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stay perfect
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in Chamber of Commerce**

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**Emergency crews receive money
to upgrade live-saving machine**

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Established 1865

The Owyhee Avalanche

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 3

HOMEDALE, OWYHEE COUNTY, IDAHO

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

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costume
award at
mock summit
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Bona Fide member to play folk music at museum

Gary Eller, left, stands with Bona Fide duo partner Marv Quinton outside the Owyhee County Historical Museum. Eller will play a free show of acoustic folk music Friday at the Owyhee County Historical Museum in Murphy. Submitted photo

Digging for Owyhee's golden oldies

Musician performing in Murphy on Friday has plans to release CD of Owyhee songs in spring

Gary Eller isn't from Owyhee County — nor Idaho for that matter — but he has fallen in love with the pursuit of the region's music.

Eller, who with Marv Quinton makes up the folk duo Bona Fide, will present an evening of acoustic-folk-historical songs and a "song-swap" at 7 p.m. Friday at the Owyhee County Historical Museum in Murphy.

The public is invited to this event. There is no charge to attend. Some of Eller's musical friends also are expected to show up to play.

The song-swap is part of Eller's ongoing quest to collect musical nuggets that reflect the Owyhees' rich history.

According to the museum's curator and director, Dr. Thom Couch, Eller is a welcome guest at the museum.

"Gary Eller and Marv Quinton, who operate under the name Bona Fide, have been instrumental (no pun intended), with the (Owyhee County Historical Society) in generating interest in historically based music," Couch said.

— See *Owyhee*, page 5A

County commission

Freund elected chairman

Last Monday, the Owyhee County Board of Commissioners reorganized at its weekly meeting in Murphy.

Dick Freund, the new commissioner from District 3, was designated the new chairman, replacing Hal Tolmie in that position. Tolmie remains the District 2 representative on the board.

— See *Chairman*, page 5A

Commission candid

Murphy resident Dick Freund made a quick transition from a top lawman to handling the county's affairs as the new commissioner for District 3.

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Nampa woman dies in rollover

A Nampa woman is dead and another taken to the hospital after a rollover accident near Upper Reynolds Creek Road early Sunday morning.

Owyhee County Sheriff's dispatchers confirmed Monday that Beth Anne Wendell, 30, of Nampa died at the scene of the crash after the Suzuki Samurai with oversized tires she was driving rolled over at approximately 4 a.m. Sunday.

Speed, alcohol and under-inflated tires — to enhance traction during off-road driving — were listed as factors contributing to the crash.

Jennifer Wilson, 26, was transported to Mercy Medical Center, with non-life threatening injuries. David Pica, 26, and Derrek Heiner, 20, were treated at the scene for minor injuries.

Owyhee County Sheriff Gary Aman, two deputies, the Melba Quick Response Unit, Marsing Ambulance, and the Owyhee County Coroner's Office responded to the crash.

— JWB

Issue of Homedale PD patrol car gets heated

Mayor says city council will analyze bids for at least one new cruiser at its next meeting on Jan. 25

A request by Homedale Police Chief Jeff Eidemiller for the City Council to authorize the purchase of another patrol car triggered a heated executive session Thursday at City Hall.

Eidemiller made the request in the wake of the New Year's Eve accident on the Snake River bridge that caused extensive damage to a patrol car. The officer, who has remained unidentified, escaped serious injury despite the car careening off both sides of the bridge, according to the police chief.

After Eidemiller delivered a

report of the Dec. 31 accident, including the possibility that the insurance company may deem the vehicle a total loss, councilman Bill Page questioned the circumstances surrounding the wreck.

"Do the police think that they are beyond the law with their speeding?" Page asked Eidemiller. "I went over the bridge twice that same night and had no problem."

Eidemiller immediately asked the council to close the public meeting.

"If this is going to be antagonis-

tic, I ask that we go into executive session for personnel," the chief said.

The courtroom/council chambers was cleared, but raised voices could be heard through the walls by people standing in the City Hall lobby waiting for the public meeting to resume.

When the open meeting was reconvened, Mayor Paul Fink asked Page to drop the issue. On Friday, Fink acknowledged Page's accusation may have been inappropriate.

"Yes," Fink said when asked if



Bill Page

he thought Page was out of line. "I'm not going to get into that."

But Fink said the nature of the police's job sometimes requires breaking the speed limit — in any kind of driving conditions.

"We have to respond to calls," Fink said.

"Sometimes it means that we're going to be driving faster than a 20 mph speed limit."

The council unanimously approved the solicitation of bids for a new police car to replace a worn-out cruiser that had been sold to a salvage yard.

City officials said \$24,000 was added to the budget last year for the purchase of a new police car, but the search wasn't to begin until after the new year anyway.

The state bid price for new

cruisers is between \$21,900 and \$23,000, Eidemiller told the council members.

The chief also suggested buying two cars at one time — if the wrecked cruiser is totaled — because the city could get a better price.

"Probably one is a probability," Fink said after the meeting. "We'll look at it."

Fink said that the bids could be presented to the council at its Jan. 25 meeting.

Homedale Police Cpl. Ian Takashige said that the police department usually has six vehicles in its fleet, allowing each officer to have a dedicated car and also to save on wear and tear of the fleet.

— JPB



Latest Smorgasbord winners announced

Homedale International Smorgasbord chair Kelley Hansen and co-chair Tracy Fisher (left to right, back row) awarded the best ticket-sellers for Week 2 at Homedale Middle School last week, including, left to right, front row, Whitney Uria (\$111), Heather Romriell (\$247), Erin Shenk (\$87) and Hayden Krzesnik (\$219). **Right:** The sixth-graders reach for cash prizes.

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Scouts learn about newspapers
Cub Scouts from Pack 409 visited the Avalanche last week to learn the basics of newspaper publication. The scouts included, from left to right: Dusty Sanders, Riley Christoffersen, Connor Carter, Jakobee Osborn, Brady Bowers, Matthew Thatcher, Lance Eaton, Teddy Webb, Hayden Brattin, Garrett Carter, Spencer Mast and Brandon Scheley.

Cub Scout Pack 409 visits Avalanche

Children hear about all facets of operation

Cub Scouts from Pack 409 got a first-hand view of the news media industry last week with a tour of The Owyhee Avalanche office.

On Jan. 9, more than a dozen

Homedale scouts were given a step-by-step view of creation news story and newspaper page from start to finish. The group’s photo was taken, then transformed to a custom front-page story for the scouts to take home. Avalanche editor Jon Brown showed the scouts the details of designing a news page and shared the process journalists

use to determine the importance of a story. Reporter Jim Beaumont gave the children a tour of the newsroom, including a discussion about the “morgue,” where past copies of Owyhee County newspapers dating to 1914 are kept for research and reference. Den leaders said the visit would help the scouts in their quest for two different merit badges.

City donates crossing arms to Marsing auction

The Marsing City Council voted to donate the city’s aging railroad crossing arms to the Marsing Disaster Board last week. Marsing Fire officials originally requested permission to hang a banner announcing the Feb. 3 Disaster Auction and raffle from the structure that spans Main Street near the entrance to town from Canyon County. Mayor Don Osterhoudt expressed concerns about the aging, debilitated state of crossing arms and possible city liability issues regarding hanging material from the crossing arms. The council voted to donate the crossing arms to the disaster auction after city attorney Stephanie Bonney drafted appropriate legal documents in order to transfer ownership. The disaster fund’s 47th annual auction, themed “Neighbors Helping Neighbors” begins at 10:13 a.m. Feb. 3 at the Phipps-Watson American Legion Community Center at 126 2nd St. N. The event has brought in more than \$250,000 since 2003. Some of the items for this year’s event include a rafting trip for 12 people, a child’s playhouse, a 90cc ATV, a picnic table, season passes to local college teams, a barbecue grill, handmade quilts and rugs, “famous” sour cream

and raisin pies, home-canned pickles and several other items. To donate items for the auction, cash for the disaster fund or to volunteer to help out, contact 2007 auction chair Cindy Floyd at (208) 830-5560 or (208) 855-9937 or co-chair Bob Carter at (208) 880-8770 or (208) 896-5701 or any Marsing Ambulance or Marsing Fire personnel. There are two levels to the annual raffle. Students are selling \$1 tickets and \$10 tickets. The top four ticket-sellers will win prizes, choosing between a portable DVD player, an IPOD music player, a Nintendo DS or \$100 cash. Two names will be drawn from the ticket-seller pool to win \$50 each this year, too.

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Murphy man arrested for DUI after joyride ... in a fire engine

— JWB

Being inquisitive types, the deputies followed the emergency vehicle on its mission northbound into the Nampa city limits.

Deputies dutifully conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle at the intersection of Idaho 45 and Stagecoach Road.


Goering is a member of the Murphy-Reynolds-Wilson Volunteer Fire District, but reportedly not active with the department. A message left for comment from the fire district was not returned.

— JWB

The Owyhee Avalanche

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Chamber tries to jump-start interest

The Homedale Chamber of Commerce mulled ways to grow its membership at its first meeting of 2007 last week.

Officer elections, scheduled for the lunch meeting Thursday at the Owyhee Lanes Restaurant, have been postponed until the February meeting as chamber members work on a mission statement and organize a direction for the organization built to promote the city's businesses.

Chamber vice president Gavin Parker of Parker, Bowen and Day CPAs said nominations for 2007 officers will be taken during the Feb. 8 meeting.

Before next month's meeting, the chamber plans to send a letter to member businesses about shaping the mission for the organization and re-evaluating the goals of the chamber as well as announcing elections.

"We need to get the chamber built back up in terms of fostering a sense of community," Parker said.

The chamber currently sponsors an Easter egg hunt and the annual Christmas parade in Homedale, but those attending Thursday's meeting brainstormed about several other ways to get the chamber more involved in community events.

Parker ran the meeting because current chamber president Aaron Tines of Flahiff Funeral Chapel was unable to attend.

Brad Dines of Parker, Bowen and Day is the chamber's current treasurer. Tammy Giedd resigned as secretary a few months ago to open a restaurant in Cambridge.

Thursday's meeting was one of the most well-attended gatherings in recent months, with representation from Parker's CPA firm, the Homedale School District and women's fitness centers Curves and Pick Up the Pace.

Everyone at the lunch kicked around ideas on how to increase participation in the chamber's monthly meetings, including better advertisement of the events.

"Look at the health of our economy and look at the growth in Homedale, and I think the chamber should echo that," Parker said.

The concept that dominated discussion during the meeting was inviting guest speakers to the monthly luncheons and spotlighting different businesses during the gathering as a way to make the meetings more attractive to local business owners.

Guest speakers could include officers from neighboring chambers of commerce to tell members what they do in their organizations.

Community leaders also could be invited to address chamber members.

Lunchtime tours of local businesses and a fund-raiser to build up the chamber's activity fund also were suggested.

But all members in attendance agreed that the chamber can't move forward without more participation from business leaders who pay their dues to the chamber each year but rarely show up for meetings.

Parker said the letter that will circulate soon will sum up ways to re-energize the chamber.

"We need to get the point across that we need participation and that we're trying to revamp what we're trying to do," Parker said.

— JPB

From page 1

✓ Owyhee: Friday show an opportunity to share region's musical gems

Couch said Eller and the OCHS recently received a joint grant worth \$3,500 from the Idaho Humanities Council to begin collecting and cataloging folk music from the Snake River and Salmon River regions of Idaho.

As part of his quest, Eller is trying to dig up songs dealing with Owyhee County, too. He hasn't found any, but he did write one about former Bruneau country horse rancher Kitty Wilkins. He hopes to release a CD entitled "Songs of Owyhee County" later this year.

"We are actively soliciting songs. This thing in Murphy is definitely part of that," Eller said. "We want to pick the best 10 or 12 songs to put on a CD to celebrate Owyhee County."

Friday's show and song-swap is another way for Eller to research regional folk songs, Couch said.

"(Eller and Quinton) are also going to give people the opportunity to have a song-swap for people to come and share, if they are aware of any folk music from the area, particularly right here along the Snake (river)," Couch said, who added that the music does not necessarily have to be original music, but also traditional music that locals have grown up listening to.

Eller, who has performed at the museum's Western Heritage Music Festival, emphasized that his performances are a song-collecting project, which will have as much historical significance as entertainment value.

"We're trying to collect historically based music from the Salmon and Snake River regions, so this is our mechanism for doing that," Eller said. Eller said he encourages local musicians to join and contribute to the effort, as well as those who simply know of local musicians that might have some historical significance.

Eller, 60, has been a musician since he was 15 years old. He holds a Doctorate of Chemistry from Georgia Tech. Prior to moving to Idaho, he worked for the Los Alamos nuclear testing facility in New Mexico, but he said that having grown up in West Virginia, he was practically born with a guitar in his hands.

Eller said that choosing to perform historical folk music was a natural choice for him.

"I'm from a part of the country, where if you do a search of songs from West Virginia, you get an avalanche (of music)," Eller said. "If you do that for Idaho songs, there is very little despite the fact there are a lot of really outstanding musicians around here. It's just that they sing about other places."

Eller said he began a search for Idaho-based songs. One of his criteria for finding music was that it specifically dealt with Idaho, and that Idaho could not be interchangeable with another state within the song. He said his idea was sparked by a study done in the past by Idaho folk singer Rosalee Sorrels, who could only find a handful of songs dealing specifically with Idaho.

"I made a proposal to the Humanities Council, that I was going to go out and search for these songs, because there have got to be some out there," Eller said. "Sure enough, there are. You just have to dig really hard."

Eller said that at least one of his original songs has dealt with the history of Owyhee County.

"On a CD we put out last year, called 'Songs of the Snake River Country,' there's a song on there called 'Queen of Diamonds' about a woman name Kitty Wilkins," Eller said. "Back around 1900 she ran the largest horse ranch in the world. It ran from the Snake River to Nevada, across the Bruneau country."

"I couldn't find any songs written about her. Back in West Virginia, there would have been a dozen songs," Eller said. "So we wrote one."

Eller said part of his drive for collecting Owyhee County songs has been from local historian and musician John Larson. He hopes to release a new CD entitled "Songs of Owyhee County" in April.

Eller agreed that sometimes an "outsider's perspective" on a given topic is the most valid. Not having grown up in the area, he has a fresh appreciation for the unique history of the Owyhees.

"I have to speak as someone who has only been around here for a few years," Eller said. "To me Owyhee County is one of the last vestiges of the real cowboy west. If you look at a U.S. road map, it's what I call the 'great blank spot.' It's got to be the biggest area in the lower 48 states without any paved roads going through it; It's wide open, wild and beautiful."

"If we don't get some of these great songs preserved, they are just going to disappear."

For more information on Eller and Bona Fide, visit www.bonafideidaho.com

— JWB



New county officers sworn in

Owyhee County's elected officials are sworn in during a ceremony in the county courthouse in Murphy on Jan. 8. Taking the oath of office, from left to right, are county clerk Charlotte Sherburn, county treasurer Brenda Richards, District 1 commissioner Jerry Hoagland, county assessor Brett Endicott, county coroner Harvey Grimme (obscured) and District 3 commissioner Dick Freund. Submitted photo

✓ Chairman: Hal Tolmie passes gavel to Dick Freund

"I think it is going to be really exciting, really interesting, because there is so much there going on and so much to learn," Freund said of his new role as a commissioner. "There are so many people to learn it from. I think it is going to be interesting and fun."

Monday's meeting at the county courthouse also was the first for District 1 commissioner Jerry Hoagland.

Hoagland and Freund were elected in May and confirmed during November's general election. Hoagland replaces Chris Salove, and Freund defeated incumbent Dick Reynolds.

Weather			
	H	L	Prec.
Jan 09	56	22	
Jan 10	47	22	
Jan 11	38	24	
Jan 12	35	12	
Jan 13	no	read	
Jan 14	no	read	
Jan 15	32	2	

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Obituaries

Preston (Pete) Charles Owen

Preston Charles Owen passed away January 10, 2007 in Marsing. Memorial services were held 1:00 p.m. Monday, January 15, 2007 at Phipps-Watson American Legion Community Center, 126 2nd Street North, Marsing. Born May 31, 1940 in Nampa, he attended St. Paul's Education Elementary and was a graduate of Nampa High in 1958.

Following high school, Pete joined the United States Navy and served this great country until his honorable discharge in 1963. After his service, he worked for the Union Pacific Railroad — and spent many years as a bush pilot and hunting guide in Alaska. When he returned to the low country, Pete became a trapper by trade.

He was preceded by his parents, Woody and Jean Owen, his grandfather, Lee Stinson, and his brother, Jon Owen. He is survived by two sisters — Karen Bass (Richard) and Marilee Wood (Ron), four children — Mark Owen, Karina Hall (Delbert), Leila, Cassy, five grandchildren — Amanda Owen, Joshua Owen, Whitney Owen, Jemier Dodd, and David Price. Many nieces and nephews and his dog, Bud.



Pete was born 100 years before his time.
In lieu of flowers, donations can be sent to the Marsing Gun Club or the American Legion Hall.
May you rest in peace.

The Last of the Wild Men
They came out of the dark into the sun, all ready for battle, at a dead run. Their tall tales of the bush and the might bear, would make a man shiver, then curl his hair.
Snowed in on a hillside, with nothing for grub, stalking the ponderous moose, then killing with a club. Spending many days,



with a two hundred pound pack, then at last a caribou, with a trophy rack.
With the fog so thick, they couldn't see their hand, they flew and flew, then landed on a strip of sand. Snaked out rainbows, as long as a man's leg, then fought off hungry wolves, in the muskeg.
Out in the bush, they'd live up to their name, they'd take a man out, and get him his game. With the three of them guiding, a man'd be a winner, but ol' Jim Bridger, would'a et all three a'fore dinner.
— **W.T. Owen**

James 'Jimmy' Ralph Munro

James "Jimmy" Ralph Munro, passed away, at age 88, on Thursday, January 11, 2007 in Mountain Home, Idaho. The family gathered to celebrate Jimmy's life at 2:00pm on Monday, January 15, 2007, in a Memorial Service at the Senior Citizens Center in Grandview.

Jimmy was born October 28, 1918, to James Ralph Munro and Minnie Rose Wood, in Eckert, Colorado.

While growing up his father's work took the family to Colorado, Utah and California.

Jimmy graduated from high school in Beaumont, California and attended college in Riverside, California. He was involved in football and basketball while in high school and college and loved all sports throughout his life. Jimmy played baseball on a town team in Grandview and enjoyed watching his son Larry play baseball.

Jimmy eloped with his high school sweetheart, Martha Jane



Gould, 68 years ago and they were secretly married in Yuma, Arizona on July 3, 1938. Their first home was in Northern California. Jimmy worked in tunnel construction and also as a ranch hand. The family migrated to Idaho where they farmed in Eagle before moving to Grandview where they farmed and ranched. This is where they raised their family. The family also

worked their cattle on their ranches at Boulder Mountain and Florence Springs. Jimmy and Martha later lived in Oreana. After retiring, they built a home in Garden Valley. They spent winters in Ivins, Utah and Yuma, Arizona.

While living in Grandview he also sold Farm Bureau Insurance throughout southern Idaho.

Preceded in death by his parents, his wife Martha, a daughter and two sons. Survived by his son Richard (Joyce) of Northglenn, Colorado; daughter-in-law, Kathy of Grandview; five grandchildren and 10 great-children: sister Francine (John) Lightner, of St. George, Utah and various nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers the family suggests donations be made, in Jimmy's name, to the Rim Rock Athletic Club at Grandview High School in Grandview.

Arrangements are under the direction of Rost Funeral Home, McMurtrey Chapel in Mountain Home.

School menus

Homedale Elementary

- Jan. 18: Enchilada or corn dog, scalloped potatoes, brownie, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 19: Pizza or peanut butter/jelly sandwich, salad, cookie, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 22: Burrito or French dip sandwich, green beans, cookie, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 23: Nachos or baked potato & toppings, cinnamon bread stick, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 24: Chicken rice bowl or egg roll & rice bowl, veggies, cookie, fruit & veggie bar, milk.

Homedale Middle

- Jan. 18: Nachos or baked potato, rice krispie treat, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 19: Chicken tenders or beef steak, potatoes/gravy, roll, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 22: Hamburger or hot dog, fries, cookie, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 23: Rice bowl w/chicken or egg rolls, veggies, cookie, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 24: Beef or chicken taco, corn, fruit roll-up, fruit & veggie bar, milk.

Homedale High

- Jan. 18: Chicken patty or hamburger/bun, potato wedges, dessert, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 19: Chicken taco or French dip sandwich, corn, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 22: Pizza, nacho bar or chef's salad, dessert, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 23: Chicken nuggets or egg rolls, rice, green beans, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
- Jan. 24: Idaho haystack or burrito, cinnamon roll, fruit & veggie bar, milk.

Marsing

- Jan. 18: Mac & cheese, veggie, fruit, milk, burritos, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
- Jan. 19: Nachos, corn, fruit crisp, milk, chicken patty/bun, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
- Jan. 22: Tostada, fruit, veggie, milk, hamburger, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
- Jan. 23: Pizza, salad, pineapple, milk, sandwiches, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
- Jan. 24: Chicken nuggets, veggie, chocolate pudding, milk, chicken fajita, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.

Bruneau

- Jan. 18: Turkey & noodles, salad, roll & jelly, fruited jello, milk.
- Jan. 19: Chicken Caesar wrap, fried rice, veggie, fruit, milk.
- Jan. 22: Stomboli, fries, veggie sticks, apple, cookie, milk.
- Jan. 23: Ham, scalloped potatoes, roll & jelly, veggie, apple crisp, milk.
- Jan. 24: Malibu chicken sandwich, potato wedges, veggies, fruit, brownie, milk.

Death notice

PAUL W. BRITTON, 86, Wednesday at Flahiff Funeral of Homedale, died Monday, Chapel, Homedale. January 8, 2007 at home of Cremation is under the direction of Flahiff Funeral Chapel, natural causes. Viewing was of Flahiff Funeral Chapel, held from 10 a.m. to noon Homedale.



Aaron Tines
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Freund focuses on fostering employee trust

New commissioner settles in quickly after turnaround from sheriff's office

Dick Freund only had one weekend to change roles in Owyhee County from lawman to county commissioner.

At 4 p.m. Jan. 5, he celebrated his retirement after 23 years as a full-time law enforcement officer, with an additional four years as a volunteer, prior to being hired fulltime.

Freund worked to the last minute as the chief deputy for the Owyhee County Sheriff's Office and was late to his own retirement ceremony because he was working to secure a search warrant in an ongoing case.

The next Monday at 10 a.m., he was sitting on the board of county commissioners for its weekly meeting at the courthouse in Murphy.

"Stopping the law enforcement job is bittersweet," Freund said. "I miss the people. I miss going to work everyday and I miss the constant 'having something to do.'"

Freud said that while he misses the sheriff's office in general, his specialty of child abuse cases was beginning to become a personal and professional burden.

"I'm glad to not have to do the specific things I was doing because I was getting burned out doing the child abuse stuff," he said.

"I'm glad I was able to do it, to help those people that I was able to help, but a steady diet of that is not a good thing."

While he already misses some aspects of the sheriff's office, his voice was filled with optimism as he listed some of his new challenges as District 3 commissioner.

Freund said that some of his personal strengths will serve the

citizens of Owyhee County well.

"I think I'll be able to work with the people well," Freund said. "I've got a lot of experience doing that."

Freund said that as a law enforcement officer, one of the many roles he played was that of a mediator and negotiator. While he humbly insists that he is not a "certified" mediator, his years spent honing that vital law enforcement skill will be put to good use in his new position.

"We were able to solve issues by getting people to sit down at a table and talk," Freund said. "I hope to be able to carry that into the commissioners meetings, to be able to solve problems through communication."

"In 23 years, I had four fights. The rest of the time, I was able to get people to talk things out and communicate with them enough to solve the issue and to get them to see my way of thinking, surrender, or whatever we needed, without a fight."

Freund said that, while an anomaly in politics, the Owyhee Initiative was a perfect example of this type of cooperative effort, though on a larger scale, where diverse groups with differing needs came together for a common goal.

"Anytime you take that many different organizations and get them to sit down together with so many different views, and get them to agree to a plan to regulate the growth and operation of such a vast area — and to protect it from destruction ... that's something pretty unique, that you don't see everyday. That's a team program, a group program."

Freund doesn't plan to waste any time before addressing



Commission takes on a new look
The Owyhee County Board of Commissioners held its first weekly meeting with new members Jan. 8 inside the courthouse in Murphy. From left to right: county clerk Charlotte Sherburn, District 2 commissioner Hal Tolmie, District 1 commissioner Jerry Hoagland and District 3 commissioner and board chairman Dick Freund. Submitted photo

Owyhee County's other pressing issues, such as growth and county employee relations.

"I want to develop a trust between the employees and the board," Freund said last week. "I want to be able to work on county planning, long-term planning. We've got a great planning and zoning commission right now, and I'd like to keep it that way. They're great people, they seem to work well with the people of the county, they know the ordinances."

Freund said that keeping planning and zoning regulations updated is one of his priorities. Additionally, managing inevitable growth and recreation issues in Owyhee County is an essential task of the current county administration.

"The growth has to be controlled," Freund said. "Recreation is a huge issue. It doesn't bring a whole lot of income into the county, but it brings a lot of problems for everybody."

But the new commissioner isn't

completely against the growth that is on the county's doorstep — as long as government agencies are prepared.

"Growth is a good thing, but you have to manage it," Freund said. "If growth comes too fast and is not regulated, you don't have the funds in the county budget to support the people that come in, you don't have the money, the infrastructure, roads, law enforcement, or fire and ambulance services."

In that critical crossroads of needs, cooperation and communication between all aspects of the community is necessary for a successful outcome, he said. Freund said one key element of this future is planning and zoning regulations. As an example, Freund offered the interaction between different highway districts within Owyhee County.

"We have county road districts and individual districts," he said. "We have the Gem Highway District, the Homedale Highway District, the Three Creek

Highway District. You have all these highway districts, that are separate from the county highway district. Those districts have to be talking together and working from the same sheet of music."

Freund said devising a strategy to deal with growth was one of the reasons he decided to pursue a spot on the board. One of the fronts of that battle is impact fees and ensuring that county taxpayers are not footing the bill for new growth. He would like to see developers pay the lion's share of the growth tab.

"Growth was a huge (issue) that I saw wasn't getting attacked," Freund said. "I thought it needed to be worked on. I thought we could work on impact fees for the county."

"There are things you have to start with in order to get impact fees going so that county taxpayers are not paying for the growth of new subdivisions and new people coming in, that the developers pay for the impact on the county. It's only fair they (developers) pay for the things they want, the new roads, new fire services, new ambulance services or law enforcement."

Freund said his first meeting as a county commissioner on Jan. 8 was a learning experience, and that he plans to thoroughly study procedures to make his role on the board efficient and legal.

Freund welcomes public comment and encourages those wishing to input constructive ideas to contact him via e-mail at rfreund@co.owyhee.id.us. Freund offered one caveat: Those wishing to simply complain about an issue need not write; those wishing to complain — and who have possible solutions for the issue — are more than welcome to provide suggestions.

— JWB

GV firm makes angus report

Grand View's C&D Angus Co., has been listed in the 2007 Spring Sire Evaluation Report published by the American Angus Association of St. Joseph, Mo.

C&D Angus owns one bull

listed in the report.

Issued in both the spring and fall, the new report features the latest performance information available on 5,178 sires, and is currently accessible at www.angussiresearch.com.

Senior menus

Marsing center

Jan. 18: Salisbury steak, potatoes/gravy, winter blend vegetables, cabbage salad, soup, dessert, drink.

Jan. 19: Oven fried chicken, potatoes/gravy, beets, salad, soup, dessert, drink.

Jan. 23: Meatloaf, baked potato, green beans, coleslaw, soup, dessert, drink.

Jan. 24: Chili, tossed salad, soup, corn bread, dessert, drink.

Homedale center

Jan. 18: Pork chow mein, fried rice, stir fry vegetables, milk.

Jan. 23: Meat loaf/gravy, mashed potatoes, broccoli, roll, milk.

Jan. 24: Chili con carne, ham & cheese/bun, tossed salad, milk.

Birth

Colby Clarence DeGeus

Colby Clarence DeGeus, a son, was born Dec. 27, 2006, to Edward and Jessica DeGeus of Homedale. Colby weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces and was 21¼ inches long. Colby has a 2-year-old sister, Harlee.

His maternal grandparents are Fred and Floydine Egurrola, and his maternal great grandmother is Lucile Egurrola, all of Homedale.

Colby's paternal grandparents are Kendall and Lulu Korrell of Aberdeen and the late Clarence DeGeus.

His paternal great grandparents are Krena and the late Charlie DeGeus of Wilder.

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HMS plans awards night Monday

Homedale Middle School will hold an awards ceremony to honor its top students in grades 5 though 8 next week.

The awards night will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday at the school. Parents of students receiving awards will be notified by the school.

Students will receive recognition for performance on ISAT exams, perfect attendance, academic

performance and citizenship.

Top participants in the school's Accelerated Reader program also will be cited during the event.

The school's Accelerated Reader program includes HMS teachers setting goals for their students based up their reading range. Each book in the school's library has a label signifying the reading range under which it falls as well as a point value.

A student's point value is determined through a computer test pertaining to the book he or she is reading. In most cases, students have nine weeks to reach their goals.

Children who have attained their goals for the first two quarters of the 2006-07 school year will be honored Monday, according to HMS activities director Luci Asumendi-Mereness.

Disaster summit scheduled in Marsing

Health officials, commissioners to attend meeting

Southwest District Health and the Owyhee County Board of Commissioners will hold a Pandemic Planning Summit at 4 p.m. Friday at the Marsing Community Center at 123 N. Old Bruneau Highway in Marsing.

According to organizers, the goal of the summit is to raise awareness of the importance of taking steps to plan for a possible pandemic or other disaster that could severely impact the community.

While the event is open to the public, organizers specifically encourage local utility department heads, school officials, emergency first-responders, faith-based leaders, businesses and industrial leaders to attend.

According to Laurie Boston, spokesperson for Southwest District Health, the event is designed to be educational, and there is no imminent threat facing Owyhee County at this time; however, the Center for Disease Control said that a worldwide flu epidemic is a distinct possibility.

"The Center for Disease Control has said it's only a matter of time before we have another pandemic," Boston said. "Primarily with the Bird Flu. It's not human-to-human transmission yet, but it could jump across (from avian to human) very easily."

The Pandemic Planning Summit will present strategies

for preparation, response and recovery efforts needed in a pandemic or disaster. These strategies include the need for pre-planning and working together; the roles the agencies, individuals and community partners will perform to avoid duplication of efforts; defining essential services; and knowing the resources available and needed for an effective, interactive response.

Boston said lessons learned in New Orleans during the Hurricane Katrina escapade hopefully will provide insight to ways to prepare for a disaster before it happens.

"Learning from Katrina, as far as the disaster, the left hand did not work well with the right hand, so this is just planning ahead so that you know and can work together effectively to save lives and to reduce the spread of disease," she said.

The Owyhee County commissioners also have a Pandemic Planning Summit scheduled at the Grand View Senior Center on Feb. 8th at 4 p.m.

For more information, contact Southwest District Health at 455-5377.

Honor roll

HMS second quarter

Eighth grade
4.00 grade-point average — Jarod Armenta, Megan Barraza, Caitlyn Johnson, Summer Phelps, Elizabeth Silva, Jonathan Stacey, Taylor Watkins, Jessica Westergard

3.99 to 3.50 — Amber Brinkerhoff (Romriell) 3.86, Stephen Lauson 3.86, Kiley Potter 3.86, Kirsi Thatcher 3.86, Taylor Thomas 3.86, Sydney Cornwall 3.83, Sarah Maggard 3.83, Sagan Condon 3.71, Gil Lootens 3.71, Tyler Theile 3.71, Maria Escutia 3.67, Alexandra McRae 3.67, Makenzie Tiegs 3.57, Marissa Ensley 3.50, Brook Fry 3.50, Tanner Lair 3.50

3.25-3.49 — Shawnee Davis 3.43, Alicia Aguilera 3.33, Jordan Meligan 3.33, Aiesha Zenor 3.33, Cristina Garcia 3.29, Jessica Ann Henry 3.29

3.24-3.00 — Llesenia Calderon 3.14, Jessica Craft 3.14, Ada Demshar 3.14, Cristian Hurtado 3.14, Nickele Mainarick 3.14, Norma Bautista 3.00, Olivia Burkett 3.00, Jonathan Gonzalez 3.00, Blanca Hurtado 3.00, Angie Padilla 3.00, Lucia Vega 3.00

Stevenson 3.57, Brenda Vega 3.57, Brett Ryska 3.50, Austin Trevino 3.50

3.25-3.49 — Destinie (DD) Gardner 3.43, Mariah Moore 3.43, Nahum Bermudez 3.33, Zachary Lowder 3.33, Bryce Osborn 3.29, Laura Clark 3.29

3.24-3.00 — Tylee Fry 3.14, Lyndee Coombs 3.00, Wendy Prado 3.00, April Strohman-Norris 3.00

Shelby Lee, Esteban Lejardi, Ryan McDermott, Kaylee Rupp, Eric Sanchez, Kathryn Thatcher, Edmy Vega

3.99 to 3.50 — Leslie Albor 3.83, Lydia Aman 3.83, Angel Cardenas 3.83, Benjamin Cardenas 3.83, Lauren Craft 3.83, Katie Deal 3.83, Juliana Hart 3.83, Tell Hyer 3.83, Destiny Long 3.83, Erik Martinez 3.83, Noah Munster 3.83, Cheyenne Steinmetz 3.83, Eliseo Aguilera 3.67, Joel Campos 3.67, Magdalena Escutia 3.67, Riley Maggard-Qualls 3.67, Logan Moore 3.67, Lizbeth Hurtado 3.50, Stephanie Hurtado 3.50, Juliana Padilla 3.50

3.25-3.49 — Eduardo Cardenas 3.33, Maria Castro 3.33, Shellbi Forsythe 3.33

3.24-3.00 — Kayla Carson 3.17, Alisandro Garcia 3.17, Quincy Hall 3.17, Jesse Padilla 3.17, Elias Paxton 3.17, Brenda Vega 3.17, Leandra Barley 3.00, Cameron Brandhagen 3.00, Nathan Leslie 3.00, Emylee Obregon 3.00, Jace Turner 3.00

Seventh grade
4.00 grade-point average — Anthony Adams, Raven Kelly, Cody Lynde, Lane Matteson, Laurien Mavey, Aubrey Nash, Katie Price

3.99 to 3.50 — Justine Calzacorta 3.86, Deena Emry 3.86, Ashley Leslie 3.86, Dominic Christiansen 3.83, Kylie Farwell 3.83, Kyle Purdom 3.83, Casey Christoffersen 3.71, Trey Corta 3.71, Kate Eaton 3.71, Bodie Hyer 3.71, Angel Jr Salazar 3.71, Veronica D'Alessio 3.67, Rachel Gonzalez 3.67, Kylie Kushlan 3.67, Jessica Broadbent 3.57, Ashley Downum 3.57, Zachary Mereness 3.57, Phaedra

Sixth grade
4.00 grade-point average — Elizabeth Albor, Emilee Hann, Reed Maggard, Mikel Mavey, Cayetano Montes, Gabrielle Nash, Heather Romriell, Veronica Sanchez, Karissa Webb

3.99 to 3.50 — Roberto Martinez 3.86, Stephanie Villarreal 3.86, Jacob Murray 3.83, Mikal Culver 3.80, Samantha Christoffersen 3.67, Shelby Hess 3.67, Ramon Kelly 3.67, Shelby McRae 3.67, Malina Geertson 3.57, Nicole Keller 3.57, Miranda Miklancic 3.57, Ariana Rice 3.57, Brenda Uriarte 3.57, Perla Albor 3.50, Debra Esparza 3.50, Hayden Krzesnik 3.50, Whitney Uria 3.50

3.25-3.49 — Rebecca Coffman 3.43, Mariza Fernandez 3.43, Mackenzie McMichael 3.43, Derek Hellman 3.33, Jacqueline Martinez 3.33, Erin Shenk 3.33, Jaylene Stringer 3.29

3.24-3.00 — Hailee Aberasturi 3.17, Christopher Romans 3.17, Chelsea Banda 3.17, Corbin Schamber 3.14, Katia Rios 3.00, Mickayla Taggart 3.00, Ana Vasquez 3.00

Fifth grade
4.00 grade-point average — Stephanie Aguilera, Antonia Banda, Kynna Bertagnolli, Lizett Chavez, Liam Condon (Wade), Emily Conger, Britt Eubanks, Stephanie Kennedy, Trey Lane,

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The Origin of Birthstones

Most gem scholars will agree that the tradition of birthstones arose from the Breastplate of Aaron, which is described in the Old Testament biblical book of Exodus, chapter 28, verses 15-30. This was a ceremonial religious garment set with twelve gemstones that represented the twelve tribes of Israel and also corresponded with the twelve signs of the zodiac and the twelve months of the year. But because ancient people did not always classify gemstones by mineral species like we do today, there is some debate about which gemstones were set in the breastplate and why. Because of this, different cultures around the world have adopted different birth stone lists.

For example December has three: turquoise, topaz, or tanzanite. Some also argue that the proper way to assign gemstones is according to astrological sign and not month. Hence, the lists have grown.

If you wish to learn more about birthstones and precious gems please feel free to contact me.

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Jim Carrey
comedian, 1962

Chili Davis
baseball player, 1960

Andy Kaufman
comedian, 1949

Muhammad Ali
boxer, 1942

James Earl Jones
actor, 1931

Eartha Kitt
singer, 1927

Rock Hudson
actor, 1925

Al Capone
gangster, 1899

Famous Pauls born on this day:

Paul Revere
of Paul Revere and the Raiders, 1938

Paul Young
1980s pop vocalist, 1956

Who trumps them all?

Paul Brown
Our dad and grandpa

Happy birthday From the gang up north!

Economics students gain world perspective

Homedale classmates don foreign garb for global trade competition

Students from Brenda Paxton's Homedale High School economics classes were thrust into the cold, cruel world of global economics recently.

Paxton's students divided into six teams for the International Economic Summit global trade simulation and competition held at Boise State University last month. In the competition, the students were placed in the position of becoming economic advisors to their assigned countries.

Homedale students chose to represent Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, India, Cuba, Australia and Spain, even donning the full traditional garb of their respective countries.

Homedale's Cuba team finished fifth in the 93-team competition. The Saudi squad won first place in the costume portion of the contest.

Paxton's Saudi team, whose ideas centered on an alternative energy source for the middle-eastern country, mixed cultures in their winning costume display. Josh Jolley and Caleb Johnson took the stage to present their project decked out in traditional Saudi headgear, with the Westernized addition of mirrored sunglasses and business suits. Amanda Brown and Jessica Ferguson, who wore traditional black veils, flanked Jolley and Johnson.

The Saudi team's energy plan also placed in the top 10 for their particular "trade issue" and their alternative energy proposal.

Overall, Paxton was very impressed with her students' performance.

"They did really well," Paxton said. "There were 93 teams and one of the teams (Cuba) placed fifth."

Paxton said there were teams

'They did really well. There were 93 teams and one of the teams (Cuba) placed fifth.'

— **Brenda Paxton**
Homedale High School economics teacher

from throughout Idaho at the competition.

Students gain more than just economic knowledge in the program.

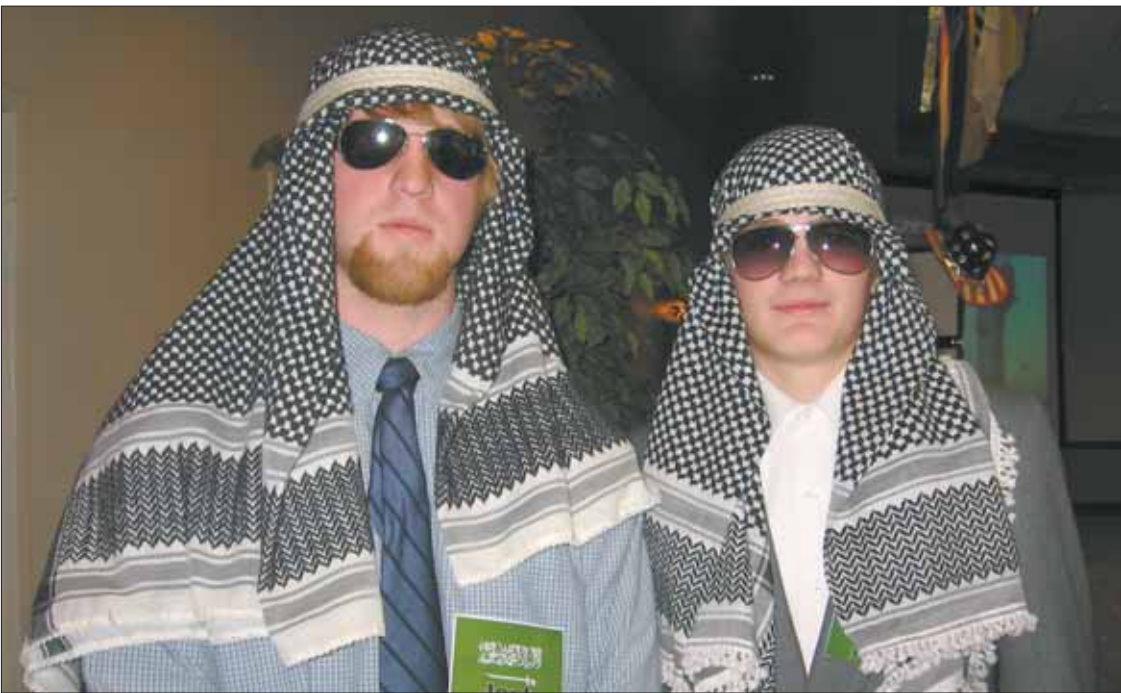
"It teaches them a lot about science and management, about tariffs, exports, and how they affect trade values," Paxton said of the long list of considerations students had to make throughout the project. They were also forced to address issues such as globalization and the standards-of-living in different countries.

Organizers of the event stressed that students must become acquainted with several aspects of their assigned country. They must be familiar with the individual challenges and strengths their countries possess.

Students had to be versed in their country's raw facts such as imports and exports, currency exchange rates, foreign aid, geography, population and political alliances.

Students also were tasked with submitting a detailed economic proposal for debate at a mock economic "summit" that all the represented countries attended.

— JWB



Homedale competitors wear top-rated get-ups

Above: Josh Jolley and Caleb Johnson show off authentic turbans that Homedale High School teacher Brenda Paxton acquired from the Middle East. **Below:** Jessica Ferguson and Amanda Brown smile through their veils during a break in the mock summit at Boise State University. Jolley, Johnson, Ferguson and Brown comprised Team Saudi Arabia, and team won the costume competition. Submitted photo





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Growth drives Homedale into '07

The City of Homedale will continue to tackle the challenges of a growing city in 2007, Mayor Paul Fink said last week.

"I think we are just trying real hard to clean up the town and make it look better and have a better quality of life," Fink said.

The improvements will continue in the new year as the city inches closer to starting projects to improve its water and sewer systems to ensure the capability

to handle the coming residential growth with as many as three subdivisions in the works.

City engineer Fred Ostler reported at last week's city council meeting that the sewer project financed by a bond passed by voters in May could be delayed as engineering reports are compiled.

"It sounds like it could be another two months before we can break ground," Fink said.

Fink said the delay could jeop-

ardize the start of work on a new lift station because once irrigation season begins a nearby ditch will be flowing, causing the water table to rise.

"There will be so much water. I doubt the construction outfit will be able to pump it out fast enough," Fink said. "If it's too late, maybe we'll put it off (until after irrigation season)."

Fink said there's a chance the water project could start first.



Homedale strip mall to hold grand opening Tuesday

The new strip mall in the 100 block of East Idaho Avenue in Homedale will host a grand opening celebration from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesday. The mall houses Curves, Rehab Authority and H&R Block. A fourth business space in the complex remains vacant.

Strip mall businesses set to celebrate grand opening

Homedale's new strip mall in the 100 block of East Idaho Avenue, which currently houses Curves, Rehab Authority and H&R Block, will hold its grand opening celebration from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday.

Rehab Authority welcomes the public to view its new location and will offer door prizes, games, refreshments and will raffle of a 24-inch television with a basket of Super Bowl goodies.

Kaye Devenport, office manager at Homedale's new H&R Block franchise, said the opportunities for new customers are many.

“We’re going to have refreshments and things so people will come and see us,” Devenport said.

“We see the growth that you have here in Homedale and the surrounding area, and we think it’s a good location,” Devenport said.

Devenport said that prior to opening the H&R Block location in Homedale, she worked at a tax preparation service in Caldwell, but many of her clients came from the Homedale and Marsing area. Devenport said that in addition to being easier for county residents to access H&R Block's services, the Homedale branch also will take some of the burden off of the Caldwell office.

Devenport said that because the location is new, those seeking tax preparation services may get quicker service due to shorter

lines.

“We don’t anticipate being very busy, so if they (patrons) do not want to go to one of the other offices and sit and wait, this would be a good office for them to come to,” Devenport said, adding that the Caldwell and Nampa offices are “bombarded” during the business’s peak time of late January and early February.

Juanita Rundell of Curves said her business plans to possibly run an enrollment special during the grand opening. Rundell said she looks forward to the grand opening, and had plans to open a Curves location in Homedale for the past two years.

— JWB

County snow and water report

The Bureau of Reclamation Web site this week showed that Owyhee Reservoir held 457403 acre-feet of water and that 20.4 cubic feet per second was being released into the Owyhee River at Nyssa, Ore.

The following snow pack statistics were gathered from the National Resources Conservation Service Web site at 8 a.m. Monday:

Date	Snow Depth	Reynolds Creek			
		Year to Date Precipitation	Average Temp		
			Max.	Min.	Avg.
01/09	0.7	6.2	41	33	36
01/10	0.2	6.2	47	31	38
01/11	1.9	6.1	40	15	26
01/12	2.6	6.1	16	9	13
01/13	2.5	6.2	12	0	6
01/14	1.8	6.3	18	5	12
01/15	2.2	6.1	17	4	10

South Mountain					
Date	Snow Depth	Year to Date	Average Temp		
		Precipitation	Max.	Min.	Avg.
01/09	22.6	12.9	41	33	36
01/10	22.5	13.0	50	35	41
01/11	24.7	12.8	37	17	27
01/12	26.4	12.9	21	6	13
01/13	25.6	12.8	18	-2	5
01/14	25.0	12.9	24	3	13
01/15	25.2	12.9	22	7	12

Date	Snow Depth	Mud Flat	Average Temp		
		Year to Date Precipitation	Max.	Min.	Avg.
01/09	10.2	6.2	44	27	34
01/10	10.0	6.2	45	24	33
01/11	10.4	6.1	44	21	31
01/12	12.1	6.1	25	7	17
01/13	11.9	6.2	16	-10	7
01/14	11.2	6.2	18	14	4
01/15	11.4	6.2	25	-4	10

Cattlemen's winter meeting, dance on tap

The winter meeting for the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association is just around the corner.

The meeting is scheduled to begin with registration at 12:30 p.m. Feb. 3 in Oreana.

The agenda also includes the meeting beginning at 1 p.m. with the membership bit drawing.

The OCA will hold a social

hour at 5 p.m. and a potluck dinner at 6 p.m.

The day of activities will be capped by a fund-raising dance at the Oreana Community Hall from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Admission is \$5 per person. Music will be provided by Runnin' For Cover.

Proceeds will benefit the community hall.



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9-1 Sat

Feds won't put peppergrass on endangered list

Slickspot peppergrass, a plant found in parts of Owyhee County, does not warrant protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced last week.

While studies show the quality of the plant's habitat on the northern Snake River Plain and the Owyhee Plateau has decreased, the current population trends do not appear to be significantly influenced by this habitat degradation. The Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) noted a lack of spring rains as a major factor for the plant's limited population growth, but, as survey efforts continue, new occurrences of the plant are being discovered.

"This decision follows an extensive review of existing and new scientific information and data," said Ren Lohofener, director of the USFWS's Pacific Region. "The review included completion of a risk assessment by a panel of scientific experts from outside the agency, an evaluation of conservation efforts underway for the plant, deliberation by a panel of Service managers, as well as consideration of comments from the public."

In making the announcement, Service officials stressed the importance of ongoing conservation efforts for the plant. These efforts are particularly



Slickspot peppergrass

Slickspot peppergrass — a plant native to southwest Idaho and Owyhee County — will not be listed as an endangered species, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced last week. Photo submitted by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

important in light of the increasing number of wildfires, fueled largely by invasive, exotic grasses, which alter the diversity and composition of the native plant community.

"Given the decline in quality of the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, we believe it is important to continue efforts to conserve slickspot peppergrass and reduce the threats to the sagebrush-steppe habitat," said Jeff Foss, field supervisor of the Service's Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office in Boise. "We are committed to supporting cooperative conservation efforts and monitoring slickspot

peppergrass populations to ensure that the species does not need ESA protection in the future."

The Service's finding, which was published last week in the *Federal Register*, is in response to an Aug. 19, 2005 court order. The order reversed the Services withdrawal of a 2002 proposal to add the slickspot peppergrass to the federal list of threatened and endangered species. The court directed the agency to reconsider whether the plant should be protected under ESA.

The additional court-mandated review reaffirmed the Service's

2004 conclusion that "there is a lack of strong evidence of a negative population trend" and showed that rangewide, the population has increased throughout its range since 2004.

Hailey-based environmental group Western Watersheds Project, which brought the 2004 lawsuit that forced the re-examination of the plant's status, has vowed to fight this latest decision, too.

In a Jan. 10 press release, Western Watersheds Project said it will continue its lengthy legal battle to list the species under the ESA.

"A federal court has already found that slickspot peppergrass stands on the precipice of extinction," Advocates for the West senior attorney Todd Tucci said in a press release found on the WWP's Web site. "It is thus incredible for (Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne) to claim that populations are stable. Slickspot peppergrass populations are about as stable as flying into the Baghdad International Airport."

Slickspot peppergrass is an herbaceous plant with numerous tiny white flowers resembling the garden flower sweet alyssum. It is found almost exclusively in the Snake River Plain and its adjacent northern foothills in southwest Idaho, with a separate population on the Owyhee Plateau in Owyhee

County.

It typically occurs in small-scale, relatively moist habitats called "slickspots" found in sagebrush-steppe habitats at elevations ranging from 2,200 feet to 5,400 feet in Owyhee, Elmore, Canyon, Ada, Gem and Payette counties.

Approximately 87 percent of the slickspot peppergrass population occurs on federal land, primarily managed by the Bureau of Land Management and Department of Defense. Nine percent of the population occurs on state land, and 4 percent is found on private lands. Slickspot peppergrass can be found on land within the boundaries governed by the BLM's Jarbidge Resource Area, which covers a portion of eastern Owyhee County.

Four conservancy plans currently exist for slickspot peppergrass. A number of conservation measures can be found in the State of Idaho's Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA), originally developed in 2003 and modified in early 2006 by the State of Idaho, BLM, Idaho Army National Guard and several non-governmental cooperating parties.

More information about the Service's decision may be found at <http://idahoes.fws.gov> or www.fws.gov/pacific.

Owyhee ranchers applaud feds' decision

Owyhee ranchers are breathing a sigh of relief after the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last week decided not to list slickspot peppergrass on the endangered species list. Declaring the plant endangered could have threatened acres currently used for grazing.

Owyhee Cattlemen's Association member Ted Hoffman, a Mountain Home veterinarian who owns a small farm near Grand View, credits much of the decision to the state of Idaho.

"I think they (USFWS) reached the right decision," Hoffman said. "They wouldn't have reached the right decision without the state of Idaho investing in a botanist to take a hard look at the evidence that has been put together so far and finding that a great deal of it was either wrong, inaccurate, misleading or exaggerated."

Hoffman said state officials saved ranchers from a typical over-reaction when there is a perceived threat to plant life.

"When a plant becomes endangered, all of a sudden people draw great big circles on the map, and say 'Just in case it might grow someplace in there, we're going to change the current management,'" he said. "This is an example where the state government has served the ranchers very well. We all suffer when a species is listed that is not appropriate."

To Hoffman, this tendency to have a knee-jerk reaction



Decision saves grazing land

Owyhee County ranchers received good news last week when it was learned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decided against listing the slickspot peppergrass plant on the endangered species list.

to a situation is a trend when it comes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has become commonplace with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

"In the absence of strong evidence to the contrary, they (USFWS) believe whatever is said about the species and react to conserve it, even if the threats are not clearly established — even if the threats don't exist," Hoffman said.

Other Owyhee ranchers welcomed the federal agency's decision, which was published in the *Federal Register*.

"My response to this is that it is very encouraging that the right decision was made," said Owyhee

rancher Brenda Richards, whose family holds grazing permits on Bureau of Land Management acreage. "Because they actually looked at the data, and the fact that all the data wasn't in. As they were gathering it, it was found that the plant actually isn't as endangered as was first thought."

Richards, a rancher from Reynolds Creek and the wife of former OCA president Tony Richards, said she did not have the peppergrass in her grazing areas. But the Owyhee County treasurer is well versed in all facets of the issue. She is a member of the BLM's Boise District Resource Advisory Council, which last

month discussed the issue in depth at its meeting in Marsing. Richards is also the federal and public lands chairperson for the Idaho Cattle Association.

"What is encouraging to me is that, so often, they run to list something without knowing fully what the threats are, or if the threats are actual to a species," Richards said. "It's encouraging that when they found out that these threats — such as livestock grazing — were not the ones that were causing the problems, that there were more factors that came in, that they made the right decision."

According to Sen. Larry Craig (R-Idaho), the announcement sheds light on an example of how the Endangered Species Act should work. Craig is a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

"This is a victory for those of us who want to recover species in a collaborative way, but will be a disappointment for those who simply want to use slickspot peppergrass as a tool to shut down grazing," Craig said.

Hoffman said it is uncertain how many Owyhee ranchers would have been affected by placing peppergrass on the endangered species list, but it had the potential to be many.

"The 'circle' around the known population was so large, certainly a goodly number of ranchers in the (BLM) Jarbidge Resource

Area would have been affected, and perhaps more," Hoffman said. "Very likely, any area that had the slickspots (necessary for slickspot peppergrass growth) would have been under the gun eventually."

Hoffman said that area could have potentially stretched from Jarbidge, Nev., to Fruitland.

Hoffman said that while it is expected that scientific methods would be used to make such a wide-reaching decision, that logic is not always used when it comes to listing an endangered species. When the state of Idaho began to investigate the scientific facts associated with slickspot peppergrass and presented that evidence to the USFWS, the Service made a decision that deviated from the norm when it came to the ESA.

"When that effort was accomplished (scientific study), that was the only time anyone had turned a critical, scientific eye on the evidence that was available," Hoffman said. "Unfortunately, until that time, the botanists and biologists that had anything to do with the plant just kind of believed what the other ones (botanists) said without any real scientific proof."

Hoffman said that without the state's decision to turn a scientific eye toward the slickspot peppergrass issue, a decision would have been made without scientific scrutiny.

— JWB

Bruneau QRU takes step to protect community

The Owyhee County Board of Commissioners last week approved partial funding for a new piece of lifesaving equipment for the Bruneau Quick Response Unit (QRU).

The volunteer emergency services agency also held a community CPR course recently, and graduated 14 new potential lifesavers.

“We held a CPR class in Bruneau in December,” QRU president Mary Tindall said. “We have about 14 people that are not EMTs (emergency medical technicians) now certified in CPR in the community.”

To further enhance service to the community, the Bruneau QRU asked county commissioners for help in a quest to update an aging defibrillator, which is used to treat heart attack patients. Commissioners approved funding for the machine.

“They (Bruneau QRU) wanted the county to purchase a new defibrillator,” Owyhee County Clerk Charlotte Sherburn said. “And they (commissioners) approved \$7,000 in funding.”

Sherburn said the commissioners approved a \$7,000 request for the Grand View Ambulance late last year.

According to Tindall, who is an EMT, the \$7,000 from the commissioners is a start. The equipment will cost approximately \$12,000 total.

“We’re updating from one we purchased in 1991,” Tindall said. “The commissioners were very nice, but it will not cover it. It will cost around \$12,000.”

Tindall said the agency does not know yet how it will finance the remaining \$5,000 to purchase the new equipment, made by Zoll Data Systems. She said the QRU board will meet today to decide how to come up with the balance of funding needed.

“We meet (today) to decide what we’re going to do to fund the rest of it, whether we have to dip into our savings, whether we have a fund-raiser, or apply for another grant,” Tindall said. “That is still in the works.”

She said the service relies on the kindness of the community to operate.

“We only exist on memorials or donations. We don’t charge for our services,” Tindall said, adding that the service is all-volunteer and no members of the agency are paid.

According to manufacturer’s information, the device is classified as a cardiac resuscitation device. Tindall said the new machine would allow emergency service workers to give a printout of a heart attack patient’s heart rhythms to emergency room doctors and responding air ambulance services, such as Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center LifeFlight or Air St. Luke’s, to provide exact information to advanced medical providers.

“The reason we went with Zoll is because it makes us compatible with the air ambulance services, with LifeFlight and Air St. Luke’s, because they have the same brand and similar equipment,” Tindall said. “No need to change pads, they can just take it and go. That is the reason we went with that company. We’re now compatible with everything in the area.”

— JWB

High school chess tourney completes first week



Students, teachers match wits, strategy

Above: More than 30 students and faculty members squeezed into Mark Thatcher’s classroom at Homedale High School last week to kick off the chess club’s second annual tournament. *Right:* Chess club advisor Thatcher makes a move against Tyler Ford.



Lunchtime competition continues this week in Homedale

The Homedale High School chess tournament got off to a big start last week in Mark Thatcher’s classroom.

After the completion of two rounds of competition, three students and two teachers shared the top spot in the standings with two points apiece.

Dayton Syme, Jake Tolmie and Kevin Marrs shared the top spot with Trojans athletic director Dave Hart and track and field coach Thomas Thomas.

The tournament format awards one point for a victory, a half-point for a draw and no score for a loss.

Shravan Shraganesh and Mark Klug, who like Syme and Marrs are members of the school’s chess club, were sixth and seventh, respectively with two points each. Computer tiebreakers were used to determine their placement.

The five-round tournament is near its midway point. Considering two days for each round to be completed, results could be final by the end of this week.

Thirty-two players entered the tournament, including seven teachers (Hart, Thomas, Thatcher, Ken Olsen, Tracey Cook, Brandy Bratcher and Nancy Anthony).

Thatcher reported two students had dropped out of the contest.

The remaining students in the tourney include Gage Egurrola, Matthew Farrell, Mike Jones, Domingo Esparza, Christian Cahill, Dustin Regis, Jarod Driskell, Reece Landa, Sam Hart, Tyler Gibson, Kevin Abels, Stefan Phippen, Aaron Wheeler, Josh Klug, Jeff Krasko, Tyler Ford, John Howes, Matt Borschowa, Jordan Kennedy and Neil Doyle.

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TRASH looks to clean up Owyhee Front

Fred Christensen is fed up with irresponsible, thoughtless use of open space, including the Owyhee Front. That is why he decided to orchestrate Operation TRASH, or Teach Responsibility and Save our Heritage.

“Our overall goal is to educate people on good public land ethic,” Christensen said, while thumbing through a collection of photos of an old rusted, burned Plymouth Reliant, Miller Highlife beer cans, an old computer monitor, a bathtub, water heater and, other household items that make the desert south of Marsing look like a haven for rejects from a Home Depot Dumpster.

For good measure, Christensen had a fair share of photos of bullet-riddled highway signs and public land scarred from off-highway vehicle use.

Last year, Christensen, a former Idaho Fish and Game Commissioner, decided to mobilize against those who would use our public and federal lands as impromptu off-road drag strips or landfills, and our taxpayer-financed highway signs as rifle, shotgun and pistol targets by starting TRASH.

Bureau of Land Management public affairs specialist MJ Byrne, who is stationed in the Boise District office, heralded TRASH’s efforts. She said the problem of illegal dumping is a complicated one for officials, and expensive cleanup is often involved.

“The short of it is, is that it costs the taxpayers money,” Byrne said. “We applaud their (TRASH’s) efforts.”

Christensen said a goal of TRASH is to organize the many

well-meaning groups throughout Idaho that regularly devote efforts to cleaning up recreational areas.

“There are lots of groups who have ‘cleanups,’ ” Christensen said. “We would like to coordinate them all at the state level.”

Education is another goal of the group. According to literature provided to The Owyhee Avalanche, TRASH has identified eight specific goals to enhance public awareness, including printing brochures, developing DVDs and video tapes for public school use and for presentations to service clubs and other outdoor enthusiasts.

The Boise-based conservation group Idaho Wildlife Federation oversees the group, Christensen said. Christensen is a IWF board member.

While unsightly trash such as cans, discarded appliances and house fixtures and old cars create eyesores on otherwise pristine space, there are sometimes more harmful products present, such as old motor oil or fertilizer that people dump that may be less visible.

“The first thing we have to do is identify what kind of trash has been dumped,” Byrne said. “If it’s old tires or something, we have to pay for the disposal of it. That is where it gets to be expensive.”

Byrne said that the taxpayers ultimately foot the bill for illegal dumping, which can be expensive when it entails cleanup of a common hazardous material such as motor oil. Cleanup can be a lengthy process even for a small amount.

“That (motor oil) gets into some of the environmental law



You name it, it’s there...

Above: As this abandoned bathtub and television shows, the Owyhee desert has become a one-stop dump-all zone for many irresponsible homeowners. **Below:** This pile of garbage, possibly left by recreationists in the Owyhee Front, is typical of the type of garbage Fred Christensen is trying to reduce with his involvement in TRASH (Teach Responsibility and Save our Heritage), a Boise-based activist group. Submitted photos



— JWB



Winter is here ... near Indian Meadows

Over two feet of snow blanketed the area near Indian Meadows last Saturday. Temperatures were reported at zero in Jordan Valley that morning. Photo by Joe Aman

Access Yes! incentive application period open

The application period to participate in Access Yes! now is open for 2007.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game’s Access Yes! program is designed to improve hunter and fisherman access to private land or across private land, to public land beyond through the compensation of participating landowners.

Interested landowners may apply to participate in the incentive program by downloading forms from the Fish and Game Web site and mailing them in. For more information or to obtain sign-up forms, visit <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov> and follow links to the news releases portion of the site.

Phone the Access Yes! coordinator at (208) 334-2920.

Approximately a dozen Owyhee County landowners already participate in the program, according to Fish and Game data.

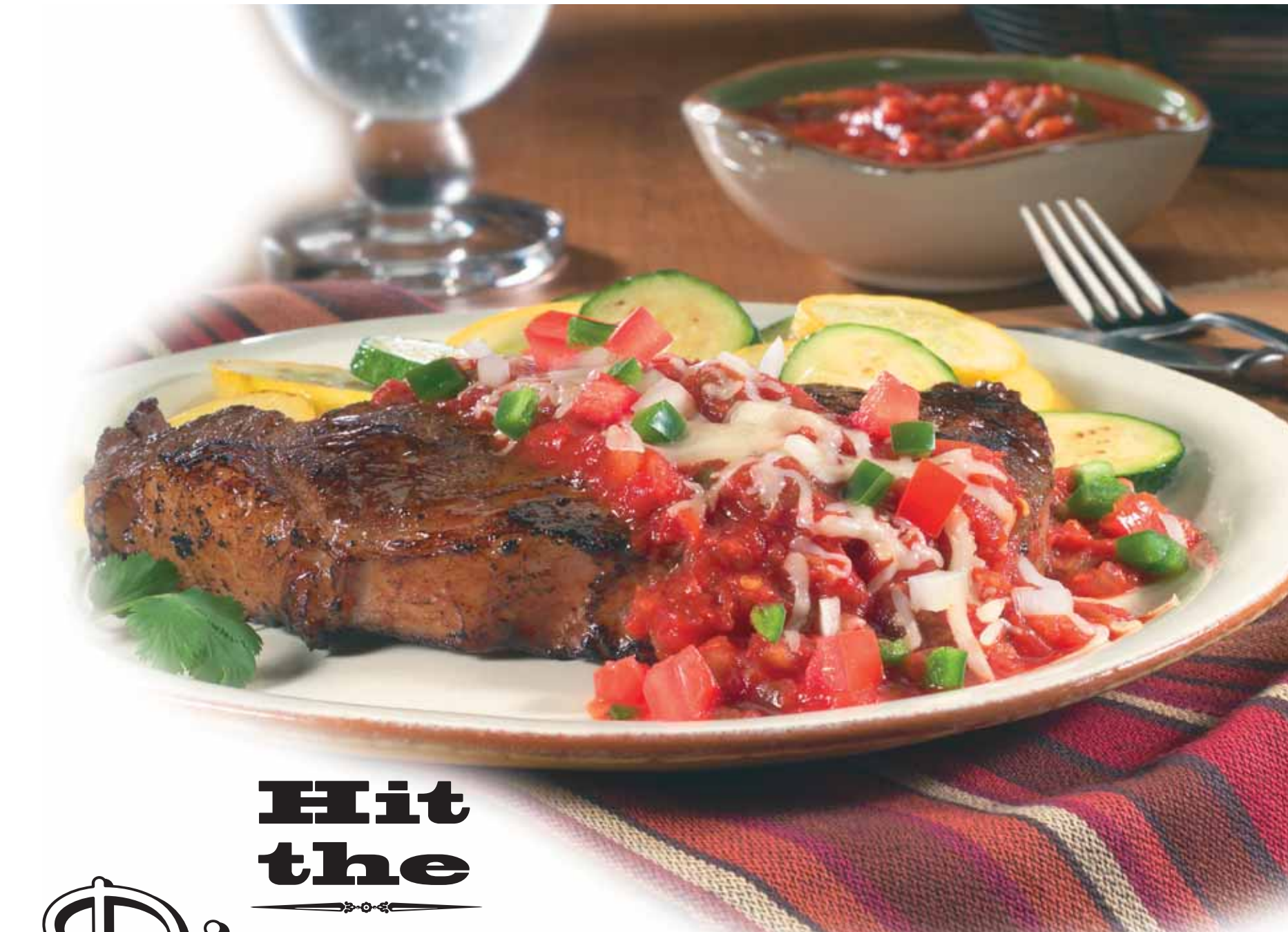
According to F&G, the goal is to provide access to hunters and anglers to 1 million or more

acres of private land and access across private land to thousands of acres of public land. Last year, participating landowners opened 102 properties, totaling 620,215 acres of private land, and access to an additional 689,030 acres of public land.

The program lets landowners specify conditions of access to meet their needs, provides access to wildlife that may cause depredation problems and helps improve hunter ethics and the relationships between sportsmen and landowners.

The program is a cooperative effort between Fish and Game, the Department of Agriculture and the Idaho Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

Idaho recreational liability statutes shield participating landowners who allow recreational activities on their property without charge, or who have entered a cooperative lease agreement with the state.



Hit the Dinner Trail

FAMILY FEATURES

When your cowboys and cowgirls come home after riding the range — *hungry* — do what cowboy cooks have done for generations. Add the tang of tomatoes, the zip of peppers and the sweet heat of onions to perk up any meal.

Put a little salsa in your life and rustle up some of these authentic ranch recipes, which Pace Foods has gathered from real-life chuckwagon cooks from Cheyenne, Wyo., to Fort Worth, Texas, as part of its effort to preserve the heritage of cowboy cooking.

Still true to its Southwestern and cowboy cooking roots, Pace Picante Sauce celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2007. For more great recipes and tips, visit www.pacefoods.com.



the Chuckwagon Tradition

Over the past five years, in partnership with Pace Foods, cowboy cook Tom Perini of Buffalo Gap, Texas, has traveled the country with his chuckwagon, giving us a taste of this 140-year-old ranching tradition.

“The word ‘chuck’ is an Old English term for food,” Perini explains. “On a long cattle drive from south Texas to the rail yards in Abilene, Kan., cowboys had to put all their food, spices and utensils in a ‘chuck’ box on the back of a wagon. While on the trail, 12 cowboys had to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner. With no refrigeration or running water, it was the chuckwagon cook’s respon-

sibility to transform beef, salt pork, dried pinto beans, flour, cornmeal, lard, molasses and spices into appetizing meals.”

Perini continues, “Tomatoes were among the first canned goods. If cowboys were lucky, they had a cook who could make a fresh-tasting salsa from these tomatoes. It was such a welcome addition that picante sauce is still considered a cowboy cooking staple among chuckwagon and ranch cooks today.”

Tom Perini owns the Perini Ranch Steakhouse, named one of “America’s Great Rural Restaurants” by Gourmet magazine.

Rib-Eye Steak

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes
Makes: 4 servings

- 1 **tablespoon vegetable oil**
- 2 **beef rib-eye steaks (about 1 pound each), 1 inch thick**
- 1 **24-ounce jar Pace Picante Sauce**
- 1 **8-ounce package shredded Monterey Jack cheese (about 2 cups)**
- 1 **small onion, chopped (about 1/4 cup)**
- 1 **jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced (about 1 tablespoon)**
- 1 **small tomato, chopped (about 1/2 cup)**

1. Heat oil in 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add steaks and cook about 10 minutes or until medium-rare, turning steaks halfway through cooking.
2. Add picante sauce and heat to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Cook 10 minutes.
3. Divide cheese between steaks. Cover and cook until cheese melts. Top with onion, pepper and tomato.

Inspired from a recipe by J. Arthur Garcia, Two Circle G Chuckwagon, Lubbock, Texas

Picante Peach Cobbler

Prep time: 10 minutes
Stand time: 15 minutes
Bake time: 40 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Makes: 8 servings

- 1 **24-ounce jar Pace Picante Sauce**
 - 1 **cup packed brown sugar**
 - 1/4 **cup all-purpose flour**
 - 1/2 **teaspoon ground cinnamon**
 - 1/8 **teaspoon salt**
 - 1 **29-ounce can cling peach halves, drained and chopped**
 - 1/2 **15-ounce package refrigerated pie crust (1 crust)**
1. Mix picante sauce, brown sugar, flour, cinnamon and salt in 3-quart saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture boils. Reduce heat to low. Cook and stir 2 minutes more or until mixture thickens. Stir in peaches. Remove from heat and let cool. Pour mixture into 9-inch deep-dish pie plate.
 2. Heat oven to 400°F. Let pie crust stand at room temperature 15 minutes or until it’s easy to handle. Gently put the pie crust over the sauce mixture; crimp or roll edges to seal. Cut slits in crust with knife.
 3. Bake 40 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Serve warm.

Inspired from a Tomato Cobbler recipe by Daryle Hester, 2H Hester’s Chuckwagon, Fort Worth, Texas

Shredded Pork Burritos With Green Chile Sauce

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 8 to 10 hours
Stand time: 10 minutes
Makes: 12 burritos

- 1 **tablespoon vegetable oil**
- 1 **large onion, chopped (about 1 cup)**
- 4 **cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 **16-ounce jar Pace Medium Chunky Salsa**
- 1 **16-ounce jar Pace Mild Chunky Salsa**
- 1 **cup water**
- 1 **medium red pepper, chopped (about 1 cup)**
- 8 **green onions, chopped (about 1 cup)**
- 1 **bunch fresh cilantro, chopped (about 1 cup)**
- 1/4 **cup lemon pepper seasoning**
- 1/4 **cup ground cumin**
- 1/4 **cup chili powder**
- 1 **tablespoon lime juice**
- 1 **4-pound boneless pork loin roast, netted or tied**
- 1 **4-ounce can Pace Diced Green Chiles**
- 12 **10-inch flour tortillas, warmed**
- 1 **8-ounce package shredded Monterey Jack cheese (about 2 cups)**

1. Heat oil in 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook until tender. Stir the salsa, water, red pepper, green onions, cilantro, lemon pepper, cumin, chili powder and lime juice into the skillet.
2. Put roast into 5-quart slow cooker. Pour salsa mixture over roast.
3. Cover and cook on low 8 to 10 hours or until meat is fork-tender.
4. Remove roast; place on cutting board and let stand 10 minutes. Use two forks to shred pork.
5. Spoon 5 cups salsa mixture from cooker into 2-quart saucepan. Stir in chiles. Cook over medium-high heat to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cook and stir 15 minutes or until mixture thickens.
6. Spoon 1 cup shredded pork down center of each tortilla. Top with 2 tablespoons green chile sauce. Fold sides of tortilla over and then fold up ends to enclose filling. Divide remaining green chile sauce and cheese over burritos.

Inspired from a recipe by Barbara Kennedy, Cowgirls Forever Chuckwagon, Desert Hills, Ariz.



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Western Family Butter Quarters 1 lb. 2 for \$4	Western Family Cream Soups 10.5 oz. 69¢ ea.	Western Family Tomato Sauce 8 oz. 19¢ ea.	Western Family Grape Jelly 32 oz. \$1.19 ea.
Top Ramen Noodles 3 oz. 10 for \$1	Western Family Soup 26 oz. \$1.19 ea.	Planter's Cashew Halves & Mixed Nuts 2 for \$6 11.5 oz.	Kleenex Facial Tissue Asst'd Sizes 2 for \$3
Nabisco Chips Ahoy Cookies \$2.89 ea. 14-18 oz.	Western Family Tuna in Water 6 oz. 49¢ ea.	Western Family Adult Cat Food 14 lb. \$6.99 ea.	Tide Detergent Powder & Liquid \$6.99 ea. 70-100 oz.
Doritos Tortilla Chips 13 oz. 2 for \$5	Western Family Refried Beans 16 oz. 2 for \$1	Western Family Chunk Dog Food 20 lb. \$4.99 ea.	Western Family Liquid Bleach \$1.29 ea. 96 oz.

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