home," Freeby said. "I think it is very important to allow the parents to have the opportunity to talk to their children before we do. I am adamant about parental support being the most important before a school official steps in."

"We didn't want to avoid the issue; (we) just wanted the parents to have the opportunity first. And we didn't know how many of Carrolina's relatives had been notified, so we had a privacy issue as well."

Freeby said that on May 16, he and Garrett spoke to Carrolina's classmates in Melanie Harper's kindergarten class. He said the children were very open with

their feelings and were able to ask many questions. He said some cried, and others only wanted to speak about how they remembered the young girl.

"We have never had to deal with something like this as long as I have been principal here," Freeby said. "I believe we did very well with it. Mrs. Garrett was so well-informed and knew exactly how to handle the children's questions. She did a wonderful job."

Garrett said the children seemed very at ease about asking questions. She said many wanted to draw pictures for Smith.

"It seemed as though if they could draw pictures, they didn't have to look at us," Garrett said. "But they had a lot of good questions. Children watch adults to see how they react to a situation. If an adult seems scared, the child will be scared. We just addressed every question as truthfully as we could."

Family expresses gratitude

Felty and Smith's father, Marvin Smith, were at Flahiff's Funeral Chapel on Wednesday finalizing arrangements to have their granddaughter buried on Saturday afternoon.

"I can speak for Patti," Felty said. "We are overwhelmed by the

generosity of this community. The heartfelt affection the people here have given us and to our daughter is something we did not expect."

"Patti is, physically, doing better. She has been up and around and she is beginning to grieve, which is good. Carrolina was her life. Patti would do anything for Carrolina."

Marvin Smith, Patti's father, said he could not put into words the gratitude he feels for the community and the efforts everyone has gone to in helping his daughter.

"Everyone has put forth a personal sacrifice in helping our family," Marvin said. "The community, friends, businesses and even people Patti or her family does not even know. It gives a person a new outlook on life to see so many people pull together to help someone."

"Patti is healing physically, but her emotionally healing will be a very difficult journey. The support she is receiving will help her in the process and is helping us, her family, in the same way. I will never be able to thank everyone enough for what they have done. I don't think thank you is enough, but all I can give is, thank you."

— CAB

Obituary

James R. Beeman

James R. Beeman 79, of Caldwell, died Sunday, May 21, 2006 at home of natural causes. Funeral services will be held at 3: 00 PM Thursday, May 25, 2006 at Flahiff Funeral Chapel, Homedale. Interment will follow at the Marsing-Homedale Cemetery, Marsing.

James was born and on October 20, 1926 in Garret County, Maryland, a son of Howard A. and Alice M. Garlitz Beeman. He was raised there as well and served in the US Navy during World War II. He was in the amphibious forces in the Asiatic Pacific campaign as a gunners mate aboard the LST 707. James then went to the Army National Guard and was in the Armor Calvary until his retirement in 1975. He was a 20 year veteran of military service. James is also a life time member of the American Legion Post 35 in Caldwell, Idaho. He worked in the reactive metal industry for 32 years.

He married Margaret Muir in 1947. To this union, 6 children were born and they made their home in Ohio until 1986 when they moved to Caldwell, Idaho where he would spend his retirement years. He loved hunting and fishing.

He is survived by his brother Frank Beeman of OH; two



daughters Mary Beeman of OH; and Charlotte Shumate of Caldwell; two sons Leon Beeman (Sheila) of Caldwell; Ralph Beeman of North Carolina; 4 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, parents, 6 brothers, 3 sisters, 2 children and 1 grandchild.

A time of visitation will be held from 4:00 to 8:00 PM Wednesday at Flahiff Funeral Chapel, Homedale.

Senior menus

Marsing center

May 25: Chicken, potatoes, beets, salad, soup, dessert, drink

May 29: Closed for Memorial Day.

May 30: Turkey w/stuffing, biscuits, potatoes/gravy, cranberry sauce, mixed veggies, soup, dessert, drink.

May 31: Lasagna, Zucchini, green salad, veggie tray, soup, dessert, drink.

Homedale center

May 25: Chicken chow mein, stir fry vegetables, fried rice, milk.

May 29: Closed for Memorial Day.

May 30: Hot turkey sandwich, potatoes/gravy, salad, milk.

May 31: Country fried steak, mashed potatoes, broccoli, roll, milk.

Death notices

ANTHONY W. MUSCHBACHER, 93, of Wilder died Friday, May 19, 2006. Funeral services will be held at 10:30 AM Tuesday, May 30, 2006 at Flahiff Funeral Chapel, Homedale. Interment will follow at the Marsing-Homedale Cemetery, Marsing.

CAROLINA DAVIS, 6, Homedale died Monday, May 15, 2006, in a tragic house fire. Graveside services were at 10 a.m. May 20 at the Roswell Cemetery, under the direction of Flahiff Funeral Chapel, Homedale. Memorial services are at 11 a.m. Saturday at Mt. View Church of the Nazarene, 26515 Ustick Road, Wilder. 337-3252.

Let our readers know

What's happening

Get in the Calendar.
Submit information on fund-raisers, dances, meetings or special events.

Call (208) 337-4681 for details



Homedale schools pick up recycled computers from BLM

Dave Holmes, the technology coordinator for the Homedale School District, second from right, accepts a donation of computers from Bureau of Land Management personnel, including Diane Barker, an asset management specialist, for the bureau's Boise Office, far left, and BLM Owyhee Field Office manager Ron Kay, second from left. T.J. Myers, a local graduate, looks on at far right. Submitted photo

Owyhee schools benefit from BLM's PC surplus

The Bureau of Land Management handed over a batch of reconditioned computers to local school districts Monday.

Personnel from the BLM's Owyhee County field office in Marsing donated a total of 25 computers to the Homedale and Rockville school districts and Pleasant Valley School.

Diane Barker, an asset management specialist with the BLM district office in Boise, spearheaded the effort with Owyhee field office manager Ron Kay to provide the recycled computers to the schools. According to Barker, this is the first time that the BLM office has given computers to Owyhee schools.

And Monday's donation, which took place at the field office, may be only the beginning.

"BLM is pleased to be able to provide these computers for use by the schoolchildren in Owyhee County," said Ron Kay, the Owyhee field office manager.

"We are hoping to have additional computers for other schools in the county this fall."

When the BLM has surplus computers, a notice is sent to local school districts and then the machines are awarded on a first-response basis, according to MJ

Byrne, the BLM's Boise district office's public affairs specialist.

The computers were distributed to Homedale School District technology coordinator Dave Holmes and Pleasant Valley School representative Barry Stream as part of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act.

The law, which was passed in 1992, allows federal agencies to donate surplus research equipment and computers to educational or nonprofit organizations for technical and scientific education and research activities.

Holmes said the Homedale district expected to receive about 17 Dell PCs and monitors. He said the machines would be used to replace and upgrade aging computers at Homedale Middle School.

"We really appreciate donations like this that are good equipment and helps us upgrade a little faster than we would be able to without (the donation)," Holmes said.

— JB

Avalanche obituary policy

Obituaries can be submitted the following ways:

E-mail

owyheeavalanche@cableone.net

Fax

(208) 337-4867

Mail

P.O. Box 97, Homedale, ID 83628

No obituaries are accepted over the telephone.

Rates are \$3.50 per column inch and \$5 per photo.

There is no cost for a death notice.

All submissions are verified through the funeral home handling the services.

For more information, call (208) 337-4681.

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Your finances

So how did debt-free Dave afford his house?

Dear Dave,

How did you save up the money for your current home? I've heard the story of how you lost it all and then rebuilt your life. It's amazing, but it seems almost impossible to save up enough money for a house, especially if you're married and have kids.

— Brian

Dear Brian,

It's really simple. We just drew a line in the sand and said we're not living in debt for the rest of our lives. We sold our previous home and moved into an old rental house we both hated. Then, we paid off our debts with the equity from the sale of the house, started saving piles of cash and we did that for many years.

We didn't quite pay cash for our current home, but we got really close. We had a very small mortgage for about six months. That's the truth of the matter, and that's how you do it. Get out of debt and then save, save, save!

— Dave

Dear Dave,

I'm 25 years old, married and we have three kids. We owe about \$100,000 on our house, with monthly payments of a little over \$800. We also owe \$8,000 on a car and have hospital bills totaling \$1,000. Our total monthly bills are about \$2,000, while my take-home pay is only \$2,100. We've also got no savings. What can we do to keep from going under and losing the house?

— Chris

Dear Chris,

Wow, things really are tight. You've got too much house for your income — way too much. Selling a house is painful, but if you don't get your income up immediately with a new job or extra jobs, you're going to have to sell. Your car is pretty expensive, too, for someone making less than \$30,000 a year. If I were you, I'd consider selling it, too, if you're not able to increase your income pretty quickly.

I'd sit down and write out a gameplan to just get vicious about it and attack that debt. First, get a beginner emergency fund of \$500 in place. Then, just go crazy — have a yard sale, pick up an extra job and live on a really tight, written budget. If you do all this, I think you could



have the hospital bills and car paid off and be debt-free except for your house in a little over a year.

You guys have been doing what lots of folks do. You've spent your lives just rolling along, living without a plan, then suddenly you both look up and, whoa, "We can't breathe!"

— Dave

Dear Dave,

Our church is running a missions trip and has told the kids that they can send out sponsor letters if they can't afford the cost. I'm trying to teach my kids that you should work for the money you get, and I don't agree with the whole idea of sponsorships for this. What do you think?

— Gary

Dear Gary,

I think you're basically on the right track in terms of earning what you get, but let's take a look at it this way. If your kids are going to be involved in the ministry — especially as a missionary — they'll have to get used to the idea of receiving. It's part of the job description.

The big thing is that the kids understand why the trip is important and why people should want to support their efforts. If it's just another chance to hang out with friends or go party in another country, most people won't be very supportive.

But, if her heart's in the right place, the support she receives will be just another part of the process in making the ministry come to fruition. There's certainly nothing wrong with kids, and even parents, working to pay for their own mission trips. Honestly, that's preferable.

— Dave

— Dave Ramsey is the best-selling author of *The Total Money Makeover*. You can find tools to help with finances or previous columns at Davesays.org. Have a question for Dave? Send correspondence to syndication@daveramsey.com or write *Dave Says*, 1749 Mallory Lane, Brentwood, TN 37027

Calendar

Thursday

Storytime for first- through third-graders, 4:15 p.m., Lizard Butte Public Library, Owyhee Plaza, 105 Main Street, Marsing. (208) 896-4690

AA meeting, 8 p.m., Homedale Senior Citizens Center, 224 W. Idaho Ave.

Tuesday

Weekly luncheon, 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., \$5 for younger than 60 years old, \$3 for 60 and over. Homedale Senior Citizens Center, 224 W. Idaho Ave. (208) 337-3020

AA meeting, 8 p.m., Homedale Senior Citizens Center, 224 W. Idaho Ave.

Wednesday

Entry deadline for Lizard Butte Library Fun Run. \$25 registration for 5-kilometer and 10K run; \$15 registration for 1-mile walk. 5K and 10K entry increases to \$30 June 1. (208) 896-4690

Thursday, June 1

Storytime for first- through third-graders, 4:15 p.m., Lizard Butte Public Library, Owyhee Plaza, 105 Main Street, Marsing. (208) 896-4690

AA meeting, 8 p.m., Homedale Senior Citizens Center, 224 W. Idaho Ave.

Saturday, June 3

Homedale Summer Block Party. (208) 337-4641

Submit information on upcoming fund-raisers, reunions or community events to *The Owyhee Avalanche* by noon Fridays for inclusion in the calendar. Drop off press releases at the *Avalanche* office at 19 E. Idaho Ave., Homedale, mail them to P.O. Box 97, Homedale, ID 83628, fax them to (208) 337-4867 or e-mail them to either

jbrowneditor@cablone.net or cherylbeeson@cablone.net. For more information on submissions, call (208) 337-4861.

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What's happening
Read Calendar each week
in the *Avalanche*



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Owyhee Auto Supply, Homedale.
For food booth information call
Chad Carter 337-4680
To place an ad in the program book
call Mark Bauer 337-4358

Read all about it

in

The Owyhee Avalanche
337-4681

Adrian High gears up for graduation

by Adrian High School Journalism

The seniors are walking tall in the hallways once again as they have completed their Senior Projects. They delivered their portfolios, speeches and presentations to the boards last week. Congratulations to Ygor Chrispin and Cynthia Thornley on receiving Honors Awards.

The Class of 2006 graduation ceremony will take place at 6 p.m. Sunday. Daniel Eicher is valedictorian and Cynthia Thornley is salutatorian.

Seniors celebrated their success with a three-day trip to the Lagoon waterpark in Utah. They stated they all had a lot of fun.

Track and field team members Sarah McPeak, Stephenie Hutchings, Brett Buchholz and Logan Branstiter competed in the 1A Oregon state championships last weekend.

The Spring Sports Banquet was held Monday, and Class Night academic awards followed Tuesday night.

Thursday is the last day of school. Students will be enjoying several activities in the morning.

For more on Adrian High School and the Adrian School District, visit www.adriansd.com/

Bruneau-GV school district seeks plant advisory committee members

The Bruneau-Grand View School District is seeking volunteers to serve on a plant facilities advisory committee.

Committee members will work with the Bruneau-Grand View School Board to identify and recommend areas where improvements should be made on school buildings and facilities.

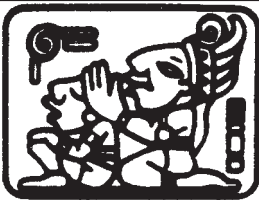
The board of trustees is seeking three representatives from each zone throughout the district.

To inquire about serving on the panel, contact a board member or school superintendent Vickie Chandler at the district office at (208) 834-2253.



Jordan Valley High School holds graduation

The members of the Jordan Valley High School Class of 2006 pose for a group photo on the night they received their diplomas May 16 in a ceremony inside the school's gymnasium. The seniors included, back row, left to right: Emil Scown, Paul McKay, Cassia Trautman, Hayley Johnson, Dinah Powers, Michelle Baltzor and Frank Beckwith; front row, left to right: James Stacy, Beth Morrow, Ashley Reed, Lauren Cuvelier.



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Faith Peterson, MS, FNP
Janine Franco PA

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Tue. 8:30 AM-9:00 PM
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Dick Ernest, FNP
Janine Franco, PA



LaDon's Corner

The Story of Emeralds

The word “emerald” is a variation of the Greek word “smaragdus,” which means “green stone.” And did you know that when an emerald has flaws that those flaws are considered as being part of the stone’s character instead of detracting from the value like, say, flaws in a diamond? Hence, it is these very inclusions that are used to assure the purchaser of a natural stone.

In actuality, emerald [which is the birthstone for May and also the anniversary gemstone for the 20th and 35th years of marriage] is the green variety of the mineral Beryl. What brings out the color is small amounts of chromium, enhanced by traces of iron.

Likewise, did you know that nearly all emeralds get treated to improve clarity? Immersing the stone into oil, which is usually green in color, generally does this. Unfortunately, though, this colored oil may evaporate over years, making flaws reappear. This, though, is a word of caution to suggest that the porous character of an emerald can take on the color of things you dip it in—just like pearls do.

Prized since ancient times, a fine emerald can actually be more expensive than a high quality diamond of the same carat weight. And some people believe that wearing an emerald brings wisdom and growth of patience. It is perhaps this last attribute that may explain why a gift of emerald for an anniversary -- or any occasion -- is symbolic of love and fidelity.

And did you know emeralds were once prescribed for eye diseases because the green color was believed to be soothing to the eyes? This is why early stone cutters kept emeralds at their tables to gaze upon as a way to give their eyes a break.

An emerald shines like green lightning, filling us with the same wonder as the civilizations that came before us. Ancient Egyptians mined emeralds in the eastern desert region 2,000 years before Cleopatra’s birth, yet today recent finds in North Carolina provides a new source. They are also found in Colombia, Brazil, Zimbabwe, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Madagascar, Nigeria, and Russia. Colombian emeralds are generally agreed to be among the most beautiful gemstones in the world, with a grass-green coloring highlighted by a touch of blue.

If you wish to see this magnificent stone mounted in jewelry please feel free to visit my store. And please come visit my web site at: <http://www.Ladonsfinejewelry.com>

LaDon Reames, owner of LaDon’s Fine Jewelry in the WinCo/ShopKo Center has been a Nampa jeweler for thirty-three years. She is a certified diamondologist and gemologist. She can be reached at 208-461-0677.
On the web @ www.Ladonsfinejewelry.com

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Student learns more about news business

Hope Christian Academy junior Stephanie Danhour, right, listens Wednesday as Cheryl Beeson, senior reporter for The Owyhee Avalanche, explains her job and shares stories from her career. Danhour spent two hours in the newspaper's office as a job shadow.

Hope student spends day of learning at Avalanche office

Stephanie Danhour has a dream to one day combine two of her loves — travel and writing — into a career.

The 17-year-old junior at Hope Christian Academy in Marsing visited The Owyhee Avalanche office Wednesday to learn more about the field of journalism.

Danhour spent more than two hours as a job shadow, watching managing editor Jon Brown and senior reporter Cheryl Beeson go through their daily activities while covering the news of Owyhee County. She also spent time asking questions about the business.

Danhour said the afternoon was informative. Her future plans are to break into journalism and perhaps write international stories or go to work for National Geographic magazine as a photojournalist.

“I like expressing ideas and being able to impact people’s lives and help them,” she said.

Danhour’s journalistic background includes two years on the staff of The Independent, a publication produced by Hope Christian Academy students and distributed at neighboring Hope House.

Danhour, who has lived in Idaho since she was 7 years old, plans to continue her education at Northwest Nazarene University and then maybe transfer to a different school for more training in journalism.

Her love of travel will continue this summer. Danhour is one of four Hope Academy students who will be traveling overseas for extended humanitarian missions from June to August.

Danhour will travel to the city of Xian in China’s FuJian Province to spend time at the Hiromi Children’s Recovery Center. Danhour said the center is similar to Hope House in its mission to help children who are no longer living with their families.

She’ll teach English and help build a discipleship center there.

Danhour’s love for writing goes beyond the two years she spent in the journalism class at Hope.

It all started with her grandmother, Janet Ellsworth.

“I got my love of writing from her, and she kind of encouraged me that I could take it to the next level,” Danhour said.

— JB

Life’s milestones

The Owyhee Avalanche welcomes any news of engagements, weddings and births or announcements of significant birthdays or anniversaries. Photos are accepted, too. Announcements must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week before publication.

There are numerous ways to get your information to the Avalanche:

- Mail — P.O. Box 97, Homedale, ID 83628
- Fax — (208) 337-4867
- E-mail — jbrownceditor@cablone.net
- Drop off — 19 E. Idaho Ave., Homedale

Call (208) 337-4681 for more information on guidelines, including e-mailed photos.

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Precinct reports		N. Homedale	S. Homedale	N. Marsing	S. Marsing	Pleasant Valley	Wilson	Murphy	Oreana	Grand View	Bruneau	Riddle	Three Creek	Absentee
Contested races														
U.S. Representative, 1st District														
R. Skipper Brandt (R)	7	18	14	3	27	19	12	6	6	10	0	0	3	
Keith Johnson (R)	27	29	25	28	2	26	29	16	26	21	4	3	10	
Bill Sali (R)	20	29	29	16	0	31	17	7	29	19	2	0	7	
Norm Semanko (R)	26	44	14	22	3	10	15	14	6	40	1	7	8	
Sheila Sorensen (R)	24	33	21	25	7	17	11	7	31	17	3	0	5	
Robert Vasquez (R)	93	96	48	66	8	69	44	14	37	31	1	2	20	
Larry Grant (D)	9	9	7	5	0	10	1	1	2	7	5	0	1	
Cecil Kelly III (D)	2	5	1	3	0	1	2	0	2	1	2	0	0	
Governor														
Dan Adamson (R)	34	25	20	22	3	23	12	1	20	21	0	1	4	
Walter Bayes (R)	8	11	14	2	5	13	4	1	7	6	0	0	0	
Jack Alan Johnson (R)	12	8	8	8	2	7	2	5	9	1	0	0	0	
C.L. 'Butch' Otter (R)	144	203	107	127	39	129	109	62	103	108	11	10	52	
Jerry M. Brady (D)	11	15	10	5	0	11	2	2	3	6	7	0	1	
Lee Chaney Sr. (D)	2	1	1	3	3	3	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	
Lt. Governor														
Larry LaRocco (D)	9	12	6	6	0	12	1	0	1	8	4	0	1	
Dan Romero (D)	5	7	6	2	0	2	2	0	3	2	5	0	0	
State Controller														
Royce Chigbrow (R)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
Donna Jones (R)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
State Rep., A														
Jim Conder (R)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
Jim Patrick (R)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
Attorney General														
Myron Dan Gabbert (R)	46	60	32	31	9	33	19	17	33	29	1	0	7	
Lawrence Wasden (R)	132	157	107	103	30	124	103	43	85	86	8	11	40	
Supt., Public Instruction														
Steve Casey (R)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
Tom Luna (R)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
Steve Smylie (R)	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	
Jana Jones (D)	9	9	8	4	0	7	1	1	4	5	9	0	1	
Bert Marley (D)	3	5	4	5	0	7	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	
Owyhee offices														
Commissioner, No. 1														
Dick Reynolds-I (R)	36	49	23	26	19	36	29	15	48	82	7	5	16	
Richard Freund (R)	78	87	70	46	11	61	57	13	7	5	0	0	18	
Chris Collett (R)	29	45	18	23	3	27	13	19	64	24	0	3	7	
Nick Ihli (D)	53	76	42	61	18	48	36	22	20	26	4	4	12	
County Clerk														
Charlotte Sherburn-I (R)	106	126	75	86	45	104	88	28	74	86	9	9	28	
Sherry Olson (R)	67	106	64	54	6	57	43	32	56	39	2	2	21	
County Assessor														
Brett Endicott-I (R)	122	159	95	95	36	117	80	36	69	92	7	7	38	
Gene Winchester (R)	71	92	52	57	16	54	48	29	63	37	4	5	11	
County Treasurer														
Brenda Richards-I (R)	113	140	98	109	32	122	89	28	58	83	7	11	34	
Linda Charters (R)	64	101	49	43	20	48	44	42	74	45	4	1	19	

Homedale voters pass bonds for water, sewer improvement

Homedale voters passed water and sewer bonds during Tuesday's election, and now the city will be able to begin construction on what is expected to be a \$4.4 million project.

Although only about 20 percent of Homedale's registered voters cast a ballot for the bonds, the water issue passed by 105-41. The sewer bond passed with a 103-43 vote. Only two ballots, one for each bond, were discarded as spoiled.

Voters were asked to pass nearly \$2.3 million for installation and construction of improvements to the domestic water system and \$2.1 million for improvements to the sewer system. The 30-year bonds should be issued with an annual interest rate of about 4.5 percent. Officials estimate the city will pay back \$4.17 million on the

Bond voting	
Water bond	
Yes	105
No	41
Sewer bond	
Yes	103
No	43

water bond and \$3.77 million on the sewer bond.

Homedale Mayor Paul Fink said during the 30-year period, the city expects to draw in \$19.4 million in water fees and \$14.3 million in sewer fees, which he says will more than pay for the bonds.

Fink said that the water and sewer fees would not increase with passage of the bonds because

current fees would be able to cover the payments. He said he promised the people of Homedale that the city would not increase fees with a bond, and he plans to stick to his promise.

The water bond will be used to install a new domestic well, replace transmission and service lines, valves, hydrants and meter boxes.

The sewer bond will replace or reconstruct approximately 15,500 linear feet of transmission lines and pay for the construction of a sewer trunk line system with collectors and a new lift station and for the replacement of a force main between the primary lift station at the treatment plant.

The last bond passed in the city for water or sewer was in 1979.

— CAB

✓ Election

953 votes to Winchester's 539 votes. Charlotte Sherburn won her bid for a second term in the county clerk's office by defeating Sherry Olson 864-549.

In the treasurer's race, Brenda Richards won her bid for an elected term after being appointed

last September. Richards defeated former deputy treasurer Linda Charters 924-554.

Jerry Hoagland received 1,262 votes for District 1 commissioner in an uncontested race. Harvey Grimme will remain as county coroner after receiving 1,170 votes also an uncontested race.

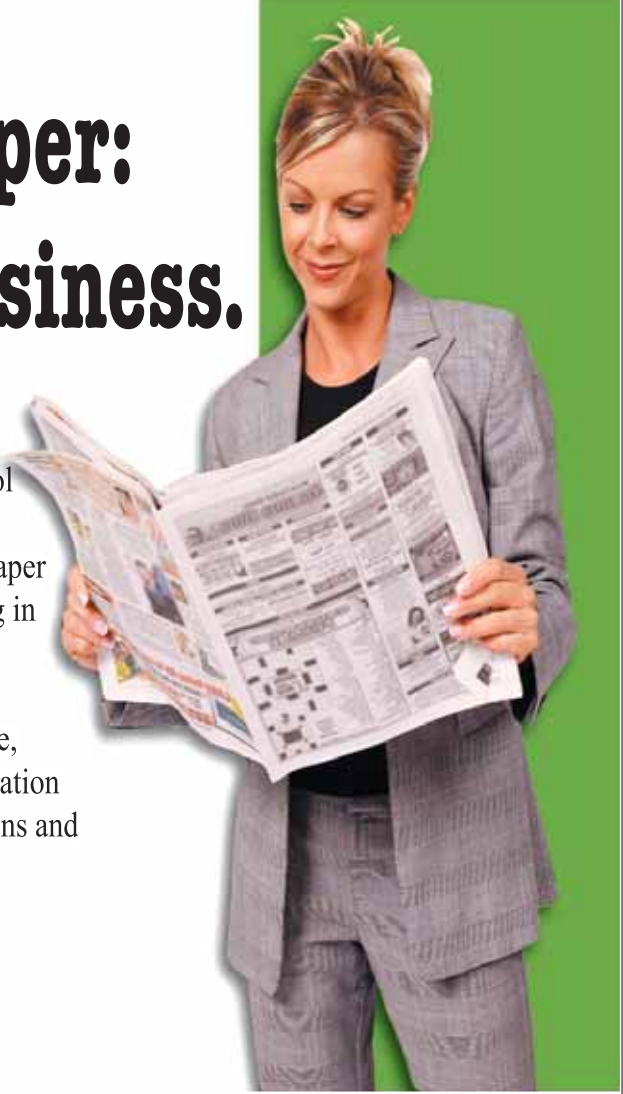
The only election for precinct committeeman was between

Shawn Dygert and incumbent Tangie Frisch in Murphy. Dygert defeated Frisch, 92-31.

Jim Patrick won Owyhee County's vote for State Representative for District 23 A seat by defeating Jim Conder 790 to 400. The state results for the representative seat were not available at press time.

— CAB

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Students from Homedale, JV earn EOU dean’s honors

Three local students qualified for the Eastern Oregon University dean’s list for the 2005 winter term:
Homedale — Michelle Eby; Michael Eby
Jordan Valley — Patrick Anderson

The Ebys and Anderson made the dean’s list by maintaining a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher. Students must have completed a minimum of 12 hours of graded coursework for the length of the term to qualify.



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Uhalde shows off winning form in Jordan Valley
Mike Uhalde snares his target during the 44th annual Jordan Valley Big Loop Rodeo last weekend in Jordan Valley. Uhalde and John Uhalde came out the big winners in the Big Loop competition. Their winning time of 24.370 seconds netted them top prize of a pair of saddles. Photo by Bill Bruce. For more on the rodeo, see Page 16B.

Master’s graduates

Homedale Middle School faculty members Sarah Greentree, left, and Brent Meiser, right, graduated from Northwest Nazarene University on May 13 with Master’s degrees. Greentree is an eighth grade English and literature teacher and the Language Arts department head. She received a Master’s of curriculum degree. Meiser is a counselor at the school and received a Master’s of Counseling. Submitted photo.





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Three Creek

by Lola Blossom

Our former Three Creek kids go on to do some amazing things.

Rich Clark, son of Bill and Sue Clark has recently been hired by the Oliver Russell agency as an art director. He filled his childhood winters on his family’s ranch by teaching himself art and drawing. He will perform amazing feats for clients designing and developing Web sites, CD-ROMs and other interactive and motion design projects.

Marc and Kristen Brackett will have a home we will all hope to see when they have it finished. In March of 2005 they purchased an old rundown house in the old town part of Twin Falls. As near as they can find out they think it was built in 1904. They paid \$90,000 for it and have since put out \$70,000 more and lots of elbow grease. It will be a wonderful winter home for their growing family and daughters.

Chet and Kim Brackett are building a new log home east of Hollister where they also have a

feed lot.

The baby shower given at the Three Creek school was a big success. It was given for Kelsie Robinson, Kim Brackett, Antonilla Gonzales, Elva Valdez, Kimberly Brackett and Kristi Severe and their babies. Hostesses were Marilyn Boss and Loretta Weekes.

Marilyn Boss and her pupils had an exciting time when Reeder’s Flying Service came out and gave them a helicopter ride. They also took a trip to a Planetarium.

Forest and Joyce Wilson, fencing contractors from Whitebird, and Bob Ramsey put in some hard days building a pole fence along the creek on Bachman’s Clover Flat Ranch.

Kathy Jones’s father, Bob Jones, was injured on his ranch near Buhl. He was attempting to load a bull when it charged him. It knocked him down twice and then hit him and pitched him over the fence. He had a badly crushed ankle that is held together with steel pins.



Potatoes beget potatoes

Homedale resident Chuck Parsons holds in his hand a bowl of winter potatoes that evidently tried to multiply while being stored at his house. “I’ve been here all my life, and I never can remember potatoes growing inside other potatoes,” Parsons said. Parsons, who figures he’s been in the area nearly seven decades, said he believes the potatoes took root while in storage and the roots grew inward seeking moisture. He said he had one other potato at home that had been split open by the force of what looked to be a second large potato growing in its center.



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- May 30 • 11 AM • Elmer’s •** 1411 Shilo Drive, Nampa, ID 83687
- June 1 • 11 AM • Elmer’s •** 1385 S. Capital, Boise, ID 83706
- June 6 • 11 AM • Quik-Wok •** 1120 12 Avenue Road, Nampa, ID 83686
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Weather

	H	L	Prec.
May 16	96	48	
May 17	98	49	
May 18	98	50	
May 19	93	50	.08
May 20	no	read	
May 21	no	read	
May 22	84	48	.17

Find out
What's happening
Read Calendar each week
in the Avalanche

Homedale library reading program to begin

“Paws, Claws, Scales and Tales” is the theme for this year’s summer reading program at the Homedale Public Library. Children may sign up at the library beginning Tuesday. But coordinators said if children cannot sign up that day, they may sign up at anytime during the four-week program. Children can earn prizes for spending time reading books this summer. A child can earn on “book buck” for each hour of reading that can be spent for prizes. There is no age limit because children who cannot read can earn prizes by listening to an older child or an adult reading to them. Special weekly programs will be offered each week during the program. Games, food and activities will last about an hour each Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. The program on June 7 is entitled “A Perfect Pet for Me,” during which children will pick a pet and give it a name. The June 14 program will be “Animal Heroes,” and children will learn about animal superheroes. The June 21 program is titled, “Wild, Tame and In-Between,” and the June 28 program is titled “Imagine That,” which will feature a Calvin and Hobbes “transmogriifier,” as well as several board games. The program will end with a treat. For more information, contact Diane Williams at the library at (208) 337-4228 from 1 p.m. until 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday. The library is located at 125 W. Owyhee Ave.

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Owyhee County folks making a difference in the world

Marsing woman earns presidential award

Overseas volunteerism spurred by Sept. 11 terrorist attacks

Jeri Rutherford lives in the Marsing area ... when she is not overseas assisting people in Third World countries with their economies by teaching them in a Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer program. Recently she was honored with the President’s Volunteer Service Award.

Rutherford volunteers for Winrock International in the John Ogonowski Farmer-to-Farmer program that assists farmers, agribusinesses and local nonprofit organizations worldwide. Ogonowski was the pilot of American Airlines Flight 11 that crashed into the World Trade Center in New York on Sept. 11, 2001. Rutherford said it was because of 9/11 that she decided to volunteer.

Rutherford is a food scientist and has a consulting company, but when she can find spare time, she travels overseas to give her expert assistance in helping establishments build profitable agricultural businesses.

She said after 9/11 she wanted to do something but the military was not an option. She chose to volunteer.

“I said, ‘I have to do something,’” Rutherford said. “I have traveled all over the world and have seen a gradual change in how Americans are viewed. Even if I am only changing the mind of 10 people, I needed to do something.”

Her first trip, a month after 9/11, was to the Republic of Georgia, formerly the southernmost republic of the USSR. She said the area, in its landscape, is as close to Boise, Idaho, as one can get.

“It was amazing,” Rutherford said. “The town (she visited) was built in 400 A.D.

Rutherford said her presence and the humanitarian aid is part of an effort to bolster the legitimate economies in these countries by making companies more profitable. The companies can then pay their workers a living wage, which Rutherford says could prevent people from entering the drug trade or selling their children in the sex trade.

“You have to understand why our government would send us there. It is a sad and horrible thing. I am funded by the humanitarian portion of our aid packages. When the government gives aid to these countries, they don’t just hand over a check. They are given a credit. From that credit, they can draw funds, write grants and other things for the money.”

Rutherford said she has had to learn while teaching the people she is trying to help. She said the most difficult aspect has been the law enforcement system in the countries.

“When I am in the field, I always have a driver and a translator,” Rutherford said. “It is their job to take care of us. We carry a card that we give to the police that shows who we are. When they come up, we hand them the card, and they know not to ticket us.”

But Rutherford does not only help companies in the poor countries, she also works to give a small offering of her own to orphaned children in the poor economic cities.

“Jeri usually has a big toy drive just before she leaves,” Rutherford’s husband, Larry, wrote in a letter while she was in Georgia. “This consists of calling as many people as we can think of and have them donate their toys, stuffed animals, out-grown children’s clothing and so on, for her cause. Upon receiving these items, Jeri packs a suitcase just slightly smaller than the state of Rhode Island with these items.”

But Jeri Rutherford says many of the items she takes with her are stolen from the suitcase before she is able to claim it at the airport.

“I took my suitcase of toys and clothes I had collected to the orphanage,” she wrote. “It was difficult on the heart. Made me feel bad really, rather, complicated emotion actually. I looked into the children’s rooms, six beds per room, not a toy or piece of personalization in sight. Just beds.”

Rutherford is modest in discussing why she puts herself in danger by volunteering in the countries, she says she is a diplomatic volunteer and she hopes she can make a difference.

“If I can share my knowledge with these countries and help them to become independent, then everything else is worth it,” she said. “The award says I have completed over 4,000 hours, but I don’t know for sure. It really is rewarding work to walk away and see the smiles on the people’s faces because something works like you said it would. It is great.”

“This is not what I do this for,” Rutherford said of the honor. “I just hope to make a difference.”

Her last trip was to Kyrgyzstan in central Asia, which Rutherford said is directly around the world from Boise. Jeri said she assisted three different food plants become profitable by showing managers how to make their product of good enough quality to be sold in the worldwide market.

“Our work creates jobs, which helps put people to work so they are not selling themselves or growing drugs and they are independent,” Rutherford said.

The presidential award recognizes Rutherford’s dedication



Faraway land

Jeri Rutherford shows a rug that she purchased during her last volunteer service mission to Kyrgyzstan in central Asia. She said the homes in the city she visited are lined with hand-woven rugs like the one she brought back to the United States.



Local flavor

Above: Bags of spices line a streetside vendor’s tent in a town square in the central Asian country of Kyrgyzstan. Rutherford said the vendors would pour the spices from a shot glass into a make-shift bag of used paper. **Below:** Huts are used as homes and businesses in the Republic of Georgia where wood is nearly impossible to obtain. Submitted photos



— CAB



Local church to mark Founder’s Day
The First Presbyterian Church building at 320 N. 6th West in Homedale was dedicated on April 7, 1963. The congregation will celebrate Founder’s Day with a potluck and service Sunday.

First Presbyterian plans Founder’s Day service, potluck for Sunday

The First Presbyterian Church, Homedale, Marsing and Wilder, will celebrate Founder’s Day on Sunday at 11 a.m. with a service and a potluck luncheon. A program honoring the builders of the church will follow.

The potluck will feature dishes created from the recipes of the founding members.

The congregation, formed in 1958, met in the old Seventh-Day Adventist Church on Main Street in Homedale, at the IOOF Hall, and in the manse before ground was broken for the current church

on Sept. 30, 1962.

The church is located at 320 N. 6th West in Homedale.

The present church building was constructed by Roy Martin of Notus with assistance from the volunteer labor of the congregation members themselves. The building was dedicated on April 7, 1963.

Homedale resident Harold Johnson created the limestone walls from a quarry in Rome, Ore. The unique rough-hewn wooden cross facing Washington Avenue was hewn by Harold Ax of Middleton. The Rev. Raymond

L. Wilson, pastor at the time of the United Presbyterian Church in Emmett, designed the building. Elmer Mitchell of Homedale built the chancel furniture, baptismal font and pulpit.

A plaque honoring these contributors and others will be placed in the entry, and individual plaques expressing the appreciation of the church membership will be given to the builders and their families.

Everyone who has participated in the growth and development of this church is invited to attend.

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Owyhee Initiative takes another step

Chairman tells county commission Monday that initiative work group has released proposal to Crapo

Finally, nearing the fifth year, the Owyhee Initiative Agreement and bill proposed by the Initiative Work Group is finished and in the hands of U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), with all issues resolved. Initiative Chairman Fred Grant gave a final report to the Owyhee County Commission on Monday.

“A long time has passed since the work group signed the agreement,” Grant told the commissioners. “Two issues were left to deal with after that initial signing. First, to negotiate a compensation package for the ranchers voluntarily participating in the wilderness package. Second, to agree on final words to state reservation of future uses of water on the rivers and streams being designated wild and scenic.”

Grant said dealing with the issues was difficult for the work group.

“The process of negotiation was complicated, time-consuming, and frankly sometimes frustrating to the point of wondering whether to continue,” Grant said. “On more than one occasion, one or more of the members of the work group took the position that it was time to either agree or declare failure. I can tell you, personally, that I, as the chairman, had that thought virtually every week, if not every day.

“But, we all persevered. Many times, it seemed that there was simply no way out. On one side we had the ranchers who set their own price for the sale and exchange of their land and sale of the interests in their preference; and on the other we had a position of insisting on a regular appraisal as is used in voluntary sales of land. For various reasons, neither position took us to agreement.”

Grant said the “compensation package” as the group began to call the process, was the key to the entire Initiative process as far as the work group was concerned.

“You know that without the ‘volunteer’ private lands, we could not have reached agreement on the wilderness lands, and that would have meant no agreement at all,” Grant said. “The Owyhee Cattlemen’s Association had agreed early in the process to wilderness designation, and the members agreed also to support any rancher who entered into personal negotiations to include land in wilderness if it was necessary to make his ranching operation economically sound.”

Grant reported that Dr. Chad Gibson, consultant to the initiative, worked with 16 ranchers who saw the opportunity to remove themselves from the “strangling restrictions,” which had been

put on them during the last few years of the “Clinton-Winmill connection.”

“Their entangled lands lay adjacent to wilderness to be designated,” Grant said. “Working with Chad, they determined the exchanges, which would be necessary to make their operations efficient again, and the cost of the portion of the preference they would be selling. Once the ranchers had set on a price, I reviewed each case with Chad and the rancher.

“Then, the ranchers’ offers were given to the conservation groups for review. The agreement did not specify the manner in which the price would be fixed, because this was not a commonly used market price type sale. These ranchers had not offered their land and preference for sale. Had they done so, they would have been looking at a typical ‘fair market price.’ But, they had not done so. They were approached by the work group because they had land, which would be highly suitable for inclusion in the wilderness areas. So, the process was that the ranchers set their price, and the price was then reviewed to determine whether we thought we could get passage of the bill on the ranchers’ terms.”

Grant said the question to the sale-exchange program was whether members of the work group could support a bill based on ranchers setting their own market-untested price.

“The conservation members

had to review the process with their national organizations, because we are counting on support of those organizations to get us through Congress,” Grant said. “The national review showed us that we would run into trouble immediately, perhaps fatal trouble, if we could not show a market-acceptable set of standards which we had used to come up with the price paid the ranchers. This was a difficult task, because each rancher had set his/her own price depending on the value to him of what he was giving up compared to the value to him of what he was getting. That’s not the manner in which fair market sales are normally accomplished.”

Two weeks ago, the Idaho Rivers United board voted to support moving ahead with the initiative. Grant said Idaho River United’s representative on the work group, Bill Sedivy, had been instrumental in negotiating the final water language to make the reservation of future uses possible in the wild and scenic areas.

“Then we reached agreement on the water language, and the second amended agreement was signed on May 10,” Grant said. “Joining original signatures were Bill Walsh of the South Idaho Desert Racing Association and Bill Sedivy of Idaho Rivers United, both members added by the county commissioners.”

This past week, the governing council for the Wilderness Society approved moving ahead with the Initiative, and Grant said, “that

was the go point for us.”

“That council made it clear that they were supporting the Initiative because ‘on balance’ it was a fair resolution of the issues involved,” Grant said. “They did not, and will not, defend the compensation package itself, because it is not the typical market-sale formula. But, they will defend the overall Initiative, and did acknowledge that the compensation package in this case helped make the resolution a fair and balanced one.”

The next meeting of the work group will include all new members appointed by the commissioners. Final maps to accompany the bill will be approved at the next meeting.

In the meantime, Crapo has said that he will send the bill to legislative counsel, who will re-draft it in acceptable congressional form. Once that is done, the work group again will carefully review the draft to ensure the intent of the work group is not changed in the wording. At that point, Crapo can introduce the legislation into Congress.

“After that, we all can enjoy the roller coaster trip to passage and signing into law,” Grant said. “It has been a long journey. One that, for the most part, I have enjoyed.

“If the result turns out to be as good for the county and for the continuing viability of the ranchers, as I think it will be, then I will have kept the faith with my dad, who wanted me to help ‘our folks out in Owyhee County.’”

Owyhee County among areas in recently finalized Idaho-USDA conservation pact

\$258 million agreement could cut water usage

The members of Idaho’s congressional delegation are applauding last week’s announcement of the \$258 million Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) agreement.

U.S. Sens. Mike Crapo and Larry Craig and U.S. Reps. Mike Simpson and C.L. “Butch” Otter say the CREP agreement between the State of Idaho and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will reduce demands on water and improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

CREP is part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), America’s largest and most effective private-lands conservation program, with more than 36 million acres enrolled. Through the general CRP and CREP, farmers and ranchers plant grasses and trees in crop fields and

along streams. The plantings stop soil and nutrients from washing into regional waterways and contaminating the air. The grasses and trees also provide habitat for wildlife.

The agreement will include all or parts of 22 Idaho counties, including Owyhee County. The counties will be eligible if the total CRP enrollment drops below 25 percent of the county’s total cropland before the CREP project reaches the 100,000-acre enrollment target.

“This agreement is a major commitment to Idaho water conservation with benefits to water users while at the same time improving water quality and wildlife habitat,” the Delegation members said. “Once again, Idahoans are showing leadership in acting to assist species and preserve the environment in a cooperative and effective manner.”

One goal of the CREP agreement is to enroll up to 100,000 acres of irrigated cropland in the Idaho Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer,

which could reduce irrigated water use by 200,000 acre-feet annually. Groundwater levels will be increased under the plan, which also would establish new wetlands, grassland areas and permanent vegetative cover for wildlife.

“The CREP program will be an effective tool in replenishing the Eastern Snake River Plain Aquifer and helping Idaho meet its conservation goals,” delegation members said in a release. “We applaud the efforts of Gov. Dirk Kempthorne and Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns in reaching this agreement and thank the many Idahoans who are partnering to improve the continued multiple use of Idaho’s jewel, the Snake River and the Snake River Plain Aquifer.

“The Idaho CREP’s goals of conserving water and reducing contaminants highlights President Bush’s commitment to conservation,” Johanns said. “By establishing native grassland habitat, participants will increase wildlife populations

and groundwater quality, while reducing irrigation. I strongly encourage Idaho farmers and ranchers to participate in this important conservation program that protects our environment.”

“This is a winning agreement for all of Idaho,” Idaho Lt. Gov. Jim Risch said. “The agreement benefits our agriculture community and protects the environment. After extensive research, we have determined that this unique state-federal partnership will result in better water flows for spring users, improved water quality for everyone and an increase in wildlife habitat. At the same time, this agreement will protect the income streams of our rural communities that depend on agriculture to drive the economy.”

Johanns and Risch, on behalf of Kempthorne, signed the CREP agreement.



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As (school) days dwindle to a precious few ...

Homedale Elementary children enjoy annual rite of spring — Field Day

Students at Homedale Elementary School always can tell when summer break is about to begin.

Each year, the students take part in Field Day as a way to escape the final, grueling days of the school year.

The 2006 Field Day was held Thursday and included an afternoon of fun events coordinated by Dan Moore, Homedale Elementary physical education instructor.

The last day of school for Homedale Elementary School students is Friday. The school day ends at 1:40 p.m. that day.



Summer fun

Top: Meghan Sheley tosses a ball with another student during Homedale Elementary School's annual field day Thursday. Students will be released from classes Friday at 1:40 p.m. for the beginning of summer vacation.

Above: Children at Homedale Elementary School play under a parachute during the school's annual field day on Thursday.

Below: Conner Carter catches a water balloon, without getting wet, during an annual field day at Homedale Elementary School last week. Students will have plenty of time for wet summer fun, as the school will release students Friday for a three-month summer vacation.

Activities trigger laughter

Above: Nancy Mendoza bounces on a jumping ball during Homedale Elementary School's annual field day event held last week.

Below: Children at Homedale Elementary School participate in a tug-of-war during the school's annual field day.





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