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rough going at state tourney**

Wednesday, February 28, 2007

Established 1865

The Owyhee Avalanche

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 9

HOMEDALE, OWYHEE COUNTY, IDAHO

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

Most county felonies end with pleas

**Prosecutor unsure how many outstanding
cases he has yet to file in district court**

Owyhee County Prosecuting Attorney Matthew Faulks admits he has felony charges that he has yet to file with the

district court, but he can't put a solid number on the backlog.

"I've got some on my desk," he said

Friday.

He said the last felony he took to trial was in December, but most other cases he handles result in plea deals, including the latest involving Homedale residents Adam Cook and Stephen Dickson.

Dickson and Cook entered plea

agreements in district court in early February. Originally facing felony charges of aggravated battery and robbery stemming from a September incident that put Homedale resident Douglas Grever in

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**How did
weekend
storm
affect snow
numbers?
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Steel dreams



Homedale student makes fire and steel come alive

Jacob McRae, a senior at Homedale High School and a self-taught artist, creates life from scraps of metal and the blue flame of a blowtorch. See story, Page 13A

Sheriff Aman names new chief deputy

**Former marine deputy
now second-in-command;
two deputies sworn in**

Owyhee County Sheriff Gary Aman bolstered the ranks of the Owyhee County Sheriff's Office by three last week.

Bruce Cameron of Oreana, Russ Turner of Bruneau and Lynn Bowman of Marsing were sworn in as the newest members of the agency Feb. 20 in Murphy.

Cameron will be Aman's right-hand man as chief deputy. Cameron has been a sheriff's posse member for the past 26 years, including most recently a marine deputy. He also has served as a volunteer emergency medical technician with the Oreana Quick Response Unit (QRU).

Cameron replaces former chief deputy Dick Freund, who retired in January. Freund is now the chairman of the Owyhee County Board of Commissioners.

— JWB



Bruce Cameron

Meet the new Owyhee lawmen, 10A-11A

Freund: Assessor is on the right path

**Commission chair
reports progress
after tax summit**

The Owyhee County Assessor's Office seems to be headed in the right direction to correct assessment-to-market value ratio compliance issues, a meeting

between county and state officials revealed last week.

Kathlynn Ireland, a consulting appraiser assigned to the county by the Idaho State Tax

Commission, said that Owyhee County commissioners Dick Freund and Jerry Hoagland and

— See *Assessor*, page 5A

Commissioners set meetings in Washington

The first Owyhee County Board of Commissioners meeting for March has been canceled so the commissioners can attend meetings on the Owyhee Initiative in Washington, D.C.

Monday's commissioners meeting in the county courthouse in Murphy won't be rescheduled.

Commission chair Dick Freund said that he and his colleagues will meet with Sen. Mike Crapo (R-Idaho) and his staff as the Owyhee Initiative Implementation Act nears another run in the Senate.

The commissioners next meet on the morning of March 12 in Murphy.

Marsing City Council alters March meeting

The Marsing City Council's monthly meeting for March has been rescheduled, according to city clerk Janice Bicandi.

The meeting, originally scheduled for 7 p.m. on March 14, has been moved to 7 p.m. on March 13, a Tuesday. The meeting still will be held at Marsing City Hall on Main Street.

No specific reason for the change was given.

Council creeps toward decision on bond

Leaders return to original plan of financing water, sewer projects through feds

Although no action was taken Thursday, it seems the Homedale City Council has decided to continue down the path of obtaining federal funds for the city's sewer and water projects.

Eight days after voting to explore the feasibility of using the Idaho Bond Bank to fund upgrades, council members heard from U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Agency representative Dave Flesher.

After Flesher's presentation, Homedale Mayor Paul Fink rationalized looking into the state-banked funding. But later, he conceded that federal funding seemed the best option.

"If we want to put the most (resources) back in the ground, the way to go is with USDA," Fink said. "The reason I looked at (the bond bank) is just to get this thing going."

Although Fink and the council seemed content to complete the process with the federal government, no vote authorizing Fink to sign the loan was taken.

Fink said after the meeting that no action was taken because Flesher had said that there was no rush to get the papers signed. Flesher said it would take about a week for the money to be released once the papers were signed and the final conditions met.

The state Department of Environmental Quality still has to

'If we want to put the most (resources) back in the ground, the way to go is with USDA. The reason I looked at (the bond bank) is just to get this thing going.'



— Paul Fink
Homedale mayor

sign off on the engineering report for the project before work can proceed. Thursday, city engineer Fred Ostler expressed concern that the fact that he moved from Sunset Engineering to PEC Engineers in the middle of the design phase and that the plans do not bear an engineering seal could be met with skepticism by DEQ personnel.

"I didn't stamp the report, and DEQ could see it as unofficial," Ostler said.

Flesher wasn't as worried about the situation because, he said, DEQ already has approved the plans for the sewer project.

At the same time, Fink conceded that the slow progress has created a favorable situation for the city because construction costs have dropped, meaning that Homedale could get more out of its multimillion-dollar bond.

Flesher said the interest rate

that the city will be charged for its bond also has dropped to 4 1/8 percent, down from 4 3/8 percent if Homedale had finalized the deal in December, and that will save the city more money.

The rate could go down even further if the interest rate falls before the end of construction when the bonds are purchased.

"If it goes up, you get to keep that 4 1/8. If it goes down, you get the lower rate," Flesher told the council.

Flesher did say that the USDA RDA could require an early pay-off of the bond.

"We are a lender of last resort, so if at some point the city gets well-off enough financially, we could ask you at some point to graduate or pay us off," he said.

Fink also announced at last week's meeting that a preliminary comparison has revealed that the Idaho Bond Bank option actually would cost the city \$250,000 more than the federal funds.

Flesher added later in the meeting that the Idaho Bond Bank option also would cost more because Homedale would have to pay interest on the full

\$4.4 million from the beginning of the loan. With the federal plan, Flesher said, Homedale would receive the money for the sewer project first. No interest would be charged on the money for the water project until those funds were released when the city was ready to start that work, he said.

Flesher began his presentation by saying city leaders apparently misunderstood the terms of the letter of conditions he had presented at a meeting in December.

Saying that there were too many restrictions tied to the federal money, the council on Feb. 14 voted to look into the state-backed funds from the Idaho Bond Bank. But Flesher said Thursday that the perceived restrictions, such as limited or no development for the life of the bond if a flood plain was declared in the area where the sewer or water improvements would be made, did not exist.

"There were no mitigation measures with this project," Flesher said. "The only time that we impose a mitigation measure restricting connections in the flood plain is if our project is either going to directly or indirectly encourage development of a flood plain."

Flesher said there are no flood plain concerns in either the water or sewer work, although the lift station that will be built near the Snake River could have been a concern if the engineering designs hadn't made provisions for the structure's proximity to the water.

— JPB

— Sparse turnout for public hearing on P&Z changes, page 15A



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Txoko Ona center opens doors for dance



Work continues on Homedale Basque center

John Badiola works outside the Txoko Ona Basque Center on Main Street in Homedale. The 7,600-square-foot facility will host its first major public event March 10 with the annual Basque Dance.



New building hosts first major function

The new Txoko Ona Basque Center on South Main Street in Homedale is getting ready for its first big event. The Txoko Ona club’s seventh annual Basque dance will be held there at 6 p.m. March 10. According to Txoko Ona president John Lejardi, center has been in use on a limited basis since September, but this dance will be the first time the center will be used for a large-scale, public event. The Caldwell Basque Dancers, under the direction of Gloria Lejardi, will perform at the event. The dance group has changed its name to the Herribatza Dantzariak, which

means a “collection of towns.” The name is designed to reflect the makeup of the dance group. The dancers practice every Monday at the Txoko Ona Basque Center, accompanied by accordionist Jake Murgoitio, a student at Albertson College of Idaho in Caldwell. This is Lejardi’s 27th year as a Basque dance instructor. Cost to attend the dance is \$5 per person. A live DJ will provide music. The event also will feature a raffle for a 12-gauge over-under shotgun and a 42-inch plasma screen television. Tickets for the raffle are \$10 each. A silent auction is planned for a wide variety of items. Proceeds

from the auction will be used for further improvements to the center. Chorizos, wine, beer and soft drinks will be available. For more information, contact John Lejardi at 337-3840 or dance chairman Ben Badiola at 337-4619. While the annual Basque dance is not new, according to Stan Zatica, who sits on the board of directors for Txoko Ona (pronounced *cho-ko oh-na*), this is the first time it will be held at the new Txoko Ona facility at 333 Main Street in Homedale. “It (Basque dance) was always held at the (Homedale) Armory,” Zatica said. Zatica expects the event to flow beyond the actual building’s capacity, so he and other organizers of the event are ready with tents to house portions of the festivities.

Volunteers prepare Basque Center

Stan Zatica (center) works outside the Txoko Ona Basque Center last Saturday afternoon in Homedale. Zatica, Mark Asumendi (left) and Danny Uranga (right) were among a small army of volunteers working to ready the center for the Annual Basque Dance, which will be held for the first time at the Txoko Ona center on March 10.

“We will use the existing building, and then we have some tents that we will put outside the building, that will connect to the patio area, that will be used in conjunction the dance and celebration,” he said. “Eventually, we would like to have a bigger hall, in order to have the dance.” Zatica said the amount of volunteer work that has gone into the new 7,600 square foot facility during the past year is not easy to pin down. Also, the cultural value to the Basque community is greater than any number of man-hours expended. Txoko Ona has owned the property for approximately two years, most of which has been filled with vast

amounts of work from dozens of volunteers. “I don’t know how you put a figure on it. We’ve had a lot of donated help,” Zatica said. “All of the work is done primarily by members who have donated their time and material. It’s been a project.” According to a press release from Txoko Ona, club members define their organization as a “social organization to preserve, promote and enhance the Basque culture, language and history and to maintain and promote cultural, social and economic ties with the Basque Country, its people, history, language and culture.” — JWB

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Nampa Chamber boss to address Homedale counterparts at lunch

Homedale Chamber of Commerce president Gavin Parker announced last week that the head of the Nampa Chamber will be the guest speaker at the next luncheon.

Georgia Bowman-Gunstream, president and CEO of the Nampa Chamber of Commerce, will appear at the Homedale Chamber's monthly meeting, set for noon March 8 at the Owyhee Lanes Restaurant.

"All local business owners are encouraged to attend," Parker said.

Bowman-Gunstream, who has been leader of the Nam-



Georgia Bowman-Gunstream

pa Chamber since the summer of 1996, was honored along with 24 other women from the Treasure Valley on Thursday night during the Idaho Business Review's Women of the Year awards celebration in Boise.

Bowman-Gunstream's appearance is another step in the Homedale Chamber's renewed effort to bolster attendance and participation in its organization.

For more information, call Parker or Chamber vice-president and treasurer Brad Dines at Bowen-Parker-Day at 337-3271.



Shopping spree prize leads to mad minute

Gloria Connor of Homedale, right, gets assistance from Paul's Market employee Nate Patnode during her 2-minute shopping spree Saturday at the Paul's in Homedale. Connor was able to load approximately \$250 worth of Western Family grocery items during the furious 120 seconds.

Corrections

The responsibilities of Owyhee County Assessor Brett Endicott as outlined by Idaho State Tax Commission consulting appraiser Kathlynn Ireland were incorrectly reported in a Feb. 28 article. The assessor is responsible for

"maintaining uniform and equitable assessed values for all property" in the county, according to Ireland.

Also, the table displaying ratio studies that accompanied the Feb. 28 article reflected the 2005 tax year.

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Read all about it
in the Avalanche!

From page 1

✓ **Felonies:** Most charges in past 8 months amended to misdemeanors

the intensive care unit at Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise, Dickson and Cook saw the robbery charges dropped in exchange for guilty pleas to aggravated battery.

Cook is scheduled to be sentenced on March 9, while Dickson faces sentencing April 13.

Faulks has recommended a sentencing package that could see the pair out of jail after just six months.

“That’s always a question,” Faulks said when asked if the recommendation could be construed as lenient.

While he refused to get into specifics of the situation involving Cook and Dickson, Faulks mapped out the general philosophy he applies when considering plea agreements or sentence recommendations.

“Usually when I’m looking at any sort of a plea agreement on felony cases and any sort of recommendation, I try to take into account what I believe may be the likely sentence given the charges and the facts of the case.”

He pointed out that the final decision is up to the sentencing judge based on the evidence of the case, the criminal history of the defendants, if any, and the outcome of a pre-sentencing report.

A plea deal that amends charges is not unusual for Faulks’ office.

“There are various reasons to make charging decisions and plea arrangements,” Faulks said. “We bring our charges, hopefully in good faith, based on probable cause on the evidence.”

In a sample of 20 felony cases cleared by Faulks in the past eight months, nearly half were amended to misdemeanors.

Faulks said that he last took a felony case to trial in December. As far as total felony trials during his time in Owyhee County, he said there have been “not a great number since I’ve been in office here.”

Faulks was elected to the prosecuting attorney’s position in 2004. He’s up for election in 2008.

“Trials are an interesting beast,” he said. “We put on a trial in front of a jury, and it is a very dynamic event. We have evidence put on. We have testimony. We hope we can rely on our witnesses to put on the evidence that we think that they have.

“We hope that we would get the result we believe we should have with a jury, but ultimately a jury decides that with the trial.”

Faulks said a plea agreement, in many cases, does the job of the trial without eating up the county’s resources. He added that

there is an emphasis on resolving cases without trials to save those resources.

“By getting a (defendant to enter a) plea to a charge, that is generally going to give the court the room to get the kind of sentence we think we’re going to get out of the conduct that is involved,” he said.

“By getting a plea to those kind of charges, we’ve achieved a great deal of what we want to achieve out of the case.”

According to disposition papers obtained from the Third Judicial District Court, the most recent amendments to charges performed by Faulks came when husband and wife Rocky and Kimberly Nix pleaded guilty to misdemeanor petit theft on Jan. 30. They were facing felony grand theft charges.

District Judge Gregory M. Culet sentenced Rocky Nix to 180 days in jail, but Nix received credit for eight days served and had the rest of the term suspended. He was placed on two years probation and ordered to serve 50 hours of community service.

Kimberly Nix appeared before District Judge James C. Morfitt and received two years probation. She had the balance of a 180-day jail term suspended after receiving credit for nine days served in Owyhee County Jail.

Other felony cases in which Faulks amended the charges to misdemeanors included:

- An attempt to flee or elude police charge against Caldwell resident Bruce Allen Ingham, who was stopped for driving under the influence by an Idaho State Police trooper in August.
- Ingham pleaded to the lesser eluding charge and misdemeanor DUI on Sept. 18 and was sentenced by District Judge Thomas J. Ryan to one year of probation for the DUI and six months in jail for the eluding charge. All but 20 days of his jail term was suspended.
- David Alan Barkell of Givens Hot Springs had his driver’s license suspended for six months, served 30 days in jail, was ordered into a treatment program and given 18 months probation after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor DUI. He was originally charged with felony DUI.
- Trey Carson, an 18-year-old from Boise, entered a guilty plea to misdemeanor unlawful entry after facing a felony burglary charge. He was placed on six months probation and ordered to attend a treatment program.
- The other four amendments involved juveniles with felonies ranging from grand theft to malicious injury to property to burglary.

In the same amount of time,

Faulks has overseen prosecution on four felony cases that weren’t amended, including:

- Parker Simon Lopez of Nogales, Ark., who was placed on five years probation after being convicted on a grand theft charge.
- Homedale resident Bryan McRoberts was convicted of felony possession of a controlled substance. No sentencing information was available.
- Payette’s Chad Bond received five years probation after pleading guilty to a charge of burglary.
- Douglas Olsen of Caldwell was convicted of felony attempting to flee a police officer. No sentencing information was available.

The balance of the 20 cases sampled included two cases dismissed by the judge and three cases — including a felony count of lewd conduct with a child under 16 — in which Faulks dropped the charges.

In most cases, though, a conviction was achieved, and Faulks said justice is the bottom line.

“Gaining certainty is something that sure helps the system,” he said. “It’s putting us in motion to have the matter resolved, to hold the defendant accountable and allow the judge to provide sentencing.”

— JPB

✓ **Assessor:** Freund says software will help office track county trends

county assessor Brett Endicott met with tax commission officials Wednesday.

Ireland said the meeting was facilitated by a call from Freund, who is county commission chair.

“Dick had a lot of really good questions and informed questions in what the solution could be,” Ireland said. “He has been very aggressive and approachable in the matter.”

Endicott presented his five-year plan to shore up the county’s ratio during Wednesday’s meeting.


Twenty percent of a county’s property assessments are analyzed each year of a five-year span to further ensure equitability and uniformity throughout the county, and Owyhee has just started another cycle, Endicott said recently.

Freund said the meeting was positive and tax commission representatives — including deputy state Attorney General Carl Olsson — seemed to welcome the corrective plan laid out by Endicott.

“Their comment was that it sounds like the new five-year plan was on the right track of solving the problems (the assessor’s office has) right now,” Freund

‘I believe Brett’s on the right track in getting things turned around.’

— **Dick Freund**
Owyhee County commissioners chair



said Friday.

Ireland said she has been analyzing Owyhee County’s ratios since early in 2006, and that Wednesday’s meeting was the first time county commissioners had met with the tax commission to explore a solution.

Freund said he was simply doing his job to look out for the county’s citizens.

The assessor’s office has come under scrutiny from the tax commission because at least the past two ratio studies have been out of compliance with state standards. Ireland has said that assessments of the different types of properties in any county should be between 90 percent and 110 percent of market value.

The county’s performance in meeting that goal was woeful for the 2005 tax year, according to the state’s review of the ratio

study submitted by Endicott in January 2006.

But Freund said the lack of compliance was more a product of the history of the county assessor’s office than a reflection of Endicott’s performance.

“The way the system was designed by assessors prior to him, it was extremely inefficient to change it,” Freund said. “And the way his new five-year plan is set up, I think it is going to be extremely efficient in making those changes.”

Freund, who has worked for the county for nearly a quarter-century, said that the assessor’s office long ago assumed an unofficial philosophy of keeping property values down so taxes stay low for the county’s residents. He stressed that it was an unwritten code, and was never officially endorsed by the county.

Freund added that the objective of those past assessors would be achieved legitimately once the county’s ratio woes are resolved.

“Once everything is leveled out, if the assessment goes up, the levy generally drops,” he said, adding that lower levies usually equate to lower taxes regardless of how a property is assessed.

“My assessment went up 32 percent last year, and my taxes actually went down because the levy went down.”

Freund said he has faith in Endicott’s ability to do his job and right the ship.

“I believe Brett’s on the right track in getting things turned around,” he said.

The District 3 commissioner also said new accounting software should arrive from the state tax commission later this year to help in the quest to keep the county in compliance.

“New software will be available by June to help track trends and identify problems before they crop up and become issues,” he said. “(Endicott) can go in on a daily basis, if he wants to, and run a report to see what’s going on ... and it’ll show if there is anything that is starting to trend

the wrong way.”

While the meeting with the tax commission was positive, Freund did admit that he was troubled by Ireland’s comment in the Feb. 21 edition of The Owyhee Avalanche when she asserted that ratio studies have shown the possibility that newcomers to the county have had their property assessed differently than established residents.

And Freund said the solution would be simple, if such bias was proven.

“If the county has employees that are treating newcomers different than people who have been here, (the workers) ought to be sent down the road,” he said. “We need to be fair to everyone.”

— JPB

Have a news tip?

Call us!

337-4681

School menus

Homedale Elementary

March 1: Chicken nuggets or finger steaks, broccoli, fruit & veggie bar, cinnamon roll, milk.
March 2: Pizza or popcorn chicken, salad, fruit & veggie bar, cookie, milk.
March 5: Hamburger or fish sandwich, potato wedges, fruit & veggie bar, cookie, milk.
March 6: Chicken tenders or fried beef steak, potatoes/gravy, roll, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
March 7: Crispito or toasted cheese sandwich, taco salad, fruit & veggie bar, churro, milk.

Homedale Middle

March 1: Idaho haystack or split top sandwich, churro, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
March 2: Chicken tenders or chicken fried beef steak, potatoes/gravy, roll, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
March 5: Hamburger or hot dog, fries, fruit & veggie bar, cookie, milk.
March 6: Chicken or beef nuggets, broccoli, fruit & veggie bar, cinnamon roll, milk.
March 7: Enchilada or chicken & noodles, corn, fruit & veggie bar, cherry turnover, milk.

Homedale High

March 1: Chicken patty or hamburger, potato wedges, fruit & veggie bar, cookie, milk.
March 2: Beef taco or toasted cheese sandwich, soup, corn, fruit & veggie bar, milk.
March 5: Pizza, mini corn dogs, chef’s salad, fruit & veggie bar, brownie, milk.
March 6: Oven fried chicken, wiener wrap, scalloped potatoes, fruit & veggie bar, fruit roll-up, milk.
March 7: Enchilada, pizza hot pocket, baked potato, fruit & veggie bar, milk.

Marsing

March 1: Nachos, corn, milk, chicken patty, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
March 2: Mac & cheese, veggie, fruit, milk, burrito, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
March 5: Tostada, veggie, fruit, milk, hamburger, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
March 6: Chicken nuggets, veggie, chocolate pudding, chicken fajitas, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.
March 7: Pizza, salad, fruit, milk, sandwiches, salad bar 4th-12th, roll.

Bruneau

March 1: Turkey noodles, veggie, roll/butter, fruited jello, cake, milk.
March 2: Cheese pizza, salad, pineapple, milk.
March 5: Hamburger/bun, fries, veggie, fruit, cookie, milk.
March 6: Spaghetti, salad, garlic bread, fruit, milk.
March 7: Hamburger gravy, mashed potatoes, peas, roll/butter, fruit crisp, milk.

Death notices

JIM D. DAVIS, 66, of Homedale died Wednesday, Feb. 21, 2007, at a local hospital. No services. Arrangements were through Nampa Funeral Home, Yraguen Chapel.

EDNA MAE GRIMES of Homedale passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 24, 2007 at a Homedale care center. Graveside services will be held at 2:00 PM Wednesday, February 28, 2007 at Marsing-Homedale Cemetery.

Obituary

James Robert Followill

James Robert Followill was taken into God’s hands on Saturday, February 17, 2007. Memorial service with Military honors rendered was held at 2:00 PM Saturday, February 24, 2007 at Flahiff Funeral Chapel, Caldwell.

James was born July 1, 1926 in Lipan, Texas to James Monroe and Cressie Followill. He will be remembered for the genuine love of his family and friends. He had a jovial attitude and loved to fish and hunt and loved to spend time with his grandchildren.

He was a veteran of WWII and fought at the Battle of the Bulge. He served on the security staff for Gen. Eisenhower and later joined the Idaho National Guard, which was one of his great joys of his life. He retired in 1978, serving his country for more than 25 years.

James married Peggy Neel of 54 years on November 6, 1952. They made their home in Marsing, Idaho where they raised their four children. He was a member of the



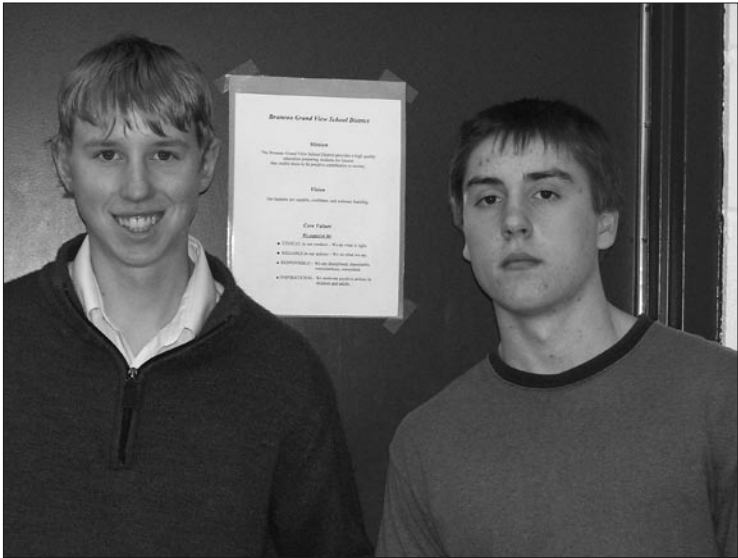
Church of Christ.

He is survived by his wife Peggy of Homedale; four children Teri Jo (T.J.) Followill of Homedale; Jerry Followill of Homedale; Garry Followill of Camas, WA; Pamela Madole of Yerington, NV; nine grandchildren and two great grandchildren, a brother J.C. Followill of Granberry, TX; and

a sister Mary Smith of Laguna Wood, CA. He was preceded in death by his parents, James and Cressie Followill, sisters: LaRue Jones, LaRee Frazier, and a brother G.F. Followill.

In lieu of flowers please make donations to the Church of Christ, 4012 S 10th, Caldwell, ID 83605.

Rimrock FFA news



Jay Long, left, and Leigh Martin

Members to receive State Degrees

by Chelsey Lemon,
chapter reporter

Two members of the Rimrock FFA are to receive their State Degrees in April. Leigh Martin and Jay Long are to receive this award.

Martin and Long are both seniors at Rimrock High School and have been working toward this degree. The members had an

evaluated test on the FFA history and parliamentary procedure. Both members did well on this.

Long is also in the running for the Star Farmer Award, but won’t find out until April if he has received this award.

The state convention is scheduled for April 12-14 in Twin Falls. The Rimrock FFA chapter will compete in horse judging and scrapbook at the convention.

JV student on Franciscan U. Dean’s List

Sean Cunningham, the son of Jordan Valley residents Ron and Nancy Cunningham, has earned a spot of the Dean’s List at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio.

Cunningham is a freshman Business major at the school.

Scouts to host bean feed

The annual Boy Scouts Bean Feed will be held from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. next Wednesday at the Homedale LDS church on West Idaho Avenue.

Ticket prices for the event are \$15 per family, \$5 per adult, \$3 for children younger than 11 years old.

Boy Scout Troops 409 and 509 will sponsor the event. Proceeds will be used to fund the troops’ annual summer camp near McCall in June.

For more information, contact Gary Rupp at 337-3936.



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Your finances

Encourage son's golf, but keep the family's finances up to par

Dear Dave,

Our 10-year-old son has been playing golf since he was 3, and he's very good. He likes it, he's already placed very high in some tournaments and we think he could make a wonderful living at it one day.

We're debt-free except for our house, so what do you think is a reasonable amount to spend in order to support his golf activities?

— Debbie

Dear Debbie,

This sounds really cool, but you and your husband can't live every second of your lives for a 10-year-old's golf game. Your family as a whole should come first, so you need to figure out what's a reasonable percentage of your life and income to dedicate to the little guy's talent.

It's not reasonable if you're going into debt to support this, or if your household budget is blown every month and you're going without necessities. He can learn to play golf on a public course and without traveling to tournaments, or having the best clubs and a personal coach.

You're looking for balance, Debbie. And you've done a great job to get where you are. Just take care of regular family stuff like having an emergency fund, putting college savings in place and not going into debt as a result of Junior's golf game.

If you do this, everything will be fine.

— Dave

Dear Dave,

Our financial advisor recently told me about A and B mutual fund shares. What shares do you recommend?

— Randy

Dear Randy,

It's not going to matter which shares you choose in most cases, as long as you hold the fund seven years or more.

The big difference is that with B shares you pay the fees on the back, and with A shares you pay them on the front.

I buy A shares because sometimes I don't want to hold a



particular fund that long. So, that way, I've already paid my fees.

A lot of mutual fund brokers push B shares because it gives you a reason to stay in the fund. I don't buy them personally, but there's nothing wrong with them.

— Dave

Dear Dave,

We're debt-free except for our house, and we have \$25,000 in our emergency fund. There's \$124,000 remaining on our mortgage, and we're paying \$940 a month on the note. We also have \$125,000 in a mutual fund and other stocks outside our IRAs, and a combined income of about \$90,000.

Are we in good enough shape to pay off the house by cashing out our non-retirement investments?

— Will

Dear Will,

If you didn't have a house payment you could easily save \$1,500 a month. And in about five years you could save up everything you cashed out of your investments and re-fund them, plus you'd have a paid-for house that entire time.

Write a check today and pay off the house, Will. With no house payment and your emergency fund and IRAs still in place, you'll be a living, breathing definition of financial peace!

— 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*. For more financial advice, visit the Web site or call (888) 22-PEACE. Have a question for Dave? Send correspondence to *syndication@daveramsey.com* or write *Dave Says*, 1749 Mallory Lane, Brentwood, TN 37027

Calendar

Today

DivorceCare recovery support group, 7 p.m., Mountain View Church of the Nazarene, 26515 Ustick Road, Wilder. (208) 337-3151

Thursday

Exercise class, 11 a.m., free, Homedale Senior Citizens Center, 224 W. Idaho Ave. (208) 337-3020

Rhythm and Rhyme at the library, 11 a.m., Melba Cottage Library, 109 Charlotte Drive. (208) 495-1063

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), 5:30 p.m. weigh-in, 7 p.m. meeting, First Presbyterian Church, 320 N. 6th St., Homedale. (208) 482-6893

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

Friday

Celebrate Recovery 12-step program, 6 p.m., Mountain View Church of the Nazarene, 26515 Ustick Road, Wilder. (208) 337-3520 or (208) 337-3151

Saturday

Marsing Lions Bingo, 6:45 p.m. early bird, 7 p.m. regular start, Phipps-Watson Marsing American Legion Community Center, 126 2nd St. N., Marsing. (208) 896-4815

Sunday

Snake River Valley Fellowship Bible study, 10 a.m., 532 W. California Ave., Homedale. (208) 475-3733

Wednesday

Melba Cottage Library book club meeting, 7 p.m., Melba Cottage Library, 109 Charlotte Drive, Melba. (208) 495-1063

DivorceCare recovery support group, 7 p.m., Mountain View Church of the Nazarene, 26515

Ustick Road, Wilder. (208) 337-3151

Thursday, March 8

Exercise class, 11 a.m., free, Homedale Senior Citizens Center, 224 W. Idaho Ave. (208) 337-3020

Homedale Chamber of Commerce luncheon, noon, Owyhee Lanes Restaurant, 18 W. 1st St. (208) 337-3252

Rhythm and Rhyme at the library, 11 a.m., Melba Cottage Library, 109 Charlotte Drive. (208) 495-1063

Owyhee Garden Club meeting, 1 p.m., University of Idaho Owyhee County Extension Office, 238 8th Ave. W., Marsing. (208) 896-5474 or (208) 896-4104

TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly), 5:30 p.m. weigh-in, 7 p.m. meeting, First Presbyterian Church, 320 N. 6th St., Homedale. (208) 482-6893

Marsing School District Board of Trustees monthly meeting, 7 p.m., district office board room, 209 W. 8th Ave. W.

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

Friday, March 9

Adrian High School Senior

Citizen Luncheon, 1 p.m., Adrian Schools cafeteria, 202 High St., Adrian, Ore. (541) 372-2335.

Greenleaf Friends Academy Quaker Country Auction preview and early auction, 6 p.m., Greenleaf Friends Academy, 20565 N. Academy Road, Greenleaf. (208) 459-6346

Celebrate Recovery 12-step program, 6 p.m., Mountain View Church of the Nazarene, 26515 Ustick Road, Wilder. (208) 337-3520 or (208) 337-3151

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 *jbrownditor@cablone.net*. For more information on submissions, call (208) 337-4681.

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Owyhee 4-Hers ‘serve’ at Statehouse

Four youths part of annual Know Your Government event

Four Owyhee County 4-H members took part in the 20th annual Know Your Government activities in Boise during the Presidents’ Day weekend.

Shad Jensen of Owyhee Silver Spurs, Chris Johnson from the Owyhee Sharp Shooters, Erik Munson from Owyhee Animal Friends and Megan Romans of the Tumbleweeds were among 160 4-Hers from around Idaho who gathered at the Statehouse to practice democracy and try their hands at mimicking the elective roles in the capital.

Jensen is a 13-year-old eighth-grader at Marsing Middle School. Chris Johnson is a 14-year-old eighth-grader from Greenleaf. Munson is a 14-year-old eighth-grader from Marsing, and Romans is a 14-year-old ninth-grader from Wilder. Both Munson and Romans are homeschooled.

The state’s top elected officials, including Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter and Idaho Supreme Court Justice

Daniel Eismann were among the featured speakers who helped educate the eighth- and ninth-graders during the Know Your Government experience, which is operated by the University of Idaho Extension 4-H program.

The 4-H members acted as legislators, judges and reporters during the Know Your Government exercise, which was held Feb. 17-19 in Boise.

Members conducted mock committee meetings and mock trials, breakfasted with legislators and judges and toured the Statehouse, observing the Legislature in session, among other activities.

Mahmood Sheikh, a former 4-H member from Latah County and past member of the KYG Planning Committee, was the opening banquet speaker. Sheikh, the Associated Students University of Idaho president in 1999, now works in Boise to fund scholarships for the University of



Owyhee students learn about government
Four Owyhee County 4-H members attended the annual Know Your Government event in Boise during the Presidents’ Day weekend, including, from left to right, Shad Jensen, 13, Megan Romans, 14, Chris Johnson, 14, and Erik Munson, 14.

Idaho athletic department.

Matt McCarter, executive director of Boise’s Healthy Community - Healthy Youth, led legislative workshops on Feb. 19.

Major donors this year include the Idaho 4-H Endowment Board, Ada County Farm Bureau, D.L. Evans Bank, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation, Idaho Grain

Producers Association, Idaho Law Foundation, Idaho Power Co., Idaho Potato Commission, J.R. Simplot Co., 2nd District Bar Association, Monsanto and Red Lion Hotel.

More than 33,000 youth and nearly 3,700 adult volunteers participated in Idaho 4-H last year.

Marsing LDS church to hold Louie’s meal

Organizers of the third annual Louie’s fund-raising dinner for the Young Women’s Girls Camp want folks to skip the traditional St. Patrick’s Day corned beef and cabbage on March 17.

Instead, organizer Shauna Sauer says, try a catered Italian meal of lasagna, fettuccine Alfredo, breadsticks, dessert and a beverage — all catered by Treasure Valley Italian restaurant Louie’s.

The dinner, sponsored by the Marsing LDS church, runs from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on March 17, and raises money to send local girls to the camp.

Tickets are \$30 per couple or \$15 per person. Tickets must be purchased by March 12, and no tickets will be sold at the door.

The dinner will be held at the church 215 3rd Ave. W., in Marsing.

For more information, call Sauer at 455-2899.

Local breeders listed in angus report

Four Angus cattle breeders from Owyhee County recently had livestock nationally recognized with inclusion in the American Angus Association’s 2007 Pathfinder Report.

The Owyhee County producers who were recognized included:

- Bruneau’s Colyer Cattle Co., placed 11 registered Angus cows in the report.
- Homedale’s Doug and Janice Burgess had four Angus cows placed in the report.
- William L. White of Murphy had two registered Angus cows

in the report.

- Stacy M. White of Oreana had one registered cow cited.

Only 2,324 of the more than 34,000 American Angus Association members are represented in this year’s report, according to John Crouch, executive vice president of the Association with headquarters in Saint Joseph, Mo.

The Pathfinder Program identifies superior Angus cows based upon recorded performance traits that are economically important to efficient beef

production. These traits include early and regular calving and heavy weaning weights, reports Bill Bowman, Association director of performance programs.

More than 1.5 million eligible dams and more than 5 million weaning records were examined to determine Pathfinder status.

All registered Angus cows that meet the strict Pathfinder standards are listed, along with their owners, in the Pathfinder Report that is published annually by the Association.

The 2007 Pathfinder Report

lists 9,726 individual cows and 256 Pathfinder sires.

It is published in the April issue of the *Angus Journal*, and copies are available from the Association.

The reports appear on the Web site at www.angus.org.

The largest number of Pathfinder cows from a single herd this year is 82.

Started in 1978, the Pathfinder Program continues to recognize outstanding breeders participating in the Angus Herd Improvement Records (AHIR) Program.

Lions bingo resumes in Marsing

The Marsing Lions benefit bingo season is winding down with just two nights of games remaining.

Bingo will be held Saturday inside the Phipps-Watson Marsing American Legion Community Center at 126 W. 2nd St. N. An early bird game begins at 6:45 p.m., and regular bingo starts at 7 p.m.


The final bingo night will be held April 7 at the community center.

Popcorn, pop and coffee will be on sale both nights.

Event proceeds benefit a different cause each night. The Lions Club’s scholarship fund will benefit from Saturday’s action, and February’s earnings went to the community center.

For more information on the bingo nights, call Lions member Chris Salove at 896-4815.

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Visitor

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The Owyhee Avalanche

Marsing taking one for the BPA team

Faculty, club presidents volunteer
to get creamed to raise funds
for trip to conference

Some surprisingly willing volunteers have lined up to help the Marsing High School chapter of the Business Professionals of America put on a “Pie-in-Your-Face” fund-raiser today at the school.

The hour of reckoning comes at about 2 p.m. today in a pep assembly held inside the Marsing Middle School gymnasium.

Several members of the school’s student body and faculty allowed BPA members to put their names on collection jars.

“Most of the faculty were more than happy to participate and support our Marsing BPA,” BPA advisor Brandy Smith said. “And we got many of the club presidents to volunteer as well.”

The jars were set up a month ago, and students, faculty members, parents and other family members were encouraged to put money in the jar for the person they want to see get “pied,” according to Smith.

The funds will be used to finance the BPA’s trip to the State

Leadership Conference, which will take place March 8-11 at Boise State University. Nine BPA members will attend the state competition and vie for an opportunity to attend the National Leadership Conference, which is scheduled for May in New York City.

Today is the deadline to turn in money. Jars have been set up for faculty such as Mark Worley, Don Heller, Ed Pfeiffer and Marsing High senior and honorary BPA member Charlene Eells as well as Marsing FFA chapter president Daniel Ineck and Marsing BPA chapter president Jessica Elsberry.

The victims, er, volunteers whose jars contain the most

money — two teachers and two students, Smith says — will be marched out in front of a school assembly Friday afternoon and be subjected to the pie-throwing.

As of Friday, Worley’s jar had garnered the most action — \$57.52 — among the faculty. Pfeifer was second at \$36.93. The drop-off between second and third (nearly \$32) suggests that Worley and Pfeifer will face the creamy wrath today.

On the students’ side, Elsberry, Ineck and Eells were in a close race for top “honors.” Elsberry led with \$13.27, followed by Ineck at \$12.78 and Eells at \$11.41.

There is an out for the would-be pie-catchers: If they match the funds in their respective jars,

they have the opportunity to pick another of the group to face the pie-firing squad.

Another element of the fun and games is a raffle that has been going on all month on campus. For a quarter, students can buy a raffle ticket for a chance to be the triggerman in the pie-throwing. Students with perfect attendance last week received free raffle tickets.

— JPB

Buy it, sell it, trade
it, rent it in the

Classifields!

Adrian High students plan annual senior citizen lunch

The Adrian High School Leadership and Associated Student Body will hold its sixth annual Senior Citizen Luncheon March 9 at the Adrian Schools cafeteria.

The Adrian Schools complex is located at 202 High St., in Adrian, Ore.

The luncheon, which is open to all ages, will be held from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and will feature a hot meal, entertainment and door prizes.

For more information, call Stephanie Allison or Lorine VanCorbach at the school, (541) 372-2335.

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Katie Belanger
Toby & Shannon Johnson
Dan & Vicky Landa

Probably many more people have contributed to the
Smorgasbord this year. If your name or business was
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Sincerely,
Jeff & Kelly Hansen, Chairmen
Dwayne & Tracy Fisher, Co-Chairmen

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Owyhee gains new lawmen

Marsing

Bowman no stranger to emergency services

Along with Chief Deputy Bruce Cameron and Deputy Russ Turner, Owyhee County Sheriff Gary Aman welcomed Lynn Bowman as a full-time sheriff's deputy last week.

Aman said that the reasons for choosing Bowman to represent the sheriff's office on a full-time basis were based on his qualifications and dedication to the community.

Bowman will serve the area in which he lives — Marsing.

"Lynn scored very high (during testing procedures). He lives in the area where he works. That's his hometown," Aman said. "He grew up there.

"He's very involved with the community with the (Marsing) ambulance and fire department and several other groups. He's going to be a huge asset to me."

Bowman, 36, is no stranger to emergency services in Owyhee County. He has been an Owyhee County Sheriff's Posse member and Marsing firefighter for nearly

16 years. He also volunteers with the Marsing Ambulance and is a certified emergency medical technician (EMT)

Bowman began his law enforcement career shortly after graduating from Marsing High School by attending a law enforcement training program at the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls, where he received a certificate of applied science in law enforcement. Bowman described the program as being similar to attending the Idaho Peace Officer Standards Training (POST) police academy.

After attending training, Bowman didn't choose to enter a full-time law enforcement career. Instead, he went to work at the family business in the Marsing area, Bowman Produce Inc. He worked there approximate-



Lynn Bowman

ly 17 years until the family decided to sell the business.

During his time spent working for the agricultural business, Bowman became active in public service as a member of the Sheriff's Posse and the fire and ambulance crews in Marsing.

"I've been with the fire department and the sheriff's department for 16 years," Bowman said.

"I was a driver for the ambulance for about the same amount of years, and I've been EMT for two years."

After years serving the community on a volunteer basis, Bowman chose finally to enter law enforcement on a full-time basis in the community he, his wife and three daughters call home. After leaving agriculture, Bowman's choice to dedicate himself fully to public service was a natural process.

"I'd say, continuing on helping the community out (is a reason to work full-time),"

Bowman said. "I'm real dedicated to the community with the fire department.

"We sold the family business, and I needed something to do," Bowman said. "That's what I started out in life as, as wanting to be a cop."

Like the rest of the Owyhee County Sheriff's Office, Bowman said one of his biggest challenges in the years to come is adapting to change throughout the county.

"The No. 1 thing, probably, is the county is changing, growing," Bowman said. "There is going to be a lot more people, a lot more crime."

While he already has a great deal of law enforcement experience, Bowman will be required to complete the Idaho POST Basic Patrol Academy in Meridian. Bowman is scheduled to begin the 10-week course in April. He is currently undergoing field training under the tutelage of Sheriff's Sgt. Gary Olsen in the Marsing area.

— JWB

Bruneau-Grand View

Turner brings years of life experience to deputy job

As one of three newly hired Owyhee County Sheriff's deputies, Russ Turner hopes to protect and serve the citizens of Owyhee County in the years to come. Turner will be stationed in the Bruneau area, an area in which he has lived most of his life.

Like new Chief Deputy Bruce

Cameron, Turner, 53, brings a wide range of life experiences into his new position as a full-time lawman.

Those experiences include four years in the U.S. Navy, during which he attended flight and officer candidate school in Pensacola, Fla.; a bachelor's degree in animal

science from the University of Idaho; years working in the cattle industry; and graduate study in agricultural economics at University of Nevada in

Reno before settling into a career as an appraiser, dealing with farms.

Those years of experience obviously paid off in the selection process for the new deputy. While already functioning as a sheriff's posse member, Turner had to undergo written tests, physical tests and multiple interviews before being selected as a full-time deputy. Candidates also were judged on their level of community involvement.

According to Owyhee County Sheriff Gary Aman, Turner was



Russ Turner

top-notch in all areas.

"Russ Turner scored highest in written (tests) and oral (interviews) of any of the applicants," Aman said. "Russ is a natural. He's got a lot of good command presence. He's a natural cop.

"He's very involved with the community, which I want them (deputies) to be."

Turner said his involvement with emergency services began a few years back as a volunteer emergency medical technician (EMT) with the Bruneau Quick Response Unit, then as a member of the sheriff's posse.

"Through the EMT deal, I got to know some of the fellows and got involved with the sheriff's posse," he said.

Turner said he was a licensed real estate appraiser for approximately 20 years. He also owns a small ranch near Bruneau and is currently the president of the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association.

Turner said that when the opportunity to devote his efforts to helping the people of Owyhee County full-time opened up, he jumped at the chance.

"The opportunity came up, and I thought I'd give it a go," Turner said. "In my appraisal business. I'm on the road a bunch. I'm down in Nevada. I'm here and there. This will give me the opportunity to be in Owyhee County and maybe focus my efforts closer to home."

"Obviously, for me, it's a new environment, and getting to where my competency levels are where they need to be in the position are the biggest challenges," Turner said.

Turner will enter the Idaho Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Basic Patrol Academy at an unusual age. According to POST statistics, the average age of an academy student is 30.

Turner and Chief Deputy Bruce Cameron will attend the 10-week academy beginning in July. They'll be tasked with a daily exercise routine that entails lots of running, alongside recruits many years younger.

"Exactly, and we're going to look back when we beat them," Turner said with a laugh. "That's one of my strong points. I can run."

— JWB

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in the Avalanche

Owyhee gains new lawmen

Chief deputy

Vet seeks new challenges as right-hand man

Owyhee County Sheriff Gary Aman announced last week that marine deputy and 26-year posse member, Bruce Cameron would help lead the sheriff's office as chief deputy.

Cameron brings a wealth of life experience to his new position, looks forward to new challenges as the chief deputy and hopes to be responsive to the public's needs.

"I love working with the public, and I find a lot of reward in helping people," Cameron said of his reasons to accept the position when Aman offered it.

Aman, who announced the hire Feb. 20, said Cameron's leadership experience as a shift supervisor at Grand View's US Ecology gave him the administrative tools to help oversee the growing sheriff's office.

"We are at a place, because of growth, that we have to keep up with technology. We've got to keep up with equipment, manpower," Aman said. "The main reason for Bruce is that he has a lot of experience in employee supervision — Bruce's experience in that area is the reason I hired him. Bruce is a man of integrity, and I demand that."

Cameron said that as a boy, his father was a security police officer in the Air Force, which allowed Bruce to experience much of the world at a young age.

"I was born to an Air Force family and was raised in Europe," Cameron said.

Fate brought Cameron to Idaho in 1968, when his father was transferred to Mountain Home Air Force Base. Cameron said he had never heard of Idaho, much less Owyhee County.

"When he told us we were going to Mountain Home, Idaho, I asked: 'Dad, what country is that in?'" Cameron said. "I had no idea; I just thought the world dropped off west of the Mississippi, like everyone else from Europe."

"Once we got here, it was an adventure. We'd never seen desert — only pictures of it — we'd never seen real mountains," Cameron said. The allure of the rugged, high desert captivated him, and he decided he never wanted to leave.

Cameron said he still has family in Mountain Home, but for him, Owyhee County was the place he chose to call home, after graduating from Mountain Home High School in 1973.

"Once I crossed the (Snake) river after I graduated high school, I never wanted to go back to Elmore County," he said.

"I went to work for Bill Tindall at Tindall Ranches out at Grasmere. I worked for Simplot Livestock. I

worked for an irrigation company in Mountain Home," Cameron said.

Eventually, he went to work for EnviroSafe (now US Ecology) and became shift supervisor. He ended up staying with the company for 28 years.

Cameron now lives in the Oreana Valley with his wife, Patti. His son, Ross, lives and works in the Grand View area, and his stepson is in the Air Force, stationed at Hill Air Force Base in Ogden, Utah. He has two grandchildren.

Career started with Posse

Cameron began his law enforcement career in the early 1980s. The requirements at the time were simple: He had to own a firearm.

"Fred Jayo asked me if I had a gun. I said I did, and he said 'Would you like to be a posse member?'" Cameron said.

"I told him I'd consider it. He got me an application, and I filled it out. (Then-Sheriff) Tim (Nettleton) approved it — that was 26 years ago," Cameron said.

Cameron said that several years later he completed the Idaho Peace Officer Standards (POST) Reserve (part-time) officer academy, later he attended the marine deputy training academy.

In the late 1990s, Cameron became a marine deputy for Owyhee County and his involvement in law enforcement continued to expand, even helping to pass on the tools of the trade as an instructor at the Idaho POST marine deputy training academy.

"In 1998 or '99, the county started the marine program with the support and partial funding from Idaho Parks and Recreation, and we've taken that to a different level," Cameron said. "It has been a real positive, positive move for the county and for the general public."

Now, Cameron will have to be a student at the POST Basic Police Academy in Meridian, a course required by the state of Idaho of all full-time police officers and sheriff's patrol deputies. He will attend the 10-week training session, beginning in July, along with newly hired Owyhee deputy Russ Turner.

Academy adventure awaits

Cameron looks forward to the challenge of the police academy, where he, at 51, will be twice the age of many of his classmates. Turner also will be at the upper end of the academy's age spectrum at 53.

"I look forward to it. I like a challenge," Cameron said. "We (he and Turner) are probably

going to show these kids how some of the things are really done."

While some at Cameron's age and amount of work experience begin to see retirement on the horizon, he vehemently opposes the notion that retirement is in the works.

"When people retire, they live about a year and they pass away. I'm not that type of guy," Cameron said. "I'm a field-type guy. I like to get out in the trenches with the guys. I like to be the first one through the door."

That mentality extends to engaging the public, too.

"It's a shared venture," Cameron said of the partnership the sheriff's office has with the citizens of Owyhee County.

Growth emerges as issue

Cameron acknowledged that Owyhee County's growth and changing demographics are issues to which the sheriff's office must respond and be able to adapt. Cameron agreed that the size of the sheriff's office may remain one step behind the population as the county grows at a rapid rate.

"That is an issue (growth). We

have a limited amount of resources to cover a lot of country," Cameron said. "The department is going to have to grow with that growth, but it is not going to jump 'leaps and bounds' as the population grows. So we are going to have to make do with what we have and do the best we can."

"Here in the last 10 years, we got better equipment, better training, and let's just keep that going and enhance the training aspect of it. With the growth in population, we're going to get more diversified cultures in the growing population. Hopefully, we can appease that growth."

Sheriff deals with rec issue

Along with growth, Cameron said that recreation issues are another fact of life for the sheriff's office. Dealing with the multitude of recreational uses of Owyhee County's public land requires a complicated balancing act.

"I think the county is on the right track. A lot of that is going to have to do with the federal and state governments assisting with funding, as far as how fast we grow with it," Cameron said.

Cameron said that sometimes

the sheriff's office is faced with additional law enforcement and public relations duties when state and federal agencies close recreational areas.

"On a seasonal basis, we have a lot of ATVs, four-wheelers, motorcycles, off-highway vehicles. Those people aren't going to be happy when you start locking them out of spots they have been accustomed to enjoying," Cameron said. "A lot of our work is PR work, to try and make as many people happy (as possible). There are going to be those that you aren't going to make them happy no matter what ... It's a lot of feather-smoothing ... The end result is we have to deal with it. We don't have a lot of control over what is closed and what is not."

Wednesday, only 20 minutes into his first full day on the job, Cameron said his goals as Aman's right-hand man are simply take one day at a time and to work with the community.

"I guess if I had a credo, it would be 'A day's work for a day's wages, and have fun doing it.'"


— JWB

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Snow, water report

The Bureau of Reclamation Web site showed that Owyhee Reservoir held 527,710 acre-feet of water and that 32.3 cubic feet per second was being released into the Owyhee River at Nyssa, Ore.

The following statistics were gathered from the National Resources Conservation Service Web site at 10 a.m. Monday:

Date	Snow Depth	Reynolds Creek		Average Temp		
		Year to Date Precipitation		Max.	Min.	Avg.
02/20	0.0	7.2	32	21	27	
02/21	0.0	7.2	43	26	36	
02/22	1.9	7.4	39	22	25	
02/23	0.6	7.4	43	26	36	
02/24	0.8	7.5	27	19	22	
02/25	0.8	7.6	31	18	25	
02/26	2.1	7.6	32	23	28	

Date	Snow Depth	South Mountain		Average Temp		
		Year to Date Precipitation		Max.	Min.	Avg.
02/20	27.3	16.1	34	21	26	
02/21	26.8	16.1	43	29	34	
02/22	26.8	16.2	42	27	34	
02/23	27.2	16.1	43	23	34	
02/24	28.6	16.2	31	18	22	
02/25	30.1	16.5	31	17	25	
02/26	41.0	17.7	32	22	28	

Date	Snow Depth	Mud Flat		Average Temp		
		Year to Date Precipitation		Max.	Min.	Avg.
02/20	8.0	7.0	39	26	31	
02/21	7.8	7.1	49	28	37	
02/22	7.3	7.1	49	35	41	
02/23	7.3	7.1	51	30	39	
02/24	8.2	7.0	36	18	27	
02/25	7.6	7.2	36	15	27	
02/26	12.5	7.5	41	24	32	

Weather

	H	L	Prec.
Feb. 20	52	28	.00
Feb. 21	63	31	.18
Feb. 22	40	30	.02
Feb. 23	52	30	.04
Feb. 24	no reading taken		
Feb. 25	no reading taken		
Feb. 26	49	23	trace



Snow brings out charm of the Owyhee Mountains

A wet snow Wednesday blanketed the Poison Creek Grade south of Homedale, making travel up and down the old stagecoach road a slick proposition. While there are no official snow sensors in the area, approximately 1-2 inches were left by late afternoon.

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The Owyhee Avalanche

Welded wonders

High school artist creates life from fire and steel

While most look at a few odd pieces of scrap metal as junk, Jacob McRae sees it as his canvas, and his paintbrush the icy, blue flame of a blowtorch.

McRae, a self-taught artist and a senior at Homedale High School, recently won an award in the International Smorgasbord student art show. But he didn't even enter his own piece, a flower in a vase, molded from steel.

"That was my first one (art piece)," Jacob said, quick to add that his mother and sister entered the piece without his knowledge.

Apparently the judges thought it to be show-worthy and awarded it a blue ribbon.

"That was my Christmas present from him (Jacob)," said Andrea McRae, Jacob's mother. "We just kind of took it in (to the art show) and surprised him."

Andrea said Jacob never showed much desire for creative visual art, until he began welding. But Jacob expressed other creative impulses through storytelling.

"With the welding, he just kind of found a knack," Andrea said. "He's a very creative child. He's very creative whenever he has a school assignment (in writing). Even as a child, he was very creative."

Jacob is also quick to give credit to Homedale Ag teacher Lori Harrison and Canyon-Owyhee School Service Agency instructor Mark Bauer for his handiness with a blowtorch.

"I learned from Miss Harrison. I took her class first, and I had Mr. Bauer's class (COSSA)," Jacob said.

Harrison said she began having students make art through welding about two years ago. Flowers were the subject matter. Harrison said that having a finished product is a good learning tool for students, and family members love receiving the items as gifts.

"I try to have at least one project a year the students can actually take home with them; something neat," Harrison said. "It's a 'make your holiday happy' project, is what we call them."

Harrison said that doing art projects helps to enlighten new students as to welding as an



art form, rather than strictly an industrial tool, particularly female students. In at least one of Harrison's welding classes, there is nearly an even balance of male and female students.

"I think a lot of people that don't want to weld — especially the girls — they only think of the industrial side of it (welding)," Harrison said, adding that she hopes to change some of that stereotype.

For Jacob, it was really the catalyst he needed to tap into his artistic nature.

Jacob said he has never taken a formal art class, with the exception of a course in seventh grade, which he said he didn't take seriously.

"I did take art in seventh grade, but it was nothing. I wasn't any good at it," he said. He added that he didn't even have a special interest in any artistic endeavor until he picked up a torch in welding class.

"I like to make something that everyone can look at and like it," Jacob said as he again fired up his torch to round edges on a piece of black steel, which, in Jacob's mind's-eye is a butterfly's wing for a future project.

When asked if he had any schematics, or even a rough sketch drawn out for the steel insect, he said he did, but they were all inside his head.

Jacob said that after graduation in the spring he plans to work for a year, then leave for a church mission. Part of his plans may entail the sale of his artwork.

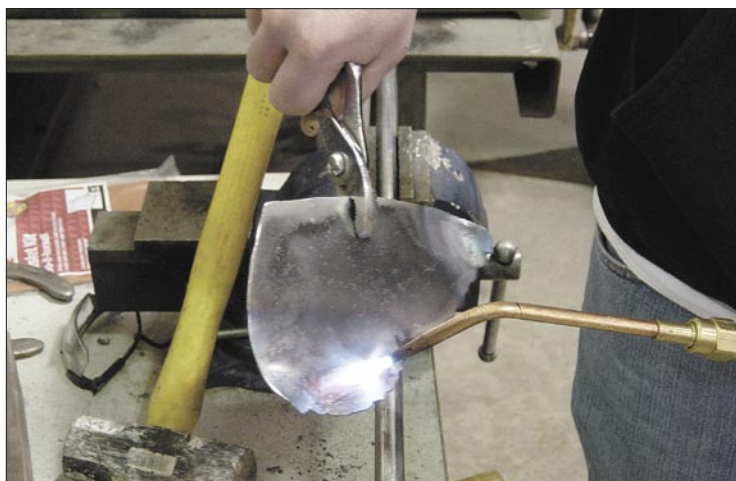
"I've already had people offer to buy my stuff," Jacob said.

Recently, a table he made from horseshoes sold for \$100 at the Smorgasbord's silent auction.

— JWB

"I like to make something that everyone can look at and like it."

— Jacob McRae
Homedale High School senior



Blue ribbon winner

Above: This steel flower made by Jacob McRae — a self-taught artist — was originally a Christmas gift for his mother, Andrea McRae of Homedale. Left: Steel and flame form what, in Jacob's mind's-eye, will be a butterfly's wing. Top: This metal flag was made with a plasma cutter in Mark Bauer's COSSA welding class.

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Sheriff responds to four stranded motorists

Silver City Road closed after heavy weekend snowfall

The Owyhee County Sheriff's Office responded to four different stranded motorist calls in remote areas during the weekend.

No injuries were reported, and Sheriff Gary Aman credited the use of cell phones with preventing a more serious situation from developing, or necessitating a more extensive search.

Silver City Road was closed Sunday afternoon as a result of snow in the area. It had been open for much of the weekend, so none of the motorists will be billed for the county's time.

"They had a cell phone and were able to get (a transmission signal) out," Aman said of the stranded motorists. Aman said that given the amount of traffic in the Silver City area during the weekend, the motorists would have eventually been found, but being able to get specific information via cell phone was a great help toward a positive outcome.

Aman has two main pieces of advice to motorists before traveling into the backcountry:

"Tell somebody where you are going, and take extra clothing — you're going to get wet in the snow," Aman said. "Those are the two big things."

According to information received from Owyhee County Sheriff's Dispatch, at approximately 5 p.m. on Friday, William Johnson of Texas became stuck in the Silver

City area. Chief Deputy Bruce Cameron and Deputy Travis Woodbury responded. Cameron gave the man a courtesy transport to Murphy, and Johnson's vehicle was later towed from the snow. He was able to call out on a cell phone and provide information to deputies.

At approximately 11:30 p.m. Saturday, dispatchers received information that a group of people — including two small children — was stranded high on Silver City Road in a Lexus SUV. Aman and Woodbury responded and located them. The stranded parties also were able to use a cell phone to provide an approximate location to authorities.

At approximately 3 p.m. Sunday, two teenage boys prompted a search in the CJ Strike Reservoir area after their Ford pickup became stuck in the mud. The boys

were located unharmed the same day on the Elmore County side of the reservoir.

Also on Sunday, a man became stuck in a late-model Hyundai SUV in the mud off of Murphy Flat Road near Murphy. The unidentified man was able call Owyhee County Dispatch and provide global positioning system (GPS) coordinates of his location. He was located by Aman and Sheriff's Posse member Eddie Olson.

Aman said none of the stranded motorists were prepared for the wilderness.

"Nobody was really prepared to spend a day or two out," Aman said.

Aman said Silver City Road was open during much of the weekend, but closed Sunday afternoon as a result of approximately 2 feet of new snowfall in the area.

— JWB

New P&Z chief ready to help county's progress

Huff moves over from building department to lead development side

Owyhee County's new planning and zoning administrator invoked a familiar document when describing the cooperation that will be needed to move the county forward during a time of monumental growth.

Mary Huff, who was hired Feb. 5 to succeed Kay Kelly as the county's planning and zoning administrator, said officials and concerned citizens would be well-served to follow the example presented by the Owyhee Initiative construction process when settling differences in land-use opinions regarding Owyhee's bur-

geoning residential growth.

"Very much like the Owyhee Initiative, if we can get a collaborative effort from a diverse group of people and come to a consensus, it's going to be a lasting, long-time effort rather than satisfying a few people in the short-term," Huff said.

"It's the smartest way to do it."

She should know. Huff is the wife of Brad Huff, the most recent past president of the Owyhee Cattlemen's Association. The ranchers have played a major role in drafting the Owyhee Initiative, which

is poised for another trek through Congress soon.

Mary Huff has worked in the county offices for about a year. She has worked primarily in the building department after it was split off from Planning and Zoning.

Rural sprawl — or residential growth outside city limits and away from centers of vital services — is a major concern for Huff as she takes the helm of the department that oversees development in the county.

"Sprawl drives costs up for the sheriff or ambulance or other services to get out where people want the services," Huff said.

She added that the sprawl creates a "spoke" out of the mainstream.

At the moment, Huff is working alone in the Planning and Zoning office. The county has the job of assistant currently open, she said. Resumes can be sent to the county clerk's office in Murphy.

"(The assistant job) has many of the same duties (as administrator)," Huff said. "There's a lot of research and dealing with the public."

Huff said any candidate for the assistant's job has to be knowledgeable in the county's ordinances and comprehensive plan.

And, if the administrator's outlook on her own job is any indi-



Mary Huff

cation, the assistant will have to conduct the job professionally and above reproach.

"I absolutely think of myself and try to always conduct myself as a person of great integrity and honesty, and that's how I want this office to be known," Huff said.

"If I give you my word I'm going to get something done, you can count on it. If you leave me a message I'll call you back."

She also said she plans to be very accessible for the public, making time to address anyone's concerns about the planning and zoning application process.

Huff said she also has a great deal of respect for the all-volunteer county Planning and Zoning Commission as well as the county commissioners and other county officials.

"We have a group of people that is so knowledgeable and I'm honored to be able to work with them," Huff said.

She said the commission hearings will continue to maintain a daytime schedule. The next meeting is scheduled for March 14.

The first order of business beginning with the March 14 hearing is alleviating the backlog of applications before the commission, Huff said.

The planning and zoning permit process stalled when Kelly retired at the end of December. Even so, Huff said that in most cases the county still is within the 125-day approval period for complete conditional use permit applications mandated by state law.

Huff said the commissioners

plan to clear their caseload by the end of April.

"Eight permits have been put off, and those are first and foremost on list to get heard," she said of the immediate P&Z commission agenda.

The new administrator also said she will work toward streamlining the hearing process in hopes of shortening meetings.

All permit applicants will receive a packet with detailed requirements so that they can submit all the pertinent information to commissioners before the hearing date. Huff said this will cut down on continuations and other postponements.

"I try to do everything I can so that if there is any possible way that the planning and zoning commission is going to approve them that they have everything they need, every tool they need to answer every question they have to do what they need to do," she said.

Huff also stresses education for anyone who plans to submit an application to the commission. All commission meetings are open to the public.

"I always encourage them to come sit in one or two of them before they go through their own. We do hold it in a courtroom, and it is a pretty formal process here," she said.

"If the people go and hear the type of questions the commissioners ask and the type of things they would like to have addressed and clarified, it's just a huge help for those people that have to come in and sit before them."

The Planning and Zoning department's phone number is (208) 495-2095, or Huff can be contacted at mhuff@co.owyhee.id.us.

— JPB



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Homedale

Sparse turnout for public hearing on P&Z changes

Homedale council has to call P&Z coordinator for clarification of commission’s recommendations

The Homedale City Council held a public hearing Thursday on recommended planning and zoning ordinance changes inside a mostly empty meeting room and without the city’s P&Z coordinator in attendance.

Homedale’s Planning and Zoning Commission devised five alterations to city code, and P&Z coordinator Sylvia Bahem forwarded them to the council. However, Bahem, who is a part-time employee of the city, didn’t attend the public hearing, which was held immediately after the city council’s regularly scheduled meeting.

There were only three people in attendance at Thursday’s public hearing, including businessman John McBean, who is in the process of moving Kitfox Aircraft LLC from Caldwell to the Homedale airport.

At the end of the meeting, councilman Dave Downum said he

would take the changes suggested by the council back to the planning and zoning commission.

The items discussed included:

- Requiring that all new residential construction include an attached garage, effectively prohibiting carports.
- Requiring that the ground floor on two-story residential structures be no smaller than 1,000 square feet.
- Changing the commercial/industrial regulations to classify an aircraft hangar as one of the construction projects that won’t require a special permit. Currently, developers can’t build a hangar without applying for a permit on top of the general building permit.
- Adopting new language for all plats within the city that prohibits property owners from filing nuisance lawsuits against nearby agricultural or industrial operations that may emit noise or

other inconveniences.

- Amending city ordinance to provide a variance from the 7,000-square-foot lot requirement for residential development. The variance would apply to the lots in the old plat of town that are 50 feet-by-125 feet (6,250 square feet).

Council members dissected the proposed changes, added their own ideas and conferred with city attorney Michael Duggan on how the changes could be implemented.

When it came time to discuss adding airplane hangars to the approved uses in the commercial/industrial zone, the council seemed unclear on what exactly the planning and zoning commissioners had in mind. Public works supervisor Larry Bauer was asked to call Bahem for clarification.

The council decided that the change should specify that hangar construction would be allowed without a special permit only at the airport because similar structures in other areas of town could be considered shops, thus creating a loophole in any new

regulations.

The council suggested that the ground-floor square-footage requirement recommendation be amended to require minimums of 1,000 square feet (with an attached garage) for single-level dwellings and 1,200 square feet with garage for two-story homes.

Mayor Paul Fink said one reason for the alteration was the fact that the design of two-story 1,400- to 1,700-square-foot homes planned by developer Ron Woods in his Pioneer Road subdivision would have less than 1,000 square feet on the ground floor.

No immediate action on these proposals is expected because the council asked Duggan to find out whether the changes must be made by new ordinances or simply through resolutions.

Duggan also reported during the hearing that the annexation of land in the city’s area of impact near U.S. Highway 95 and Pioneer Road has been delayed because it’s unclear what type of annexation the city must declare.

Duggan said he would have to confer with Bahem on whether

the annexation would qualify as a Category A or Category B annexation.

The crux of the matter is whether or not the city has the affected property owners’ consent for the annexation. A Category A annexation can be declared if there was consent, and Duggan said that if residents already were receiving city services that it could be construed as implied consent.

The city’s attorney surmised that if the annexation were a Category A then a “minor” change would have to be made to the preamble of the ordinance. If it’s a Category B annexation, Duggan stated that the city may have to start the process over because the city didn’t comply with the public notice regulations.

He expected a resolution to the confusion by the council’s March 14 meeting.

Duggan said affected property owners still can appeal the city’s original annexation ruling because the ordinance hasn’t been published yet.

— JPB

US Ecology soon will store soil from eastern U.S. site

The parent company for US Ecology Idaho announced last week that it will begin shipping soil containing low levels of radioactive material to its Grand View disposal facility.

US Ecology Idaho environmental affairs director Richard O’Hara said that the soil from a Washington, Pa., ore-processing site contains traces of uranium and thorium.

“It’s known as naturally occurring radioactive material, or NORM,” O’Hara said.

American Ecology Corp., the parent company of US Ecology Idaho, unveiled a deal with international minerals producer Molycorp Inc., to transport between 100,000 and 140,000 tons of the contaminated soil from Pennsylvania to the Grand View dump site.

“We believe our investments in rail infrastructure, the superior geology of our Idaho site as well as our outstanding regulatory record and customer service makes us an excellent choice.”

After excavation from the Pennsylvania site, the contaminated soil will be shipped by train to US Ecology Idaho’s off-load point on Simco Road in Elmore County.

From there, O’Hara said, the waste will be trucked to Grand View. Idaho highway 78 is one of the roads used in the route from

Elmore County to Grand View.

“The truck is covered, and the truck then takes the direct route to our land disposal site,” O’Hara said.

“This is the route we use for all the waste materials brought into the facility.”

O’Hara said US Ecology Idaho’s dump site already is taking similar contaminants from a large cleanup project at a New Jersey ore-processing plant owned by Honeywell.

— JPB

BLM to stage ‘coffee shop’ meetings in GV-Bruneau area

The Bureau of Land Management’s Boise District office will hold two meetings in the Bruneau-Grand View area Thursday.


The “coffee shop” meetings will be open to the public and give BLM officials an opportunity to share information and discuss issues with permittees, the Owyhee County commissioners, recreation, environmental and off-highway vehicle groups; and

other interested members of the public that use the public lands in the local area.

The public is invited to drop in at the first meeting anytime between 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. at the Bruneau One Stop at 45251 State Road Highway 51 in Bruneau.

A second meeting is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Y-Bar, 140 Highway 78 in Grand View.

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Info about Leslie Gulch poacher worth \$10,000

Information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person(s) responsible for the killing of a California Bighorn Sheep near Leslie Gulch last month could be worth big bucks — \$10,000 to be exact.

On Jan. 20 a male California Bighorn ram was found dead near Long Gulch, which is between Leslie Gulch and Three Fingers Rock, near the Idaho-Oregon state line. The animal’s head and horns were missing.

Authorities say the strategy at this point is simple: Turn the tables by placing a sizeable bounty on the poacher.

“We’re looking for people to come forward that may have information and are interested in getting quite a bit of money,” Oregon State Police Trooper Bob Wilson said. “As far as I know, this is the largest reward that has been offered in Oregon.”

Wilson said that those with information can remain anonymous. Wilson said that the informant will be required to reveal their identity to investigators, but their identity can be protected from others.

“We’re relying heavily on members of the public to do the right thing,” Wilson said.

Wilson says would-be informants can contact the Turn In Poachers hotline at (800) 452-7888 or can call him at the Oregon State Police Office in Ontario at (541) 889-6469. Wilson said that if the information is time-sensitive and would require immediate action to apprehend the violator, the Turn in Poachers hotline is the best number to call.

According to Wilson, who is in charge of the investigation, various groups, including the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, Oregon Hunter’s Association, Turn In Poachers Program and Backcountry Hunters and Anglers are credited with raising the reward money.

Wilson says the \$10,000 reward is unprecedented and shows just how upset folks are about the animal killed illegally for its horns north of Leslie Gulch. He said his best hope for successfully closing this case is for someone with information to come forward.

Wilson is a seven-year veteran trooper, holds a bachelor’s degree in wildlife resources from the University of Idaho, and specializes in fish and wildlife investigations for the OSP. He said physical evidence indicated the animal was killed by humans at the scene, then the head and horns taken.

Wilson said that DNA evidence collected at the scene could be matched to the animal’s missing head if it is located, tying a suspect to the crime.

Wilson said that the suspect could face misdemeanor charges of illegally taking the animal. Additionally, Wilson said that by Oregon law it would be a misdemeanor simply to possess the animal’s head. The violator could face up to a year in jail or a \$5,000 fine. Tools such as four-wheelers and firearms, used in committing the crime, also could be seized.

The ram’s head could be worth several thousand dollars if mounted and sold, Wilson said.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife lists the Leslie Gulch herd as the third-oldest herd of California bighorn sheep in Oregon. The species was reintroduced to the area in 1965 with the relocation of 17 sheep from Hart Mountain.

According to the ODFW studies, the herd grew to nearly 350 in the early 1990s. Today, the population is estimated to be approximately 125. The herd’s dwindling numbers has been attributed to contaminated natural drinking water sources and mountain lion predation.

—JWB

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ARREST AND CONVICTION OF THE POACHER(S)
THAT ILLEGALLY KILLED A CALIFORNIA BIGHORN
SHEEP SOME TIME PRIOR TO JANUARY 20TH, 2007
EAST OF THE OWYHEE RESERVOIR IN THE LONG
GULCH AREA OF MALHEUR COUNTY, OREGON**

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OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION
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BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS AND ANGLERS
AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

**CONTACT:
TURN IN POACHERS HOTLINE ~ 1-800-452-7888
OREGON STATE POLICE ~ 541-889-6469**

Poacher wanted: \$10,000 reward

Various groups throughout Oregon have banded together to offer a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person(s) responsible for illegally killing a California Bighorn ram last month in the Long Gulch area near Leslie Gulch along the Idaho-Oregon state line. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Turn In Poachers hotline at (800) 452-7888 or contact the Oregon State Police in Ontario at (541) 889-6469. Poster image courtesy of Oregon State Police.

Irrigation boards to meet Tuesday

The boards of directors of local irrigation districts will meet Tuesday at the South Board of Control office in Homedale for monthly meetings.

The South Board office is located at 118 S. 1st St.

The Ridgeview Irrigation District board meets at 7 p.m.

The Gem Irrigation District meets at 7:15 p.m.

The South Board of Control meets at 7:30 p.m.

Homedale hunters ed course begins March 13

A hunters education course series will be held at the Mountain View Church of the Nazarene beginning March 13.

The church is located at 26615 Ustick Road.

The series of classes will be offered to youth hunters ages 10 and older. Parents are encouraged to attend with their children.

The course costs \$8. Classes will be held from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on March 13, March 15, March 20 and March 22.

Another class in the series is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on March 17.

The final class begins at 9 a.m. March 24 and will run until the course is completed. This day’s class will be held at the Homedale Rod and Gun Club Range on U.S. Highway 95.

According to Idaho law, hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1975 are required to complete a hunter education course.

For more information, call instructor Walt Rost at 337-3535 or 989-3152.

U.S. 95 crash near Jordan Valley kills 5-year-old

A one-vehicle accident near Jordan Valley just after midnight Monday claimed the life of a 5-year-old girl, according to officials at the Malheur County Sheriff’s Office.

Authorities wouldn’t release the names of any of the persons involved in an early-morning fatal crash near milepost 26, approximately six miles south of Jordan Valley on U.S. Highway 95.

Sgt. Bob Speelman from the Malheur County Sheriff’s Office said that preliminary reports indicate icy roads may have been a factor.

“Icy roads, conditions — I believe that played a factor,” Speelman said.

Speelman said there were seven occupants traveling in a pickup truck when it left the roadway and rolled several times.

Six of the seven occupants were ejected from the vehicle.

The driver, the only occupant wearing a seatbelt, was not ejected. The 5-year-old girl died at the scene.

Speelman said the case has been released to the Oregon State Police for further investigation.

Look for the Avalanche every Wednesday morning

JV man to serve 4 years in prison for sexual abuse

Jason Walter Potts, of Jordan Valley, will serve the next 48 months in prison after a plea agreement made with the Malheur County District Attorney's office.

In November, Potts, 27, was indicted on felony charges, including first-degree sexual abuse, burglary, sexual harassment and criminal trespassing charges.

Last month, Potts plead guilty to sexual abuse in the third degree and burglary.

"He plead guilty to burglary in the first-degree and sexual abuse in the third-degree and stipulated to 48 months in prison," Malheur County District Attorney Dan Norris said.

Norris said that Potts will be subject to "post-prison supervision" after his release, which is similar to parole in Idaho.

"Post-prison supervision means that they put them (offenders) on conditions that they will be expected to meet while he transitions from prison," Norris said. "In this case, he (Potts) will be required to register as a sex offender. That would be one of the conditions of this post-prison supervision, to report and do the (sex offender) notification."

Norris said if convicted at trial of the original first-degree sexual abuse charge, Potts would have faced a minimum



Jason W. Potts

mandatory sentence of 75 months in prison, as stipulated by Oregon sentencing guidelines. Norris said Oregon law defines first-degree sexual abuse as "sexual contact with a victim under 14 years of age."

Norris said that the exact conditions of Potts' release won't be known until he undergoes extensive evaluations.

"They (conditions) vary depending on the individual because they are tailor-made to each offender as they are getting out (of prison), as in terms of what risks to community safety they (offenders) pose and what other issues they face," Norris said.

Norris did not comment on the exact nature of the case against Potts, citing the sensitive nature of the case, and the DA's

desire to protect the victim's privacy.

But in November, Norris did make general statements about the case.

"The allegations are that he sexually abused the victim after illegally entering a residence," Norris said.

Potts was arrested on Iowa Avenue in Jordan Valley last fall after Malheur County Sheriff's deputies stopped he and his brother, Edward Potts, also of Jordan Valley. Edward Potts was arrested at that time on an unrelated misdemeanor warrant.

After his arrest Jason Potts was held in the Malheur County Jail on a \$90,000 bond.

— JWB

Counselors ready to show students the big picture

Educators earn grant to exhibit value of K-12 education in career path

The Homedale School District has been awarded a Career Guidance Program grant. The grant will bring the district \$8,800 to implement a district-wide career guidance program.

According to Homedale Schools superintendent Tim Rosandick, the grant was awarded by the Idaho Division of Professional-Technical Education.

"Career guidance, among other things, is intended to help students explore their own talents, interests and aspirations and learn what kind of education and jobs they should pursue to support their career goals," Rosandick wrote in a press release to The Owyhee Avalanche.

The comprehensive career guidance program in Homedale is in response to the Homedale School Board of Trustee's goal of increasing graduation rates. The theory is students who have discovered the relationship between education and the attainment of their career goals are more likely to see the relevance of their education and be motivated to continue toward graduation.

The grant was written and submitted by the Homedale School District counseling staff, including Kelly DeWitt at the high school, Brent Meiser at the middle school and Randee Garrett at the elementary school.

Meiser hopes the program will encourage students to look past the pages of their textbooks and see the impact their studies may have later on in life. The grant will assist in this goal by providing funding for a computer program called Career Information Systems (CIS), which the school already uses.

"It exposes kids to careers and kind of gets them thinking about long-term, after high school," Meiser said of the program. "It's a program we purchase. Basically, what it has been is focusing on the eighth-graders."

Meiser said that with additional funding, the program may be expanded to include sixth- and seventh-graders, as well.

Homedale Elementary counselor Randee Garrett said a goal at the elementary level is to identify a student's academic strengths early on.

"What we're going to focus on here at the elementary school is introducing kids to multiple intelligences: The fact that there are lots of ways to be smart, other than just book-smart," Garrett said.

She said the grant will assist her in that endeavor.

"I will be helping kids to find out what their strengths are, so that by the time they begin doing career exploration at the middle school and high school, they'll know what they are good at and what they are interested in," Garrett said.

Garrett said the program may assist students in areas other than strictly academics, such as in art or music.

"We really focus a lot on reading and math. But if kids aren't super-successful in those areas, it could be that they discover a real strength in what we would call an 'artistic intelligence' or a musical intelligence," Garrett said. "Or, maybe even a social intelligence ... maybe someday they will be in a very social type of career where that will be a strength."

Garrett said the elementary school hopes to use the grant money to purchase a software add-on that will make the program more applicable for the younger students, down to fourth grade, and a puppet presentation that will reach students as young as kindergarten age.

DeWitt said the program also targets high school students, but with graduation, secondary education or the working world on the near horizon for high schoolers, the program further identifies students' strengths and



Looking beyond Homedale High School

Homedale High School counselor Kelly DeWitt discusses the many post-graduation options with senior Cory Uria. Homedale Schools recently received a grant, which is designed to help students approach their studies with eyes on the future.

matches them to career goals.

"The benefit (at the high school level) is to help the kids make better-educated choices for post-secondary planning," DeWitt said. "Whether that is the military, vocational school, four-year college or work."

DeWitt said that at the high school, she noticed a gap in the lack of career-based curriculum for Homedale students.

"My thoughts were that the Homedale School District really didn't have a formalized career-based curriculum in place," she said.

DeWitt said that before the program, she didn't have a good answer for parents who asked how she — as a school counselor — is working to help students focus on career goals.

"The idea was to get something down in writing, and approved by the (school) Board, and all of the staff on board."

DeWitt said that one of the goals

is to have all school staff involved in students' career education, and not just counselors. As an example, DeWitt said that students recently were tasked with a "scavenger hunt" on the CIS computer to

become more familiar with the program. Freshman students were also tasked with a "career inventory" to explore possible career directions.

— JWB

Classified deadline

Monday noon the
week of publication

Legal notice deadline

Friday noon the week prior to publication

The Owyhee Avalanche

337-4681

New Homedale Eagle Scouts honored

Five Homedale Boy Scouts recently were awarded with Eagle ranks at a ceremony at the LDS church.

Former Crew 509 advisor Nolan Taggart reported last week that Tyler Christoffersen, Sam Ensley, Wade Hyer, Tyler Leslie and Heath Phelps all became Eagle Scouts during the celebration.

All five are 2006 graduates of Homedale High School, and the quintet had to finish individual community service projects to become part of the 2 percent of scouts who achieve the rank of Eagle.

The five 18-year-olds began scouting at age 12 and were required to complete 21 merit badges and their Eagle project before their 18th birthday to achieve the ultimate rank in scouting.

“The scouting experience requires the boys to acquire skills in camping, cooking, first aid, family relations, nature and wildlife

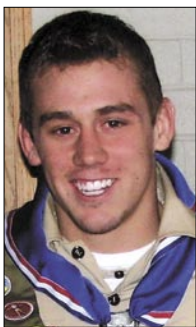
and, above all, service to others,” Taggart wrote in a press release.

The ceremony was the last for Taggart as crew advisor. Greg Leslie, the father of Tyler, has succeeded him in the position.

The scouts’ Eagle projects included:

Tyler Christoffersen — He built six portable and three stationary benches for students to use at Homedale Middle School. Some of the stained-wood benches are located in the school’s hallway.

Christoffersen is the son of Gheen and Devra Christoffersen and he currently is a student at

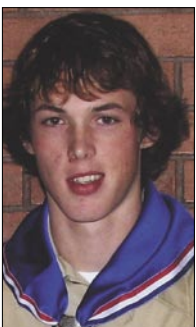


Tyler Christoffersen

BYU-Idaho in Rexburg.

Sam Ensley — Ensley built and painted eight athletic benches that were used during the 2006 Homedale High School football season at Deward Bell Stadium. Four of the wooden benches are painted white, and four are red.

A student at the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls, Ensley is the son of Kevin and Ruth Ann Ensley.



Sam Ensley



Wade Hyer

Wade Hyer — Hyer put the finishing touches on signs made for the Homedale School District’s Outdoor Classroom. Hyer attached the signs to angle-iron brackets and permanently installed them in the ground with concrete. The outdoor classroom is located near Succor Creek and Homedale Middle School.

Hyer is the son of George and Dolly Hyer and his enrolled at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario, Ore.

Tyler Leslie — Leslie’s Eagle Project truly was a true community service endeavor. He made 12 emergency kits filled with personal supplies and presented them



Tyler Leslie

to the Homedale Fire Department to distribute to families and individuals when they are displaced from their homes because of fire or other natural disasters.

The son of Greg and Meri Leslie, Tyler has been working as a masonry contractor since his graduation from Homedale in May.

Heath Phelps — Phelps’ project also helped the Homedale School District’s Outdoor Classroom. He made three goose nesting boxes that were installed on the classroom site.

Phelps is the son of Randy and Lynn Phelps, and he is a freshman at BYU-Idaho.



Heath Phelps

Homedale art teacher helps cultivate talent

Homedale High School art instructor Katy Belanger was recognized this month for her outstanding teaching efforts with the Homedale School District’s Award of Excellence.

Belanger received the award at the school board’s monthly meeting Feb. 12.

While others speak volumes of Belanger’s work ethic and commitment to the students and community, Belanger is quick to divert the limelight to her fellow teachers and the administration.

“I don’t do nearly as much as half these other teachers. Everybody works really hard here and stays late after school,” she said.

“(Homedale High School principal Mike Williams) is very supportive,” Belanger said. “About seven years ago, they built this wonderful facility for me, and it’s probably the nicest (art) facility in the state, as far as high schools go.”

Belanger agreed that developing a strong art program in the school system takes years and that her familiarity with students over the years helps to foster the program. She gives part of the credit to having art classes in Homedale Middle School.

“I have large classes — 26 in one class and 27 in another,” Belanger said. “Just trying to get to everybody, so you can help them. You can’t sit at your desk and teach art. You have to be up out of your seat walking around. There is no ‘desk time.’”

Belanger’s peers are quick to recognize her work efforts.

“I have taught in the room next to Katy Belanger for 13 years,” Homedale teacher Mike Greeley said. “These are some of the things I know to be true — Katy is the ultimate professional educator. She is a strong disciplinarian. She is compassionate toward her students and cares about their well-being. She stretches their imagination and art skill to the highest levels possible.”

Greeley said that Belanger balances focused study with a friendly atmosphere, to create an ideal learning environment for her students.



Katy Belanger



No ‘desk time’ for Belanger

Homedale High School art teacher Katy Belanger (center) gives hands-on instruction to a group of art students. “You can’t sit at a desk and teach art,” Belanger said. “You have to be up out of your seat walking around. There is no ‘desk time.’”

“I suppose it takes a while. The kids start to know you, and then their brothers and sisters take your class,” Belanger said. “We finally, in just the last couple years, have an art program at the middle school.”

“It does take time. The kids get better, the more classes they take,” Belanger said.

Belanger, who is currently working on her master’s degree, said that teaching large classes is often a challenge, and that her work in the classroom never stops because of her hands-on approach to teaching.

“When you walk into Katy’s class, you see a classroom full of students on task, but comfortable at the same time,” Greeley said. “The students are engaged in learning, while Mrs. Belanger walks around putting wayward students back on task with ease.”

According to Greeley, Belanger is able to quietly do her job with little fanfare.

“Katy has been an unrecognized gem of the high school staff since she started here,” Greeley said. “She pulls her weight quietly and efficiently. Homedale is very lucky to have a teacher of

this caliber on staff.”

Belanger’s efforts to shape not only her students, but also the community of Homedale, extend beyond the classroom. For example, she recently coordinated the student art show at the International Smorgasbord.

“Mrs. Belanger has worked for the Homedale School District for 13 years,” Williams said. “I’ve had the pleasure to work with and

observe Mrs. Belanger for the past 10 years. During this time, Mrs. Belanger was always very professional and willing to do the extra ‘little things’ that build a successful program.

“Her duties have extended beyond the classroom, assisting students with dance decoration, working as a class advisor, yearbook advisor and her yearly commitment to the Smorgasbord Art Show.”

Belanger said one of the rewards of teaching art at Homedale is the repeat students she has over the years.

“It’s rewarding in that they keep coming back,” Belanger said. “I might have 10 kids. Two hours out of the day as seniors, that really, really love the subject, they paint on their own, at home and plan on going into art,” Belanger said.

— JWB

A full-page background image showing a sunset over a body of water. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the upper center, casting a long, shimmering reflection down the water. Two silhouetted figures are sitting in a small boat on the water, fishing with rods. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

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10 lb.

Potatoes

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5 lb.

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Quart

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Western Family

Seasoning & Gravy

Mix Foil Pouches

3 for 99¢

Western Family

Instant Flavored Rice

6.2-6.9 oz.

79¢ ea.

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Sandwich Creme Cookies

Asst'd 32 oz.

\$1.69 ea.

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Potato Chips

13.25-13.75 oz.

2 for \$5

Campbell's

Chunky Soups

18.6-18.8 oz.

2 for \$3

Cup Noodles

2.25 oz.

10 for \$3

Western Family

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32 oz.

\$1.79 ea.

Zee Napkins

Family Pack

360 ct.

\$2.99 ea.

Western Family

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96 oz.

\$1.69 ea.

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\$2.49 ea.

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Ice Cream

5 Quart

\$5.99 ea.

Gatorade

64 oz.

2 for \$4

Western Family

Soft Tub Margarine

16 oz.

89¢ ea.

Purina

Dog Chow

22 lb.

\$8.99 ea.

Western Family Cat Food

Ocean Fish Flavor

14 lb.

\$6.99 ea.

Quaker Life & Captain Crunch Cereal

15-16 oz. While Supplies Last

\$1.99 ea.

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