

The Owyhee Avalanche

VOL. 39, NO. 12 \$1

HOMEDALE, OWYHEE COUNTY, IDAHO

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024



Homedale Boosters crab, steak fundraiser grows stronger every year

Above: Tony Uranga (right) reads some notes with Teresa Ryska (left) and auctioneer Zack Zumstein standing nearby with dozens of auction items as a backdrop Saturday for the 11th annual Homedale Booster Club's Crab and Steak Feed. The Homedale youth athletics fundraiser was staged at the Owyhee County Community Center at the fairgrounds for the first time after a decade at the Txoko Ona Basque Center. **Right:** Jace Salutregui acknowledges a bid during the sold-out dinner and auction. Organizers gave thanks to the community, Booster Club officers and volunteers in helping to make 2024 "the best year yet" for the event. Photos by Joshua Gray / GrayHawk Photography



Bruneau-GV schools levy on May ballot

Public forum will address \$1.3M proposal

Bruneau-Grand View School District patrons will be asked to vote May 21 regarding a proposed levy.

During its March meeting, the district board of trustees

approved a resolution to place a supplemental levy question on the ballot that would seek property tax receipts of \$650,000 per year for two years (a total of \$1.3 million).

District superintendent Jeff Blaser said no community members attended the board meeting to give input on the

— See *Levy*, page 9

Rare crowded county ballot set for primary

All elected offices, many GOP precinct posts contested

All four county elected positions on the May 21 primary ballot will have contested races.

According to information from the Owyhee County elections office, all four races will appear on the Republican primary ballot, meaning that the winners in the spring will be the people who take the oath of office in January.

There will be no need for a general election at the county

level in November unless there are write-in candidates.

Marsing resident Lath Callaway filed to seek the District 1 seat on the Board of County Commissioners on the final day of the filing period (Friday). He will challenge Walt Holton for a two-year term to succeed retiring commissioner Jerry Hoagland.

Michelle Spencer also filed on the final day of the window to challenge appointed Dist. 3 Commissioner Cindy Bachman for a four-year term.

Chris Topmiller, who was appointed prosecuting attorney, will face Trenton A. McRae in

— See *County*, page 9

Little's signature makes Lakey's fentanyl crime bill law

by Sophie Spanbauer

JAMM-McClure Center legislative intern

Idaho Gov. Brad Little (R-Emmett) has signed House Bill 406, adding fentanyl to the category of drugs that carry a mandatory minimum criminal sentence.

The law also allows for life in prison and a \$25,000 fine if someone is convicted of drug-induced homicide.

Dist. 23 Sen. Todd Lakey (R-Nampa) co-sponsored the legislation, which the state Senate passed by a 28-7 vote after a Feb. 15 debate. Little signed the legislation into law Feb. 26.

During the floor debate, Dist. 11 Sen. Chris Trakel (R-Caldwell) spoke in favor of the bill.

"I'm sorry if you are an addict and you are connected. You're still breaking the law," Trakel said. "It's still against the law. It needs to be off the street and removed. If we remove the demand for it by having harsh punishment, it's simple economics — they're not going to come here to sell."

Dist. 2 Sen. Phil Hart (R-Kellogg) spoke out against the bill.

"I think what this bill does is it scoops up people who are not trafficking and calls them traffickers," he said.

Hart later stated: "The judge ought to

— See *Fentanyl*, page 4

Fentanyl awareness assemblies set in schools

The Owyhee County Sheriff's Office has scheduled two fentanyl awareness events.

Sheriff Larry Kendrick will lead a town hall-style talk with Homedale High School students and staff at 1:30 p.m., on Thursday, April 4.

A similar event for students and teachers will be held at 12:45 p.m., on Wednesday, April 10 at Rimrock Jr.-Sr. High School, 39678 Hwy. 78 in Bruneau.



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Flanked by board vice-chair Bret Nielson (left) and chair Sterling Johnston, new Ridgeview Irrigation Board director Mike Pendergrass jumps right in to a familiar role by examining expenditures for the past month during the March 12 meeting.

As big water year looms, SBOC director Turner steps down

Just when the local irrigation boards were ready to get back to full strength, the Gem Irrigation directors are looking for a Division 3 colleague.

Mike Pendergrass returned to the Ridgeview Irrigation Board after a 20-year absence, signing the oath of office during a March 12 meeting to succeed the late Mark Aman.

Current Ridgeview vice-chair Bret Nielson pointed out during the last daytime meeting of the winter for the South Board of Control directors that he replaced Pendergrass 20 years ago when the Adrian-area resident left the board the first time.

While Pendergrass joined irrigation directors, South Board manager Carl Seiders announced that Gem Irrigation (and South Board) Div. 3 director Dennis Turner had tendered his resignation. A board member since 2008, Turner’s current term expires on Dec. 31, 2025.

A search for a replacement is underway.

Directors discussed the abundance of water in the Owyhee Reservoir and how nervous the 561,586 acre-feet (79 percent of capacity on Monday) was making Bureau of Reclamation officials.

The ring gate will spill this year, and flood control measures began with flows out of the dam increasing from 250 cubic feet per second to 500 cfs the day of the meeting to 750 cfs last Wednesday. On Monday, water was rushing out of the dam at 732 cfs, while the Owyhee River was feeding the man-made lake held back by a

90-year-old dam at 1,435 cfs.

Water master Ryan Nash reported that the Owyhee River watershed’s snow-water equivalent was 161 percent of the 30-year normal.

Seiders told The Owyhee Avalanche that South Canal irrigation water will begin flowing on April 1, and that the Gem Pumping Plant will start drawing from the Snake River a week later.

The new manager anticipates the 2024 allotment to be 4.0 acre-feet plus excess.

— JPB

Students’ mothers apply for Marsing school board spot

Two prospective candidates for the Zone 3 trustee position on the Marsing school board will face interviews next month.

The school board has had a Zone 3 vacancy since Luke Ankeny resigned in January when he and his family moved out of the district.

The remaining school board members will interview Stacey Sughrim and Cassea Daugherty at 6:30 p.m., on Tuesday, April 19 inside the The HUB boardroom on 8th Avenue West.

Sughrim and Daugherty are mothers of students in the Marsing school system. They were the only two community

members to apply for the open trustee position.

Zone 3 is an Owyhee County-based district with a western boundary of the U.S. Highway 95-Idaho highway 55 intersection.

Whomever of the women is selected will complete Ankeny’s term, which is set to expire on Dec. 31, 2025.

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Durrant’s steps pay off for Marsing school

Blue Cross gives Dist. 23A rep \$1,000

Durrant is running for re-election, but first the District 23A representative walked for schools.

The Kuna Republican was the only District 23 legislative delegate to participate in the Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health Steps for Schools program in February.

The freshman Idaho House of Representative member received a \$1,000 check for Marsing Middle School during a ceremony last week at the Statehouse in Boise.

Durrant walked 290,000 steps last month.

Legislators and state constitutional officers generated \$48,000 for schools across the state during the monthlong activity.

Participants who averaged 10,000 steps per day (a minimum of 290,000 steps total) received \$1,000 checks. Each participant to reach the 5,000 daily steps threshold (145,000 steps for the month) earned \$500.

The Blue Cross program



Dist. 23A Rep. Melissa Durrant (R-Kuna) earned \$1,000 for Marsing Middle School during the Steps for Schools event. Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health executive director Kendra Witt-Doyle presented a check to Durrant during a March 12 ceremony at the Idaho Statehouse in Boise. Submitted photo

promotes the importance of physical activity.

Schools can use funds to purchase equipment or sponsor programming that encourages children to be active. Participants are giving money to 60 different Idaho schools or school districts.

“The Steps for Schools walking challenge promotes the

importance of being physically active and allows the legislators to give back to schools in their districts to promote youth health,” Blue Cross of Idaho Foundation for Health executive director Kendra Witt-Doyle said.

“We’re grateful that so many of Idaho’s legislators and constitutional officers made the

effort to participate in Steps for Schools during the busy legislative schedule and helped a local school or school district in the process.”

Since the Steps for Schools walking challenge launched in 2015, more than \$316,000 has been awarded to Idaho schools on behalf of participating legislators.

From page 1

✓ Fentanyl: Bill receives some opposition during debate

have discretion for those who maybe would more benefit from a rehabilitation program that I think the judge ought to have that option. And so, we’re taking away some of the checks and balances that I think need

to protect Idahoans.”

In his concluding statements, the senator from northern Idaho said:

“I believe if we pass this bill, we’re going to put so many more people in prison we’re

going to be here two or three years from now funding a new prison for Idaho, because I think we’re going to increase our prison population by that much.”

— Sophie Spanbauer is a senior pursuing her Bachelor of Science degree in public relations with minors in political science and history at the University of Idaho.

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Correction

In the March 13 edition, a Melba High School softball assistant coach was misidentified. Marlene Jamison is the wife of longtime coach Don Jamison, who retired after the 2022 season.

Clarification

Kenzie Tuttle’s father, Kelly Tuttle, was not included in information received for the March 13 article detailing her 1A High Desert League East Player of the Year basketball Award.

The Owyhee Avalanche

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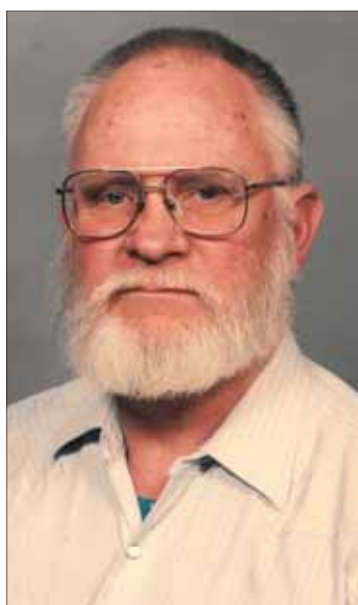
Obituaries

Richard Calvin Burman

Richard Calvin Burman, 88, passed away Wednesday, March 13, 2024 at the State Veterans Home in Boise, Idaho from lung cancer. Richard (Dick) was born February 13, 1936 at home in the Franklin Community east of Caldwell, Idaho. His parents were Oneta Nowland and Wesley Leroy Burman. He was the 5th child, joining brothers Denis, Don, Glen and sister Arlene. Later, his little sister Mary Jane would join the family.

In 1941, his parents purchased their farm in rural Owyhee County. The family moved, home and all, to near Jump Creek where they farmed for over 70 years. Dick grew up on the farm and attended Marsing Schools and church in the Marsing LDS Ward. Dick left school before graduating and worked on the farm. He joined the Homedale unit of the National Guard in 1954 and then joined the US Army in 1956 at the age of 20. He then got his GED, while in the Army. He would serve over 20 years in the Army, serving in many stations in the States, 3 tours in Germany, and a tour in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. He was wounded twice, receiving a Purple Heart, while in Vietnam. He also received a National Defense Service Medal, a Vietnam Campaign Medal, a Vietnam Service Medal w/6 Bronze Stars, a Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, and an Army Commendation Medal for Valor. He also had his Mechanic's Badge. Dick finished his service at Fort Carson in Colorado Springs.

While at Fort Carson, he attended El Paso Community



College where he took Auto Mechanic Courses, which would become his next career. Upon retiring from the Army, Dick made his home on the family farm. He began a career in auto mechanics working for a car dealership, working 10 years as a mechanic for Simplot's Feed Lot in Caldwell and 1 year for Valley Air Service. He had his own auto repair shop in Marsing for a few years. Dick also enjoyed restoring old cars. He restored a 1955 GMC Pickup, which he then donated to the VFW. This gold pickup has led many an area parade decked in flags and veterans.

Upon retiring from auto mechanics, Dick became very involved in civic service. He was part of Triad for Owyhee County for 10 years, serving 1 year as President and spending countless hours patrolling in conjunction with the Owyhee County Sheriff's Office. He served 3 years as Vice President for the Senior Center. Dick was a member of the Marsing Lions Club. As a member of the American Legion he served as Adjunct

for 3 years. Dick spent many years in service to the VFW Post in Wilder. He served as Quartermaster for 16 years, 1 year as Commander and was active in District VFW functions. Dick was instrumental in raising funds for the Wilder VFW Post.

Dick spent his vacations with family camping, fishing, and traveling, and going to family reunions. He enjoyed reading and puzzles, playing dominoes, playing bingo in Marsing and dinners with the Senior Citizens.

Dick had many health problems through his life, leaving him with hearing and vision problems and later in life suffering illnesses deemed associated with Agent Orange. Last April, Dick moved from his home on Jump Creek to the State Veterans home in Boise where he was well cared for.

Dick is survived by two cousins Barbara Durr and Shirley Mamerow; A Sister-in-law Mary Burman Huls; Nieces and Nephews Jane Webb, Wesley Burman, Richard Percy, Becky Blake, Michael Percy, Arlene Hauge, Kris Korfanta, and Ed Burman and their families and many friends. A special thank you to Arlene and Steve Hauge who were Uncle Dick's angels during the last few years.

Services will be Monday, March 25, 2024 with the visitation from 10am – 12pm at Flahiff Funeral Chapel in Caldwell. Graveside Services will follow at 1pm at Hillcrest Memorial Gardens.

Memorials may be given to the Wilder VFW Post. Condolences and memories can be shared at www.flahifffuneralchapel.com

Donald Edward Morin

Donald Edward Morin, of Homedale, Idaho, passed away peacefully on the 17th of March, 2024 at the Owyhee Health and Rehabilitation Center. Don was born in Poplar, Montana on August 30, 1940 to Andrew Edward Morin and Irma Frost Morin. Being the oldest of 6 children, Don was the last grandchild to live with his grandparents until starting school, something that was a tradition for the oldest grandchild of each family.

Don graduated High School from Hinsdale, Montana in 1958, then two years later enlisted in the National Guard until 1966. On June 14, 1969 Don married the love of his life, Mary Alice Stanfill of Medicine Lake, Montana. Daughter of Edward and Eileen Wolski.

In 1973, Don, Mary, and their three children moved to Moses Lake, Washington where they attended Immanuel Lutheran Church and were very active in the Moose Lodge. In 1983 they moved to Battle Ground, Washington where they attended Bethel Lutheran Church and were active in the Elks Lodge. Since then they have lived in Fowler, Kan., Ephrata, Wash. and Soap Lake, Wash. until Mary passed away in 2019. Then Don moved to Homedale, Idaho where he



attended Homedale Friends Community Church and enjoyed spending his lunch breaks at the Homedale Senior Center.

Don will always be remembered for how he loved his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They were often talked about and spoiled by him. His grandchildren and great-grandchildren were the lights of his life outside his one love, Mary.

Don was preceded in death by his wife Mary, grandchildren Kelsey and Amanda, brothers Milton and Gordon, and sisters Rosalie and Anita. He is survived by Sister Barbara Dickenson, Daughter Cheryl (Darrell) Berreth, Son Edward (Kerri) Stanfill, and Son Scott (Kimberly) Morin, as well as numerous nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Death notice

JOLENE MILLER (OLSEN), 79, of Marsing, died on Monday, March 11, 2024. Visitation and a funeral service were held on Friday, March 15, 2024 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Marsing. A graveside service was held on Friday, March 15, 2024 at Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, Caldwell. Arrangements: Flahiff Funeral Chapels, Caldwell.

Special Services

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24 at 10:30am

Good Friday March
29 at 7pm

Resurrection Sunday
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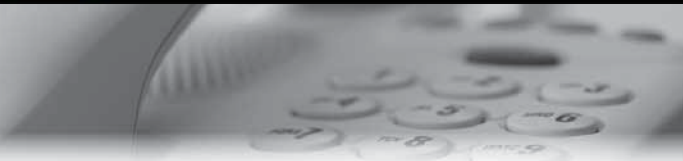
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The eligibility criteria for Oregon Lifeline includes the following:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; Food Stamps (SNAP)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Medicaid
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Veterans and Survivors Pension Benefit

You may also qualify if your total income is at or below 135% of federal poverty guidelines.

Please contact the Oregon Public Utility Commission at 1-800-848-4442 to request an application or visit www.rspf.org to apply online.

Got News?
Call us! (208) 337-4681. Community happenings, events or issues.

Master Gardeners prune grapes as part of volunteer service

If you were driving around near downtown Caldwell last Wednesday, you may have noticed some work being done along Indian Creek Plaza, more specifically in the demonstration vineyard located near the corner of Blaine Street and Kimball Avenue. The University of Idaho Extension Canyon County Apprentice Master Gardener program held an internal grape pruning demonstration and workshop to better the community. These grape vines had not been pruned since 2022, and boy, did they need a trimming.



Brad Stokes

Danny Trevett, lead groundskeeper for The College of Idaho and Advanced Canyon County Master Gardener, spent 30 to 45 minutes preparing the group of 14 volunteers with demonstrations on how to properly prune and maintain grape vines. His expert knowledge of grape pruning and the hands-on demonstration and teaching style is indicative of the UI Extension Canyon County Master Gardener program, along with multiple other UI Extension programs in our local area. Danny has 1/8 of an acre in grapes at his home and has been an Advanced Master Gardener for several years, dedicating volunteer service to the community at-large with his knowledge and expertise, additionally taking care of the entire C of I campus.

Apprentice Canyon County Master Gardeners then took to pruning the grapes vines by themselves with direct supervision by Trevett and UI Canyon County Extension staffers Brad Stokes and Leslie Harvey for the next hour and a half. Questions were asked about the growth style of grape vines, correct morphology of the vines themselves and how pruning will initiate growth for this year and future implications.

The value to the community from this two-hour service is

University of Idaho Extension

estimated to be nearly equivalent to \$900 or more. The grape vines are double-trellised and are meant to show tourists/visitors the importance of the wine industry in the general Western Treasure Valley area. For more information on wine production, visit any of these wonderful resources:

- Idaho Wine Commission (<https://idahowines.org/visit/western-treasure-valley/>)
- Destination Caldwell (<https://www.destination-caldwell.com/>)
- Sunnyslope Wine Trail (<https://sunnyslopewinetrail.com/>)
- Visit Southwest Idaho (<https://www.visitsouthwestidaho.org/>)

The volunteer-led Master Gardener program focuses on multiple aspects of gardening and horticulture in Canyon County and throughout Idaho. Volunteer time is a requirement as communities are the priority for Master Gardeners. The UI Extension Master Gardener program in Canyon County is a 16-week course about soils, plants, fertilizers, nutrients, pathogens, insects, diagnostics, integrated pest management (IPM) and gardening in general. For information or for an application to this great program, contact UI Extension Canyon County at (208) 459-6003 or canyon@uidaho.edu. This year's Canyon County Master Gardener program will open for applications running in July 1 through Aug. 16 with classes starting in mid-September.

With any other questions, email UI Extension Canyon County Horticulture Educator Brad Stokes at bstokes@uidaho.edu.

— Brad Stokes is a University of Idaho Extension Educator in the Canyon County office in Caldwell. He specializes in horticulture and entomology and is also part of the Master Gardener program. He can be reached at (208) 459-6003 or bstokes@uidaho.edu.



University of Idaho Extension Canyon County Master Gardeners learn about grape pruning from Danny Trevett from The College of Idaho, who is an advanced Canyon County Master Gardener. Photo by Brad Stokes / UI Extension



Above: The vines in downtown Caldwell hadn't been pruned in nearly two years as demonstrated in this photo before the pruning began. **Below:** The scene was much different after about two hours of demonstration and volunteer time by the University of Idaho Canyon County Extension Master Gardeners. Photos by Brad Stokes / UI Extension



The Owyhee Avalanche

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Three Owyheean running for state legislature

District 23 House GOP races will be contested

Several candidates have stepped forward for the District 23 legislative elections.

There are three Owyhee County residents seeking office, too.

All nomination forms had to be filed by Friday, and while there is only one Democrat each running for the District 23 Idaho House of Representatives seats, Republican primary voters will

have a choice for the both the Seat A and the Seat B positions.

Kuna's Melissa Durrant will be challenged by Chris Bruce for Seat A. Bruce also lives in Kuna.

As previously reported, incumbent Tina Lambert of Caldwell will face Guffey resident Shawn Dygert in the Seat B election.

Lambert and Dygert both addressed the Owyhee County Lincoln Day Luncheon. Neither Durrant nor Bruce were attendance.

Democrat Dan Harrington of Kuna

is seeking the Seat A position, and Julissa Melendez Castellanos will run in the general election for the Seat B spot.

Melendez Castellanos is a Homedale resident.

Each of the candidates for the District 23 state Senate seat are running unopposed in their respective primaries, setting up a showdown in November.

Incumbent Todd Lakey of Nampa is the Republican candidates, while Kuna's Paul Morgan is running for the

Democratic nomination.

Homedale resident Paul Smith is the Constitutional Party candidate.

All three legislative positions carry two-year terms of office.

In Idaho's First Congressional District, incumbent Russ Fulcher of Meridian will run opposed in the Republican primary. Also running in their respective primaries are Eagle Democrat Kaylee Peterson, Boise Constitution Party candidate Brendan J. Gomez, and Eagle Libertarian Matt Loesby.



Homedale Elementary staffers hit Idaho Lottery jackpot

Three Homedale Elementary School staffers won the most money among 90 schools during the Jim Bruce Scratch for Schools presented by the Idaho Lottery. **From left:** School counselor Trinity Pratt, administrative assistant Maggie Escutia, and paraprofessional Kim Wilson (HES paraprofessional) won \$967 during the March 5 event at the Ford Idaho Center in Nampa. The HES scratchers were the only ones to find a \$500 prize. Submitted photo

Ranked choice voting proponents seeking signatures again

Volunteers will return to Homedale and Marsing to gather signatures to support a ballot initiative to change Idaho election law.

Signatures are sought for a petition to get a ballot initiative before voters that, if passed, would create one open, non-partisan primary election with ranked choice voting. With enough signatures, the initiative would appear on the Nov. 5 ballot.

Volunteers will accept signatures from Owyhee County residents who are registered voters from 10 a.m., to noon at The Eddy on Main Street in Marsing and from 2 p.m., to 4 p.m., at the Moxie Java Bistro at the corner of Industrial Road and U.S. Highway 95 in

Homedale.

According to a press release from local petition organizers, the proposal would do away with required party affiliation for voting in primary elections.

Under the proposal, the top four candidates, regardless of party affiliation, would advance to the general election.

In the general election, voters would pick their top three choices for each office. If none of the candidates with the most votes held a majority, voters who hadn't voted for that candidate would have their next choices for that office elevated until one candidate achieves a majority.

For more information or for any questions, call (208) 250-2458.

From page 1

✓ Levy: Trustees seek more feedback after no one speaks up at meeting

levy proposal.

Today, district officials will discuss the proposed levy and the district's needs during the monthly School Talks forum.

Community members are invited to attend the forum to gather information and ask questions. The event will take place at 6 p.m., at Rimrock Jr.-Sr. High School in Bruneau.

After a December request from the board to analyze the need for an operational levy, an ad-hoc committee recommended the two-year levy in light of a reduction in student enrollment and the loss of federal CARES Act (COVID-19) revenue.

If passed, the levy would cost taxpayers \$212.50 per

\$100,000 in taxable assessed value each year.

The needs that the levy would address were included in the School Talks announcement:

- \$474,509 for salaries and benefits
- \$65,500 for technology services/supplies/equipment
- \$92,992 for athletics/salaries/benefits/supplies/

tournaments

- \$16,999 for ground maintenance/building care supplies

Trustees voted, 4-1, during their March 12 meeting to put the levy on the ballot. Zone 3 Trustee Raelynn Matthews of Grand View voted against the resolution.

Today's School Talks will

answer community questions, including wording on the ballot, the need for the supplemental levy, the tax cost of the levy, how the funds will help in the proposed 2024-25 school year budget, and how the election outcome will affect academic and athletic programs in the future.

Other questions are welcome.

✓ County: GOP precinct committee could see some interesting contests

the primary election. It's a rare race for the county PA spot.

Appointed Sheriff Larry Kendrick will face former Owyhee County Sheriff's Sgt. Tim Riha in the election for the county's top lawman.

Both the prosecutor and sheriff's jobs carry four-year terms.

There are several contested races for the Republican Cen-

tral Committee. Committee person positions carry two-year terms:

- **North Homedale** — Michael Aebischer vs. Robin Aberasturi
- **South Homedale** — Rich Curtis vs. Jennifer Riha
- **North Marsing** — Walt Holton vs. Lavada Loucks
- **South Marsing** — Greg

Blodgett vs. Scott Jensen (who will appear on the ballot as K. Scott Jensen)

- **Wilson** — Louis Monson vs. Stephanie Duckett
- **Murphy** — Brenda Richards vs. Heidi Murphy
- **Grand View** — Andrea Owens vs. Brandi Long
- **Bruneau** — Sidney Erwin vs. Pamela Landis

- **Riddle** — Ruth Jackson vs. Erica Beus

County committee candidates running unopposed include Tim Lowry of Pleasant Valley, Brecca Hipwell of

Oreana, and Paula Brackett from Three Creek.

No Democratic candidates were listed for either county government offices or the party's central committee.

86TH ANNUAL BOISE VALLEY/OWYHEE COUNTY JUDO TOURNAMENT



Above: Asa Mateo Black throws an opponent during his march to the middleweight championship in the 13- to 14-year-old age group inside the Homedale High School gymnasium. **Right:** Ever the mentor, Owyhee County Judo Sensei Ryan Nash coaches up a young competitor after her match.

Photos by
**Chardee
VanDerhoff
CV**
Photography



Owyhee County Judo's Sydney McDowell gets her opponent completely off the mat om the 7-8 girls' division.



Drake Denton accepts the Masao Yamashita Outstanding Technique Award from John Koyama, the son of former Boise Valley Judo Sensei George Koyama.

Owyhee judoka dominate long-standing Homedale tourney

There were plenty of local highlights when the 86th annual Boise Valley/Owyhee County Judo Tournament returned to Homedale on March 9.

At the top of the list: Owyhee County Judo — with a tournament-best 72 competitors—dominated the competition inside the high school gymnasium, and the hometown club took home the championship with 143 points (63 more than runner-up Ore-Ida).

Owyhee County judoka racked up 104 wins. The team led the medal count with 14 gold medals, 18 silver medals and 19 bronze medals.

Drake Denton, the 10-year-old son of Homedale residents Jesse and Jill Denton, earned the Masao Yamashita Outstanding Technique Award, and Ore-Ida team member Amaya Miller took home the Koyama Seiryoku Zenyo Award for the biggest throw with maximum efficiency and minimum effort.

Washington state resident John Koyama, the son of former Boise Valley Judo Sensei George Koyama, selected Drake for the technique award, and he presented the trophies to Drake and Miller.

Another Owyhee Judo judoka, 5-to 6-year-old boys' lightweight division champion Joaquin Corta, posted the fastest ippon (point scored) of the tournament at two seconds. He is the

- 5-year-old son of Homedale residents Trey and Hailee Corta.
- A dozen judo clubs attended the tournament, hailing from Washington state, Oregon and Idaho.
- Owyhee County Judo medal winners and placers included:
- Ages 5-6**
Boys
Lightweight — 1. Joaquin Corta; 4. Teal Cook
Heavyweight — 2. Avin Yost; 3. Jaxen Lujan; 4. Carter Batho
Girls
Lightweight — 2. Ellie Woodward; 3. Millie Aicher
- Ages 7-8**
Boys
Flyweight — 5. (tie) Kody Batho and Huckston Swenson; 7. Jackson Shults
Featherweight — 3. Waylon Riley; 5. (tie) Carter Batho and Lincoln VanDerhoff
Middleweight — 1. Kash Mackenzie; 2. Michael Etter; 13. Max Villareal; 17 (tie). Amos Pacheco; Spencer Sandy
Heavyweight — 2. Ace Yost; 3. Wynn Watson; 4. Beau Stace
Girls
Lightweight — 1. Sydney McDowell; 2. Kya Hummel
Middleweight — 3. Harlow Lee; 4.

- Remington Ketterling
Heavyweight — 1. Rio Hummel; 2. Molly Clifton
- Ages 9-10**
Boys
Flyweight — 3. Kody Batho
Featherweight — 1. Payson Vernon; 4. Max Villarreal
Middleweight — 2. Jess Riley; 3. Ethan McGuire; 5. Terrance Bayes
Heavyweight — 1. Cylas Black; 2. Drake Denton
Super heavyweight — 4. Andy Hummel
- Girls**
Lightweight — 2. Sydney McDowell; 3. Camille Watson
Heavyweight — 1. Matea Ketterling; 2. Oakley Mackenzie; 3. Aliviah Yost
Super heavyweight — 1. Tatum Stace
- Ages 11-12**
Boys
Flyweight — 3. Carson Montenegro; 4. Garrett Allen
Featherweight — 2. Cylas Black; 3. Jose Villarreal
Heavyweight — 2. Morgan Etter
- Girls**
Lightweight — 2. Oakley Mackenzie; 4. Emilia McGuire; 5. Aspen VanDerhoff

- Middleweight** — 1. Josephine Black; 2. Kassidy Rand; 3. Matea Ketterling
Super heavyweight — 1. Abigail Clifton
- Ages 13-14**
Boys
Featherweight — 2. Wesley McDowell; 3. Jose Villarreal
Middleweight — 1. Asa Black
Girls
Lightweight — 1. Gracie Jakovac; 3. Josephine Black
Middleweight — 3. Maddy Rand
Heavyweight (no choking) — 1. Abigail Clifton; 3. Annie Woodward
- Ages 15-16**
Boys
Middleweight — 3. Asa Black
Heavyweight — 3. Weston Woodward
- Girls**
Lightweight — 2. Maddy Rand
- Senior Division**
Men
Novice exhibition — 2. Joseph Clifton
- Women**
Brown/black belt exhibition 1 — 1. Damaris Machuca
Brown/black belt exhibition 2 — 1. Machuca

Melba athletes start season at home

Huskies pitchers combine on no-hitter

Avalanche Sports

All-conference basketball Rimrock alumnus JV coach of the year

Rimrock High School basketball has swept the junior varsity coach of the year awards.

Pedro Varela won the 1A Western Idaho Conference award for boys' basketball, joining fellow Raiders alum Jackie Thurman, as the top JV coach in the eyes of his peers.

Junior Ronaldo Gomez

— See *Rimrock*, page 13

Coaches cite Trojans

Senior Danny Lomeli ended his high school boys' basketball career as Homedale's only first-team all-conference selection.

Lomeli also was the Trojans' lone representative last week in the 3A-2A District III Senior All-Star Game.

Joining Lomeli on the All-3A Snake River Valley conference team was junior Luke Henry as a second-teamer, and 11th-graders McCoy Swallow and Keaton Sorenson as honorable mention selections.

Two HHS girls' basketball players were placed on the all-conference team, too.

Sophomore Tiana Sorenson was named to the second team.

Senior Olivia Asumendi was an honorable mention selection.



Danny Lomeli

Marsing football finds its man in Kansas

A man who once coached football in the Treasure Valley is coming back to take the reins at Marsing High School.

Mike Foristiere was hired at last month's Marsing School District board of trustees meeting.

A veteran of 40 seasons of coaching football, Foristiere most recently led Highland Park High School in Topeka, Kan., between 2018 and 2020.

He inherited a team on a 34-game losing streak. The Scots never won under Foristiere.

After 65 consecutive losses, Highland Park broke through with a 60-47 win over Wyandotte of Kansas City in September 2022 under a new coach, Jermaine Moore.

Foristiere also coached in Washington state and Idaho. Among his Idaho coaching stops in Idaho were Eagle and Vallivue.

Foristiere was approved to succeed Marsing alum Shea McClellin after an interview process before a five-person panel that included Marsing secondary school principal Sean Porter, three community members and a school board member.

McClellin resigned after two seasons to accept the top job with the Vallivue program.



Mike Foristiere (right) slaps hands with a Highland Park (Topeka, Kan.) football player. Foristiere is the new Marsing football coach. Photo by Topeka Capital-Journal



Homedale catcher Lilly Trescott corrals a high pitch from Dani Sitts during last week's non-conference victory over Cole Valley Christian. Photo by Chardee VanDerhoff

Big inning is all Trojans need to beat CVC

Senior Sitts sits down 15 Chargers

Two big hits in one inning helped Homedale High School knock off a tough softball opponent.

The Trojans blanked Cole Valley Christian, 5-0, behind

Dani Sitts' 15-strikeout, two-hit pitching performance March 12.

Ellie Miller drilled a two-run triple, and Lilly Trescott punched a two-run single in the Trojans' only scoring rally at Homedale Middle School.

The teams were locked in a scoreless duel when Homedale

erupted for five runs in the third inning against junior Charlie Barnum. The junior pitcher for the Chargers (4-1) struck out 12 and was virtually untouchable the rest of the game.

Lauren Colson and Lola Crosby both had singles for Cole Valley's only hits.

Homedale (2-1 overall) worked around four errors, and senior shortstop Olivia Asumendi ripped three singles in four at-bats.

Isana Larzelier went 2-for-3 with a run scored and an RBI.

Sitts and Arlett Quezada both singled and scored a run.

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Sports

New faces drive Trojans’ strong opening showing

Shaffer shines at her former school

Younger athletes and newcomers set the tone in Homedale High School’s track and field opener Friday.

Running on her old stamping grounds, senior Ahna Shaffer was runner-up in the girls’ short sprints during the Melba Ice Breaker at the Dave Mangum complex.

The former Mustang finished the 100 meters in a career-best 13.15 seconds, and she crossed

the line in the 200 in 27.5.

The HHS girls were fourth in the team standings.

Sophomore Kade Hall also pulled down second place with a personal record of 11.4 seconds in the boys’ 100.

The Trojans boys took sixth.

A dozen schools opened the season in Melba.

Freshman Brody Johnson was runner-up in his 110-meter hurdles debut, pulling off a 17.48. He was fourth in the 300 in 45 seconds. He also took sixth in the high jump at 5 feet, 6 inches.

Another freshman, Alec Campos, ran the first leg in Homedale’s third-place effort in the boys’ 4x400 relay. Senior Brock Johnson and juniors Alex Sotelo and Rafael Cuenca added the veteran flavor in a 3-minute, 44.98-second running.

Ninth-grader Teague Taylor and sophomore Breyden Ford made a splash in the girls’ hurdles.

Taylor was third in the 300 at 57.01, and Ford was fifth at 57.13. Taylor also finished fifth in the 100 at 18.56.

While new faces were able

to put together impressive performances, the upperclassmen found some glory, too.

Sotelo PR’d with his second-place time of 43.76 in the 300 hurdles.

Brock Johnson PR’d in the boys’ 200 at 24.61 for eighth place, and he was sixth with a long jump PR at 18 feet, 3 inches. Fellow senior Bobby Christensen posted a PR of 2:09.05 for seventh in the 800, while he took sixth in the 1,600 in 4:55.28.

Senior Conner McCarney cleared 11 feet for second place

in the boys’ pole vault.

Cuenca finished fourth in the boys’ triple jump at 39-3.

Junior Tayler Trout took fifth in the girls’ shot put with a personal-record 28-3.

Although a sophomore, Morgan Nicoletti showed she will make major contributions again this season. She was runner-up in the girls’ pole vault in 9-0, while Taylor and senior Mylisa Barrett tied for fourth at 7-6.

Barrett PR’d in the girls’ long jump at 14-8. She was sixth in the triple jump at 29-9.

Dominant Homedale sweeps another doubleheader

Pitching has emerged as the strength of the Homedale High School baseball team.

On Friday in Oregon, the Trojans trounced Baker/Powder Valley in a non-conference doubleheader.

Homedale (4-0) has allowed eight runs in two doubleheader sweeps this season.

And in three of the four victories, the Trojans have scored in double digits.

Game 2: Homedale 17, Baker/Powder Valley 5 (6) — Pitchers Lukas Hall and Xavier Uranga teamed up on a five-hitter.

Hall struck out four batters in the first four innings, and he and Uranga pitched around allowing five walks apiece.

Baker/Powder Valley struck first against Hall, posting a 2-0 lead in the first inning.

But Homedale erupted for

10 runs in the top of the third inning and capped the game with a six-run rally in the sixth inning to set up the 10-run rule.

Payton Fine, who was spectacular on the mound in the first game, went 3-for-4 with a double and five RBI and three runs scored from the top of the order in the second game.

His brother, Dillon Fine,

drove in three runs with a single and a triple.

Uranga helped his relief cause with a double and a single as well as three runs scored and two RBI.

Hall also knocked in three runs and went 2-for-5.

Game 1: Homedale 8, Baker/Powder Valley 1 — Payton Fine collected six strikeouts and allowed only an unearned run in the bottom

of the first to get the victory.

The Trojans led, 2-0, before Baker/Powder Valley struck for its only run.

Fine pitched a two-hitter and walked just one batter.

He also went 3-for-4 with a triple and two runs scored.

Chance Martell drove in two runs from the leadoff spot, and Dillon Fine scored two runs during a 2-for-2 performance at the plate.

Homedale Trojans

Athletes of the Week

Baseball
Payton Fine, sr., P
.750 (6-for-8), 2B, 3B, 5 RBI, 5 runs;
2-hitter in Game 2 vs. Baker/PV

Softball
Dani Sitts, sr., P
15 Ks in two-hit shutout vs. Cole Valley

Track and field
Conner McCarney, sr., pole vault
Runner-up 11-0 mark in Melba Ice Breaker

Golf
Danielle Price, sr.
Leads Trojans in season opener and return to sport

Tennis
Miguel Albor, jr.
Misidentified as a senior last week

THIS WEEK'S SPRING SPORTS SCHEDULE

Baseball Varsity Buck's Bags Tournament Thursday, March 21 vs. Wood River, Lofholm Field, Rodeo Park, Nampa, 1 p.m. Friday, March 22 vs. Century, Lofholm Field, Rodeo Park, Nampa, 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 22 vs. South Fremont, Lofholm Field, Rodeo Park, Nampa, 3:30 p.m. Saturday, March 23 vs. Taft, Calif., Wigle Field, Borah H.S., 10:30 a.m.	Baseball Junior varsity Monday, April 1, home vs. McCall-Donnelly, John Jackson Field, 3 p.m.	Track and field Friday, March 22 at Weiser Invitational, Payette, 11 a.m.	Golf Boys and girls Wednesday, March 20 at Cole Valley Invite (18 holes), Falcon Crest GC, Kuna, 9 a.m.	Tennis Tuesday, April 2 at Parma, 4:30 p.m.	Softball Varsity WTP Tournament at HMS Friday, March 22, home vs. Owyhee (Meridian), 9 a.m. Friday, March 22, home vs. Lewiston, 11 a.m. Saturday, March 23, home vs. Rocky Mountain, 1 p.m. Saturday, March 23, home vs. Mountain Home, 3 p.m.	Softball Junior varsity Monday, April 1 at Weiser, 3 p.m.
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Sports

Marsing experiences highs, lows of early-season baseball

Team loses
1-run game in 7th
after rare no-hitter

Call it first-week jitters. At least, coach JW Chadez is probably hoping the Marsing High School baseball season won't include a roller coaster ride in center field. The Huskies split non-conference games in a week highlighted by the program's first no-hitter in a decade. Teagan Kinney, Jace Chadez, and Luke Steinmeyer teamed up on March 11 to keep Nyssa, Ore., out of the

hit column in the Huskies' 6-1 home-field victory. "I was really pleased with our pitching performances from Teagan Kinney, Jace Chadez, and Luke Steinmeyer," JW Chadez said. The junior trio combined for Marsing's first no-hitter since Austin Williams spun the trick in 2014. "They controlled the strike zone extremely well and were able to keep them off-balance all game," JW Chadez said. Kinney struck out six batters and walked one in three innings of work. Jace Chadez fanned five batters in three innings. Steinmeyer gave up the Bull-

dogs' only run in the top of the seventh inning while walking a batter. Marsing made the most of four singles. Steinmeyer had one of the hits, and he scored twice. Dresden Wood also singled and scored twice. Dylan Arnold, a junior transfer, drove in a pair of runs. Needing a no-hitter to survive a four-hit offensive performance has JW Chadez thinking about the batting cage this week. "Our hitting will be our main focus this week. We seemed to be a little off-balance and didn't approach our at-bats with a good plan," he said.

The Huskies struck out 21 times in the two non-conference games, while Chadez said he'd like to keep the number to about five per game. "We felt we had several at-bats where we let the pitchers off the hook by swinging at bad pitches," he said. **Friday: Firth 4, Marsing 3** — The Cougars snapped a 3-3 deadlock with a run in the top of the seventh inning, making the most of four hits and taking advantage of the Huskies' five errors and six walks. "Against Firth (Marsing pitchers) also threw well, but didn't command the strike zone as well," Chadez said.

"Our six walks aren't necessarily terrible for the game, but unfortunately all six walks were leadoff walks." All of the Cougars' runs originated with a leadoff walk. "We also had a couple kids sick and one player gone, so that caused use to have to juggle players around in different positions, and (that) led to a couple untimely errors," the coach said. "But, overall, I still felt we competed well, and are definitely farther along than we were last season at this time." Kinney doubled twice, and Steinmeyer knocked in a pair of runs.

Handful of Huskies get PRs in track opener

Just one meet into the season, Nate Delaney has served notice he's ready to make a senior season splash. The Marsing High School thrower shattered his personal record to finish second in the discus throw at the Melba Ice Breaker on Friday. Delaney bettered his previous best throw by nearly 23 feet with his runner-up mark of 118 feet, 9 inches at the Dave Mangum Track. Delaney finished 15th with a

95-11½ throw in last year's 2A District III championships. Delaney's second-place showing Friday was the best of any Huskies individual. Now coached by Isaiah Ponce, Marsing's boys' and girls' teams each finished 10th in the 12-team season opener. Delaney finished third in the shot put at 43-5½. Junior Raylnn Vanosdall and senior Trinity Stimmel had the best finishes for the Marsing girls' squad.

Vanosdall was fifth in the long jump at 14-0, and Stimmel took sixth in the discus at 77-11. Freshman Bethany Steinmeyer grabbed a top-10 finish with her 13-11½ effort for seventh in the long jump. Sophomore Breann Dickerson set a PR with her eighth-place finish in the 3,200-meter run at 15 minutes, 49 seconds. Junior Sydney Nelson was eighth in the 200 meters at 29.42 seconds.

Vanosdall took eighth in the girls' 100 at 13.64. Other PRs came from sophomore Falkon Frazier in the boys' long jump (17-5½) and Stimmel in the girls' shot put (13th at 25-6½). Junior Kaitlyn Sevy notched a PR with her 12th-place distance of 13-3½ in the long jump. Senior Bentley McIntyre finished ninth in the boys' shot put (35-1), and freshman Alec Ecklund was 10th in the boys' 3,200 at 12:01.

✓ Rimrock

From Page 11 (second team) and senior Loyd Boren (honorable mention) were Rimrock's only all-conference players. Boren played on the 1A WIC senior all-star team against the Long Pin all-stars during the annual District III game March 11 in Payette. As 1A WIC coach of the year, Rimrock's Kyla Jewett led the girls' all-stars in the their game in which Raiders' seniors Ashten Moore and Kailee Martinez competed.

MARSING HUSKIES

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Baseball
Jace Chadez, jr., P/IF
5Ks in 3 IP in combined no-hitter vs. Nyssa



Softball
Lily Thoene, jr., SS
.455 (5-for-11), 2 RBI, 4 runs in 3 games



Track and field
Nate Delaney, sr., throws
PR for 2nd in Melba discus;
3rd in shot put

This week's schedule

Baseball
Varsity
Treasure Valley Baseball Invite
(Nyssa, Ore.)
Thursday, March 21 vs. McLoughlin
(Ore.), 5 p.m.
Friday, March 22 vs. Vale, Ore., 5 p.m.
Saturday, March 23 at Nyssa, Ore., 11 a.m.

Softball
Varsity
Wednesday, March 20 at Vision Charter,
GALS Complex, Caldwell, 5 p.m.
Spring Break Classic
(At West Park, Nampa)
Friday, March 22 vs. Middleton, 1 p.m.
Friday, March 22 vs. Madison, 3 p.m.
Saturday, March 23 vs. Centennial, 1 p.m.
Saturday, March 23 vs. Lewiston, 3 p.m.
Junior varsity
Thursday, March 28 at Wendell, 4 p.m.

Track and field
Friday, March 22 at Weiser Invitational,
Payette, 11 a.m.

Golf
Boys and girls
Tuesday, April 2 at 2A Western Idaho
Conference Ambrose meet, Lakeview
GC, Meridian, 3 p.m.



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Looking back...

from the files of The Owyhee Avalanche and Owyhee Chronicle

25 years ago

March 24, 1999

Duthie explains spring storms...

Meteorologist Jim Duthie holds a globe to explain the reasons for spring storms and its effects to students at Homedale Elementary School last week. Duthie also showed a video of tornadoes and spring storms to the students.



Meteorologist from Channel Six visits HES

First grade students at Homedale Elementary School were treated with a visit from Channel Six Meteorologist, weatherman, Jim Duthie last week.

Duthie discussed the weather with students in Mrs. French, Mrs. Raymond, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Franklin's classes. Duthie spoke to the classes about air pressure, different climates, tornadoes, floods, rain and hail, and the ground hog and his shadow.

Duthie treated the children with a video of tornadoes, some Duthie taped in the Wilder, Owyhee desert area, and spring storms. He explained how weather forecasts are put together which included explanations on satellites, the blue screen and the importance of computers in weather forecasting.

Adrian slides by Marsing girls

The Adrian Antelopes won 12-10 over the Marsing Huskies softball team last Thursday night in Marsing. Adrian's Christy Martin and Ashley Hansen each hit two-run home runs to lead the Antelopes to victory.

The Huskies took a two-run lead at 4-2 in the first inning but Martin slammed her home run during Adrian's five-run second inning to gain a 7-4 lead.

Marsing High students of the month announced

Rebecca Dawn Frazier and Scott Young have been chosen Marsing High School's March students of the month.

Frazier is a junior at Marsing High School. She is currently on the Marsing Huskies softball team and likes to play pool. Her favorite color is turquoise and she loves spaghetti. Rebecca's favorite class is Health with Mrs. Stancliff. Becky likes to listen to alternative music, with ICP [Insane Clown Posse] being her favorite band.

Becky plans to attend college and become a doctor or a professional in the medical field.

Young is a senior and has participated in football, basketball and baseball. Last fall Scott was awarded All Conference First Team Defensive Lineman, First Team All State Defensive Lineman and was a member of the All State All Star District III West football team. Scott plans to attend college and get a bachelor's degree in agriculture.

50 years ago

March 21, 1974



MONTE FUJISHIN, Ridgeview, receives the Eagle Scout badge from his mother, Mrs. Sam Fujishin, while his father looks on. Photo by Bette Uda.

Monte Fujishin earns highest scouting awards

Monte Fujishin of Homedale Route 1 was presented with the highest honors in the scouting program during a special Court of Honor held recently at the American Legion Hall when he received the rank of Eagle Scout.

Monte is the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Sam Fujishin to have achieved the rank of an Eagle Scout. The other was Barry Fujishin, who is currently in England attending the University of Birmingham under a two-year Marshall Scholarship. Another son, Lannie, received his second class advancement during the Court of Honor.

A formal Court of Honor ceremony was conducted by Yoshio Takahashi, district representative for the Ore-Ida Council, from Parma. The Rev. Dave Turnmire offered the invocation, followed by the entire group singing "Trail the Eagle."

George Murray, mayor of Homedale, read the Eagle candidate's scouting history and activities. Scouts of Troop 474 of Homedale escorted Monte Fujishin, his parents and scoutmaster, George Kubosumi, to the platform. Bob Stevens, institutional representative from the Homedale Kiwanis Club, read a letter from the Chief Scoutmaster, Boy Scouts of America.

Lonnie Godlevsky, scout committeeman, presented the Eagle certificate, and Mrs. Fujishin had the honor of pinning the Eagle Scout badge on her son.

The new Eagle Scout is a 1973 graduate of Adrian High School where he served as junior class president and sat for three years on the student council.

Betty Eidemiller given grant for fellowship

WALLA WALLA, Wash. — Betty J. Eidemiller, a December 1973, Whitman College graduate, has been awarded one of 71 national Thomas J. Watson fellowship grants.

The \$7,000 grant will allow Miss Eidemiller, a biology major from Homedale, to spend a year of travel abroad, in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, and Australia, on an independent study project of her choice, "Adaptive Convergence in Small Mammals."

A Phi Beta Kappa scholar, she is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Eidemiller, Rt. 1, Wilder, and a 1970 graduate of Homedale High School.

Democrats plan delegate caucus in Murphy

The Democratic Party in Owyhee County will hold a Delegate Selection Caucus on April 2 at the Courthouse in Murphy.

The caucus is open to any registered voter. "A participant needs only to sign a statement declaring himself a Democrat," Lawrence Lineberger, county chairman, said.

Delegates will be chosen for the State Democratic Convention, June 27-29 in Coeur d'Alene.

153 years ago

March 18, 1871

HORSE RESTAURANT.—Old man Springer is making arrangements to build a stable at Fairview to run in connection with his establishment in town. Those who ride or drive on the Mountain can then put their horses in the stable and get them the same day or any day they choose at the simple cost of riding up and back. Springer is a clever fellow, has plenty of hay and grain, and knows how to keep a livery stable.

ANOTHER TERRITORY.—A bill is now before the House of Representatives providing for the organization of a new Territory, to be called Chippewa, proposed to be laid off from the present Territory of Dakota. It will comprise all that portion of Dakota lying between its northern boundary — the 49th parallel of latitude — and the 46th parallel, being bounded on the east by the State of Minnesota, and on the west by Montana Territory.

THE FORTY-SECOND Congress organized itself on the 4th instant. In the House 222 members answered to the roll call. That body is complete with 243 members, but California, Texas, Connecticut and New Hampshire have 14 members yet to elect, and there are some vacancies in States that have elected, and some members whose seals have not been recognized as legally filled. Speaker Blaine and Chief Clerk McPherson were re-elected. The indications were that the session would adjourn at an early day to the first Monday in December. The Senate will probably continue to hold executive sessions for some time. For the first time since 1861, all the States will be represented in the Senate and all the districts in the House.

TWO YEARS OF Gen. Grant's administration being now completed, Mr. Boutwell reports the reduction by payment of the principal of the National Debt since March 1st, 1869, at \$204,754,413, or a little over one hundred millions per annum.

Local Hints and Happenings.

E.A. Thompson of Fairview desires to thank W. F. Sommercamp, Esq., for a keg of splendid lager beer.

A miner named Trounce, who had one of his fingers smashed some time ago, had it amputated this week.

On account of the stormy weather, Father Poulin will not give a concert at Fairview as announced in our last.

Hon. W R. Usher intends to start next week for Cottonwood, Utah, where he owns some valuable mining interests.

There's a purple half to the grape, a mellow half to the peach, a sunny half to the globe, and a better half to a man.

A 50-ton run of Oro Fino ore was cleaned up at the Webfoot mill day before yesterday. We have not learned the result.

We understand that Johnny Boyd, formerly of Flint, has been appointed Superintendent of the Minnesota mine, recently incorporated.

Miss Martha Hymer celebrated her sixteenth birth-day last Sunday evening, by giving a social entertainment to a party of young friends.

Geo. B. Walker, better known as "Old Growler," paid Silver a flying visit last week. He is superintending the carpenter work on the Boise City Assay Office.

Commentary

Mtn. States Policy Center

Small farms in the mountain states are disappearing

by Madilynne Clark

Farm numbers across the United States are dwindling, and the mountain states are no exception. Our country lost seven percent of farms from 2017 to 2022, and all of the mountain states were above the national average. As a farmer in the region, I understand the stress of this profession, and if our country continues on its current trajectory, our region’s agricultural future looks bleak — more consolidation and less food security.

From 2017 to 2022, Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming all experienced a decrease in the total number of farms. Wyoming saw the largest decrease at 12 percent of farms, totaling 1,394 farms in the state that chose to end operations. Montana and Washington had the second-largest decreases of 10 percent, a raw total of 2,782 and 3,717 farms, respectively. Idaho trailed behind at eight percent with 2,119 farms ending operations.

The decrease in farms over the past five years is the largest seen between two National Agricultural Censuses. This decrease in farming operations is seen despite the highest net farm income recorded during this time frame. Why, during a period of historical profits, were farms ending operations?

Look at the breakdown of farm number changes by income. According to the census data in 2022 and 2017, farm losses were highest in the low-income categories. The smaller farms are the ones disappearing at upwards of 40 percent and close to

— See *Farms*, Page 17

Madilynne Clark
Mountain States Policy Center sr. policy analyst

Madilynne Clark holds a master’s degree in Agricultural and Resource Economics from Colorado State University as well as a bachelor’s in Environmental Economics, Policy and Management from Oregon State University.

She lives on a Nyssa, Ore., farm a few miles from the Oregon border with her husband and four sons.



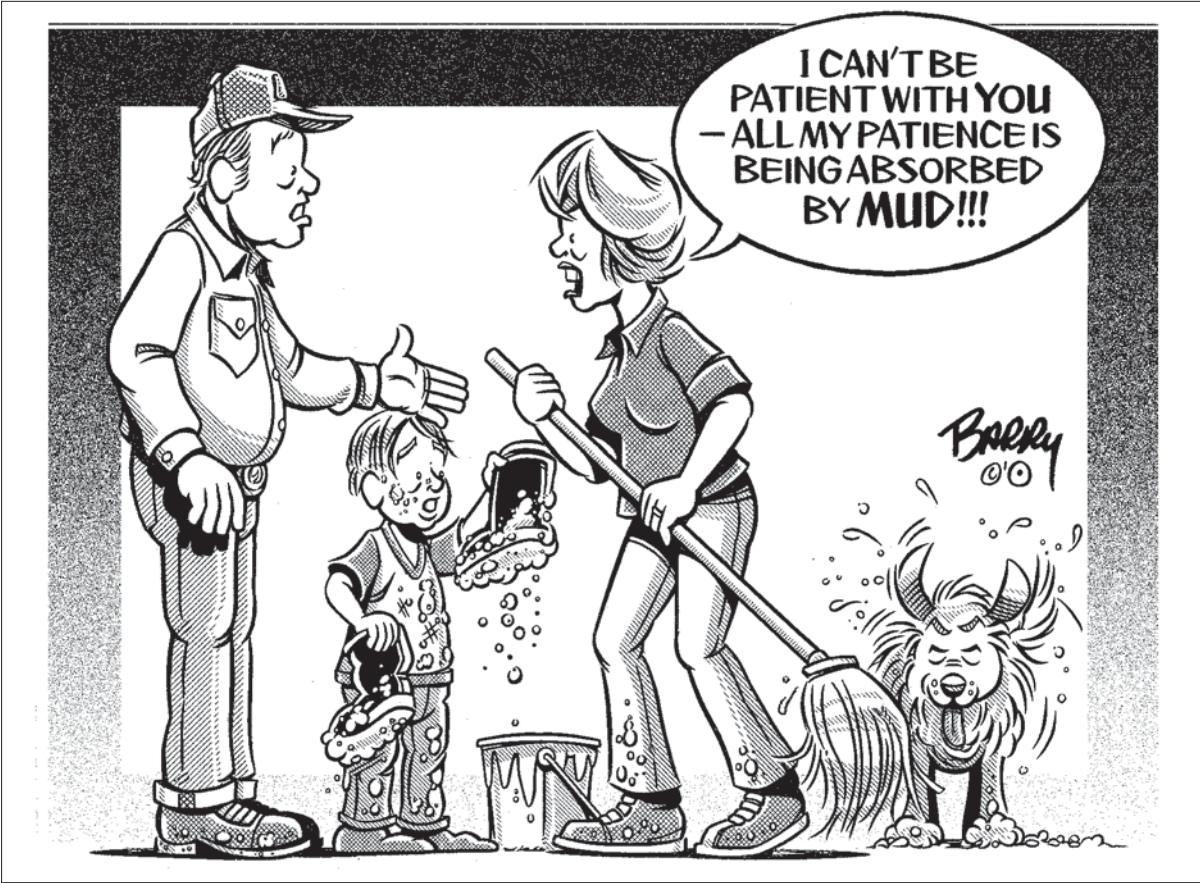
About Mountain States Policy Center

Founded in 2022, Mountain States Policy Center is based in Boise and Coeur d’Alene, and is an independent think tank that believes in providing research and recommendations to lawmakers, the media and the public, based on facts — not emotion. Harnessing the power of publications, conferences and video events, MSPC brings forward free market solutions to our region’s biggest challenges and will be a watchdog to improve government transparency and effectiveness. Our mission is to empower those in the Mountain States to succeed through non-partisan, quality research that promotes free enterprise, individual liberty and limited government.

Homedale resident Oscar Evans is on the board of directors.

Learn more at mountainstatespolicy.org.

JP Doodles



Montana-based syndicated editorial cartoonist Barry McWilliams passed away in August 2021. The McWilliams Estate has given The Owyhee Avalanche permission to publish his cartoon. McWilliams’ cartoons appeared in more than 1,500 newspapers, and he visited hundreds of elementary schools teaching children to draw.

From Washington

Pressing for passage of Maj. Richard Star Act for Idaho military veterans

I had the opportunity recently to stand with fellow proponents of the Major Richard Star Act, legislation that would provide combat-disabled veterans full disability and retirement pay, to press for its enactment. Fellow U.S. Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.), U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Fla.), Tonya Star, wife of the late Richard Star, and I joined with veterans and advocates in front of our nation’s Capitol building as we made the case for including the Major Richard Star Act in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act.

Maj. Richard Star was a father, husband, decorated war veteran and friend. He was a tireless advocate for ensuring all active duty and retired military personnel across the country, including Idaho, receive the full care and benefits they have earned. He is the namesake of our legislation to do just that.

While Maj. Star is no longer with us, his wife, Tonya, honors his legacy by carrying on this important work. Her courage to continue this fight is admirable and deeply valued as we work together to advance the legislation. As she reflected on enactment of the legislation being Richard’s greatest goal and the need to not stop until we get it done, she said, “These men and women earned their retirements the hard way.”

The Major Richard Star Act would correct a severe injustice by providing combat-wounded veterans with less than 20 years of service both their disability compensation and retirement pay without reduction. More than two-thirds of the Senate agrees, with an astounding 71 co-sponsors of the legislation Sen. Tester and I introduced in the Senate, S. 344. The companion bill, H.R. 1282, has 327 supporters in the House of Representatives.

The legislation also has the strong backing of

U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo
Republican (term expires 2028)

Local office
251 E. Front St., Ste. 205
Boise, ID 83702
Phone — (208) 334-1776
Fax — (208) 334-9044

Washington, D.C., office
239 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510
Phone — (202) 224-6142
Fax — (202) 228-1375
E-mail — <http://crapo.senate.gov/contact/email.cfm>

Committee assignments — Finance (ranking member); Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs; Budget; and Joint Committee on Taxation

Subcommittees — Housing, Transportation and Community Development; National Security and International Trade and Finance; Securities, Insurance, and Investment; Energy, Natural Resources, and Infrastructure; Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth; Health Care; International Trade, Customs, and Global Competitiveness; Social Security, Pensions, and Family Policy; and Taxation and IRS Oversight



leading veterans service organizations, which highlights the importance of ensuring medically retired and combat-injured veterans receive full compensation. This includes Idaho veterans who have informed my decision to co-lead the legislation and have worked to gain support for ending pay offsets

— See *Veterans*, Page 17

Commentary

Financial management Working while in college teaches time management

Dear Dave,
Our son will be graduating from high school in May, and then heading off to college in August. He will also be working during the summer to save up money for school. When classes begin, do you think he should continue working a part-time job, or would it be better for him to focus solely on his studies?

— **Brenda**

Dear Brenda,
There’s really nothing wrong with either approach, especially during a kid’s first semester in college. As a parent, though,

I’d urge you not to fall into the trap of thinking his grades will go down if he holds a job while in school. Research actually shows that, on average, kids who work while in college carry higher grade-point averages than those who don’t.

The reasons for this differ, depending on who you ask, but I think a lot of it has to do with them having to learn to manage their time — and their lives — more effectively. Lots of kids could pay their way through school, and not have to worry about student loans, if they just used some of the time they spend watching television and



to work during the school year, but they were self-starters. And when they came home for the summer, there was no such thing as just lying around the house all day. They had jobs, and they made money. Of course, some of it went toward having a little fun during their time off. But we made sure they set some aside for the next school year, too.

Long story short, the philosophy of not wanting kids at college to work so they can spend all their time studying is well-meaning, but misguided. For the most part, kids who work while they’re in school will make better grades and develop into more mature and well-rounded individuals.

I hope this helps, Brenda!

— **Dave**

— *Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national bestselling author, personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Today, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people take control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions.*

✓ Veterans: Legislation to stop pro-rate of vets’ disability and pension must be acted upon soon

From Page 16
for medically retired combat veterans.

The support for this correction is clear. The Major Richard Star Act must be included in the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act, or any other legislative vehicle, as soon as possible. More than 50,000 veterans, including hundreds in Idaho, could benefit from this change. I look forward to enactment of this measure to honor the service of all veterans and Maj. Star’s enduring legacy.

— *Republican Mike Crapo is Idaho’s senior member of the U. S. Senate. He is in his fifth six-year term and has served in the Senate since 1999, and he has served 31 years in the U.S. Congress. Prior to that, he served eight years in the Idaho State Senate.*

Letters to the editor

All letters to the editor submitted to The Owyhee Avalanche must be no longer than 300 words, signed and include the writer’s address and daytime phone number.

The deadline for submitting letters is noon on Friday. Letters can be submitted in these ways:

- E-mailed to jon@owyhee.com
- Mailed to P.O. Box 97, Homedale ID, 83628
- Dropped off at the Avalanche office at 19 E. Idaho Ave., in Homedale

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

✓ Farms: Idaho’s small farms shuttering operations at a 50 percent clip

From Page 16
50 percent in the case of Idaho farms with incomes between \$200,000 to \$499,999. Farm number losses are huge for operations under half a million dollars in total sales.

But the trend reverses for farms with revenue above \$500,000. Almost all income brackets above \$500,000 saw an increase in farming operations (except one income bracket in Montana) with the largest increases in the top income category of \$10 million or more.

The loss of farms isn’t driven by only one issue. Regulations, input costs, pandemic changes, trade disruptions, aging operators, and agricultural land development are all pushing out farms. The smallest farms are experiencing the greatest challenges. Some farms have risen to the occasion and grown to survive the market variance. However, there are still many farms ending operations.

Everyone should be concerned about the loss of farms in the United States. The majority of our food production is grown by the largest operations, so volume isn’t the concern but security is. Just look at the result of the COVID shutdowns. Many of the large operations experienced plant and processing shutdowns for weeks at a time from outbreaks among employees, and grocery store shelves went empty.

Having many producers involved in food production insulates end consumers from supply disruptions. One producer will likely experience operational challenges throughout the growing season be it weather, trade, policy, or labor challenges. If only a few producers are present in the market, supply disruptions are inevitable. However, if many producers, both small and large, are actively engaged in the industry, it insulates the end consumer from supply disruptions, because it is unlikely many producers face the same production challenges.

Challenges are increasing for farm operations as this last year was expected to be one of the largest declines in net cash farm income in history, the largest in nominal terms and third-largest adjusted to inflation. Farms need to become resilient to market fluctuations like the one experienced in 2023.

Policies in the mountain states need to encourage agriculture. Efforts should be made to ease the burdens of remaining in the agricultural industry for small producers like decreasing regulatory burdens, encouraging agricultural land to remain in production at reasonable rental rates, improving labor supply restrictions, and encouraging trade agreements benefiting agricultural products. Before policies are adopted, it is worth questioning what the result will be for small producers, because those are the operations least likely to survive.

Contacting elected officials

District 23 Terms expire 2024 Sen. Todd M. Lakey (R-Nampa) 12905 Venezia Ct, Nampa, ID, 83651 Phone — (208) 332-1328 (session only) or (208) 908-4415 E-mail — TLakey@senate.idaho.gov	Seat A Rep. Melissa Durrant (R-Kuna) 4000 W Hubbard Road, Kuna, ID, 83634 Phone — (208) 332-1055 (session only) or (208) 941-1963 E-mail — MDurrant@house.idaho.gov	Governor Gov. Brad Little Office of the Governor P.O. Box 83720 Boise, ID 83720 Phone — (208) 334-2100 E-mail — governor@gov.idaho.gov Website — https://gov.idaho.gov/ Term expires 2026
	Seat B Rep. Tina Lambert (R-Caldwell) PO Box 1324, Caldwell, ID, 83606 Phone — (208) 332-1047 (session only) or (208) 504-8647 E-mail — TLambert@house.idaho.gov	

Sports

HHS season starts with close matches

A German exchange student was the only tennis player to get a victory in Homedale High School’s opener.

Senior Andre Magdea beat Nyssa No. 1 Spencer Romans, 6-3, 6-4, at No. 1 boys’ singles on March 12 on the Bulldogs’ courts.

Nyssa won the non-

conference matchup, 6-1.

Kayleb Atkins, the Trojans’ No. 2 boys’ singles player, put up a battle in a 6-3, 6-4 loss to Garrison Page.

Homedale players won at least one game in every match except for No. 2 girls’ doubles where Jillian Castro and Ava Wilson fell, 6-0, 6-0, to Nyssa’s Sabrina Esteves and Courtney Carlton.

The Trojans’ top boys’ duo — Cameron Burke and AJ Robles — fell, 6-2, 6-2, to Nyssa’s Ian Esplin and Samuel

Dorathy.

Miguel Albor and Jayden Lyman (HHS boys’ No. 2 doubles) lost, 6-1, 6-0, against Caleb Woodruff and Brennan Cutler.

Page Van Vliet faltered in the No. 1 girls’ singles match, losing 6-1, 6-0 to Nyssa’s Brenna Kesler.

Nyssa also picked up a win at No. 1 girls’ doubles when Belle Wagstaff and Hadee Wagstaff knocked over Emma Olson and Mila Binford, 6-1, 6-0.

Thrower’s PR brings Rimrock’s best finish

Morgan Field’s personal record in the discus led several top-five finishes for Rimrock High School the Fired Up meet Thursday in New Plymouth.

Field celebrated with a second-place discus throw of 126 feet, 6 inches. He also PR’d in the shot put at 35-9.

Senior Loyd Boren ran to a third place in 2 minutes, 10.8 seconds in the 800 meters. He was eighth at 1,600 (5:05.86).

Another senior, Ashten Moore, finished fourth at 29-4½ in the girls’ triple jump and was fifth in the 400 (1:08.62) and the long jump (15-3).

Distance runner Goya Lemus, another senior, was sixth in the girls’ 800 (2:51.17) and ninth in the 1,600 (6:04.34).

Sophomore Kolton Jewett PR’d twice — in the 3,200 (ninth, 12:03.71) and 1,600 (12th in 5:35.36).

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Public notices

BOARD OF OWYHEE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
February 2024 Synopsis
February 6

-Approved the claims report as presented: Current Expenses-\$39,129; R&B Fund-\$14,003; Dist. Court-\$3,252; Fair, Grounds & Buildings-\$171; Probation-\$1,313; Health Dist.-\$9,316; Historical Society & Museum-\$811; I&C-\$42,177; Junior College Tuition-\$5,300; Revaluation-\$3,846; Solid Waste-\$18,894; 911-\$5,003; Waterways Fund-\$178; Off Hwy Vehicles-\$236; Capital Project Fund / ARPA-\$10,000; Interlock Device Fund-\$86.

-Approved the minutes from the January 22, 2024 meeting.

-Approved the Change Order No. 2 for thirteen (13) window replacements in the Homedale Justice Center for the amount of \$14,916.16.

-Approved County Museum’s request for a Building Permit Application Fee Waiver for the Print Shop.

-Approved the County Resolution 2024-07 - Destruction of Temporary Documents – Clerks – I&C and Elections, and County Commissioners.

-Approved the Clerk’s reassignment of Rachele King from Planning & Zoning to the Clerk’s Office, at the pay rate of \$19.00 per hour, effective March 1, 2024.

-Approved the Fairgrounds Well House & Piping Project Bid Award to Desert View Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$121,561.00.

February 12

-Approved the claims report as presented: Current Expenses-\$15,738; R&B Fund-\$35,461; Dist. Court-\$108; Probation-\$941; Historical Society & Museum-\$239; I&C-\$2,446; Solid Waste-\$969; Waterways Fund-\$301; Off Hwy Vehicles-\$1,550; Capital Project Fund / ARPA-\$11,948.

-Approved the minutes from the February 6, 2024 meeting.

-Approved catering permit for JC Landing, catering for Cindy’s Restaurant on February 14, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

-Approved Civil Dynamics’ request for a Conditional Use Permit Application Fee Waiver for the Courthouse & Jail Evaporation Lagoons project.

-Approved County comment letter to Idaho DEQ regarding the presumptive findings of the Total Maximum Daily Load which attributes the presence of E. coli to cattle grazing in the Bruneau River Sub-basin.

-Approved County comment letter to BLM regarding the Silver City Travel Management Plan.

-Approved the County Museum’s updated insurance quote for Out Post Days 2024.

-Approved County Resolution 2024-08 – Sell & Transfer Waterways Property to Ada County of the following items in the amount of \$17,000 (government to government sale).

-Approved the Lexipol Master Service Agreement for the remainder of the County’s 2024 fiscal year, for the amount of \$9,644.98.

-Approved the following solid waste, property tax cancellation, and penalty fees for the following parcels: MH01N03W21300A – \$63.00; MH01N03W213000 – \$94.09.

February 20

-Approved the claims report as presented: Current Expenses-\$16,479; R&B Fund-\$5,726; Dist. Court-\$78; Historical Society & Museum-\$1,806; I&C-\$5,514; Junior College Tuition-\$5,000; Waterways Fund-\$33.

-Approved the minutes from the February 12, 2024 meeting.

-Approved Civil Science Acceptance Letter for the North Fork Boulder Creek Bridge Project (Key No. 22594), with the Chairman’s signature for the Board.

-Approved the conditional use permit application for Courthouse & Jail Evaporation Lagoons Project presented by Civil Dynamics.

-Approved LHTAC/Local Agreement for the Leading Idaho Bridge Program Salmon Creek Bridge Project (Key No. 28298), with the Chairman’s signature for the Board.

-Approved the Sheriff’s Office temporary reassignment of Angela Patterson from part-time dispatch to full-time dispatch at the pay rate of \$20.29, effective February 20, 2024.

-Approved a letter to Senator Lakey and Representatives Durrant & Lambert that is opposing Senate Bill 1258.

February 26

-At 9:15 a.m. Went into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206 (f) possible litigation. Open session was resumed at 9:22 a.m. No action was taken.

-At 9:22 a.m. Went into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code §74-206 (f) possible litigation. Open session was resumed at 10:05 a.m. No action was taken.

-Directed Prosecutor Topmiller and Planning Director Huff to draft a letter and survey to Owyhee County real property owners regarding their desire to allow one recreational vehicle by right within all the different planning zones, where a dwelling currently exists.

-Approved the claims report as presented: Current Expenses-\$18,174; R&B Fund-\$1,697; Dist. Court-\$1,796; Probation-\$218; I&C-\$3,994; Solid Waste-\$333; Waterways Fund-\$28; Capital Project Fund/ARPA-\$177,302.

-Approved the minutes from the February 20, 2024 meeting.

-Approved 2024 Liquor License #32 for Cindy’s Café in Grand View, Idaho.

-Approved Pay Application #4 from Succor Creek Construction, in the amount of \$177,301.54 for the Justice Center remodel.

-Approved the Assessor’s pay raise for Kasey Frelove from \$21.53 to \$22.84 per hour, effective February 26, 2024.

-Approved the Assessor’s pay raise for Amanda Penny from \$20.54 to \$21.04 per hour, effective February 26, 2024.

February 27

-Approved filing an appeal with the Bureau of Land Management regarding the decision for the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey, National Conservation Area South, Travel Management Plan.

03/20/2024

NOTICE OF PENDING ISSUE OF TAX DEED
YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED, AS FOLLOWS: That a delinquent entry was entered as of January 1, 2020, in the records of the County Treasurer as Tax Collector of Owyhee County, State of Idaho, for the following

properties:

Parcel RPB0280001013A
Jesus S & Maria G Berrospe
911 Franklin St
Marsing, ID 83639
Property known as Lots 13-15 Block 1 Moler Addition 33 3N 4W, or more commonly known as 911 Franklin St, City of Marsing, Owyhee County, Idaho
Tax: \$507.56
Late Charge: \$ 10.16
Interest: \$266.72
Costs: \$248.00**
TOTAL \$1,032.44

Parcel RP009200010070
Robert J Miller
5791 Johnstone Rd
Homedale, ID 83628
Property known as Lot 7 Block 1 Canyon Estates
Sub 5 2N 5W, or more commonly known as 5791 Johnstone RD, Homedale, Owyhee County, Idaho
Tax: \$924.44
Late Charge: \$ 18.48
Interest: \$485.78
Costs: \$248.00**
TOTAL \$1,676.70

Parcel RP02N04W210175
Devin Santoro
7443 Trap Shoot Rd
Marsing, ID 83639
Property known as Tax 6 21 2N 4W, or more commonly known as 7443 Trap Shoot Rd, Marsing, Owyhee County, Idaho
Tax: \$1,117.22
Late Charge: \$ 22.35
Interest: \$ 587.09
Costs: \$ 248.00**
TOTAL \$1,974.66

Parcel RPA0040002004A
David C Ward JR
109 S 7th St W
Homedale, ID 83628
Property known as Lot 4 Less the N 80’ Block 2 & Adj N 10’ of vacated alley Shults Addition, or more commonly known as 109 S 7th St, City of Homedale, Owyhee County, Idaho
Tax: \$ 439.54
Late Charge: \$ 8.80
Interest: \$ 230.98
Costs: \$ 248.00**
TOTAL \$ 927.32

**Pursuant to Idaho Code §63-1005 (3), amounts will increase as additional cost and fees in the tax deed process are added.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED, that if said delinquent entry is not redeemed on or before April

15, 2024, by payment of said unpaid taxes together with late charge, interest and all unpaid costs and expenses up to the date of said payment at my office as Tax Collector, Owyhee County Courthouse, Murphy, ID, I shall thereupon, as required by law, make application to the Board of County Commissioners of Owyhee County, State of Idaho, for a hearing to be held on May 6, 2024, or as soon thereafter as said application can be heard at the **Owyhee County Courthouse, Murphy, Idaho**, for tax deed conveying the above described property to **OWYHEE COUNTY**, State of Idaho, absolute title, free of all encumbrances, except any lien for taxes which may have attached subsequently to the assessment hereinafter referred to. **YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED**, that the record owner or owners or any party of interest as defined by §63-1005, Idaho Code, may appear in person or by counsel, and if appearing, shall have adequate opportunity to be heard for the purpose of protesting the procedures used in taking this tax deed. **NO OTHER TYPE OF PROTEST WILL BE HEARD. YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED**, that inquiries and objections concerning this notice of the information contained therein shall be directed to the **OWYHEE COUNTY TREASURER** at 20381 State Highway 78, Murphy, ID 83650; or by calling (208) 495-1158 no later than five (5) working days before the hearing date. 3/6, 3/13, 3/20, 3/27

Dated this 1st day of March 2024.

Annette Dygert
COUNTY TREASURER
and EX-OFFICIO TAX COLLECTOR FOR OWYHEE COUNTY, IDAHO
03/06,13,20,27/2024

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Marsing Ambulance Service Board of Directors will hold its annual meeting, following the regular monthly meeting, as designated below. By-laws and board assignments will be reviewed. Taxpayers and residents of Marsing Ambulance District are invited to attend.

DATE: Thursday, March 21, 2024
TIME: 7:00 p.m.
PLACE: Marsing Fire Hall
03/6,13,20/2024



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HANDYMAN NEEDED - General help needed (fencing, carpentry, general repairs). Marsing/Homedale area. 509-860-9931.

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The Owyhee Avalanche
Special Section, March 20, 2024



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New South Board manager tries to answer producers' age-old question. **Page 4**

Water efficiency projects also aim to improve water quality in area streams. **Page 6**

Next generation breathes new life into old dairy with latest Sunny Slope winery. **Page 10**

A look at county irrigation directors and who's up for re-election later this year. **Pages 14-15**

Idaho Farm Bureau says what all Owyheeans know: Cattle is king. **Page 16**

Ag census shows farm receipts falling, operating costs continue to rise. **Page 18**

Sixth-generation rancher ready to take the reins. **Page 24**

Owyhee Conservation District obtains more grants. **Page 29**



Father and son Paul (right) and Chad Nettleton accepted the 2023 Ray Mansidor Conservationist of the Year Award for Joyce Livestock from Owyhee Conservation District board chair Andrea McRae during the annual banquet on Feb. 20 at the Owyhee County Community Center.

Preserving resource and family history on range

Nettletons cited for juniper eradication, water delivery

When your family ranch has origins in the time of Lincoln, it's bound to see (and make) some history.

Joyce Livestock Ranch has made its share of headlines for stock water, but the latest Ray Mansidor Conservationist of the Year Award the Sinker Creek outfit has earned may be one of the most significant

milestones.

Paul Nettleton and his son, Chad, accepted the award named for the late 63-year member of the OCD board of supervisors during the Owyhee Conservation District's annual banquet on Feb. 20.

The award marks the second received by the elder Nettleton, whose grandfather, Matthew Joyce, established the family ranch in 1865.

The plaque the Nettletons accepted

— See **Resource**, Page 20



An 18-year veteran of the South Board of Control, Carl Seiders was appointed manager late last year.

Manager envisions abundant water year

The ring of Carl Seiders' telephone is becoming steadier as spring approaches.

Farmers want to know when they can start tapping into the run-off of a snowpack so plentiful that federal water managers are worried.

"The (Bureau of Reclamation) is really nervous," the new South Board of Control manager said. "There's so much snow ... They asked us to spill more."

The reservoir was 76 percent full, according to watermaster Ryan Nash's report during the monthly irrigation board meetings on March 12.

Also during the last week's meetings, directors set tentative turn-on dates — April 1 for the Owyhee Reservoir to feed the South Canal,

and April 8 for the Gem Pumping Plant on the Snake River in Marsing to charge the old Gem Irrigation District system.

In the ulcerative world of water watching, spilling from the reservoir is a good problem to have — no matter how counter-intuitive it seems for men who understand how precious the resource is most years in the high desert.

"(Officials) say there is more than 1 million acrefeet up there," Seiders said of the Owyhee River's expansive watershed.

"(Owyhee Irrigation District manager Clancy Flynn) flew it (March 8), and said there's a lot of snow up there."

With the reservoir already three-

quarters of the way to its irrigation capacity of 714,000 acrefeet, you just have to make sure flood control doesn't become the next concern.

A month ago, the gates at the Owyhee Dam were spilling at 250 cubic feet per second. On March 7, the number was 500 cfs. Last Wednesday, the water ran at 750 cfs.

With the Owyhee River basin at 139 percent of normal (and snow-water equivalent 169 percent of normal), allotment news could bring Christmas in April for ag producers in the Gem and Ridgeview districts.

"As of right now, we're looking at 4 acrefeet with the possibility of excess," Seiders said on March 11.

— See *Water*, Page 8

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Owyhee Conservation District supervisor John Cossel (center) talks about projects carried out on his hay farm.

On the cover: From left: Water quality specialist Joe Peterson, Cossel, OCD board chair Andrea McRae, Landon Brezenski, and Jack Precht check out the new headgate for the 26.9 lateral project.

OCD photos

Conservation district's ag water efficiency projects save water, improve quality

by **Steve Stuebner**

*Idaho Soil and Water
Conservation Commission*

Owyhee Conservation District officials were pleased with two agricultural conservation projects carried out last spring.

In one project, two miles of open ditch canal was replaced as part of the 26.9 lateral project. About 15,000 linear feet of pipeline was installed, reducing water use by about 42 percent.

The work was co-funded by the South Board of Control, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and a \$300,000 Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA) grant from the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

The project also has water quality benefits that will accrue to Jump

Creek, a popular recreation area in the Owyhee foothills and a water quality-limited stream.

"It turned out perfect. It's made a big difference for our producers," then-SBOC manager John Eells said.

Eells, who died months after his interview, said the 26.9 lateral project benefits nine producers growing crops on 260 acres.

The open ditch canal had heavy seepage losses, Eells said. With the enclosed pipeline, water managers are saving about 4 cubic feet per second of water flow, and any unused water goes back into the canal, he said.

"It's pretty magnificent," he said, noting that he had worked as a ditch-rider on that canal for many years.

The WQPA grant literally saved the project, according to Tate Walters, the NRCS district conservationist for Owyhee County.

"As inflation hit and supply chain issues occurred during the COVID pandemic, pipeline prices went through the roof," Walters said. "The WQPA grant made the difference between the project happening or not."

The project "turned out great," Walters says. South Board did the construction with its own crews during the winter months. NRCS completed the design and engineering for the open canal-to-pipeline conversion project.

The NRCS also worked with John Cossel, an Owyhee County hay farmer and an OCD supervisor, to convert a 40-acre field from flood irrigation to pressured irrigation with wheel lines.

"It's perfect," Cossel said. "I redid

— See *Efficiency*, Page 9



✓ Efficiency: District leverages grants to push projects

From Page 6

my whole farm to convert from gravity flood irrigation to pressurized irrigation with wheel lines. It used to take me 14 to 18 days to water my fields, and now I can do it in eight days.”

Cossel said he’s still getting three cuttings of hay from his fields, and then the irrigated pastures will be available for cattle as winter feed when they return from federal grazing allotments in the fall. He is part of the Chipmunk Grazing Associa-

tion.

The overall sprinkler conservation project cost about \$100,000, officials said, and a WQPA grant funded \$22,295 of that cost.

As for water quality benefits from the project, estimates indicated that it would result in a net reduction of sediment by 735 tons per year, reduced nitrogen by 2,352 pounds per year, and reduced phosphorous by 1,176 pounds per year in Jump Creek.

“As our state and the Pacific

Northwest at large continues to battle with drought conditions, the Owyhee Conservation District feels this project will have an immediate impact on water quantity savings as well as improve water quality in Jump Creek and the Snake River,” OCD officials said.

“With the conversion of the open lateral to buried pipeline, multiple producers have committed to then convert their irrigation practice from

— See *Efficiency*, Page 27



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The Owyhee Reservoir ring gate floated for the first time in three years in 2023. In a Facebook post at the time, officials reported the water level marked the first time that new concrete applied to the ring gate had been under water. This year, the glory hole could activate. Photo courtesy Owyhee Irrigation District

✓ **Water:** Power generation on project leaders' minds

From Page 4

"I'm sure that's going to change."

Just what change looks like was to materialize at the Joint Board meeting after press time Tuesday.

The abundance of water — Seiders said the reservoir was only about five feet from spilling over the ring gate — could mean a new revenue stream for the Owyhee Project, too. Seiders said that the power plant at the reservoir is finally paid off, so the Joint Board Generator Committee

— Seiders, Flynn, Ridgeview board vice-chair Bret Nielson, and Owyhee Irrigation board member Bruce Corn — will start examining what the revenue generation concept will look like.

All in all, having too much water is a good way to enter a new job. Seiders, an 18-year South Board employee, was appointed to the position weeks after John Eells died.

Seiders was promoted after serving as maintenance supervisor during

Eells' tenure. He started with the district in February 2006 as a maintenance crewmember then was a ditch rider for about seven years before heading up the maintenance department.

"Where I rode (ditch) in the district, I know the system very well. Oregon I know inside and out," he said.

"I did not know Marsing (old Gem), but John was able to show me that area."

— See **Water**, Page 9



✓ **Water:** New manager looks for smoother operation

From Page 8

Seiders admits that there is a lot more to the job than Eells let on.

“I didn’t think John did a whole lot until I sat in this chair,” Seiders quipped from his desk in Eells’ old office. “There’s a lot. I thought I did all the work.”

As a former maintenance supervisor, Seiders has the desire to make things easier on the crews.

One way to simplify infrastructure maintenance is innovative use of screens in the 5.7 lateral off the

South Canal.

A flat screen system has been installed to replace the old, inefficient wheel line wheel that was covered with a screen and rotated to clean the ditch. Two 4-foot-by-10-foot screens were put flat in the canal, so water passes over the screen and stays healthy.

The old system required maintenance workers to essentially wash the wheel-line screen to prevent clogging. That added labor and wasted more water to keep the lateral clean. Now, the lateral basically

cleans itself as water flows to fields, saving water, labor and time.

Seiders lives in Adrian with his wife of 19 years, Michaelann, who works for the Owyhee Watershed Council, and their three daughters — 15-year-old Clara; Ada, who is 10; and 7-year-old Maudie.

The 47-year-old Adrian native grew up with horses on 20 acres. He began rodeo when he was 15, and he was a steer wrestler and team roper at Treasure Valley Community College.

— JPB



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The Dunning Estates owners are family. **From left:** Parker Dunning and his wife Kacie, and Heather and her husband Brayden Dunning. **On cover:** The owners transformed a 100-year-old milking barn — complete with dirt floors — connected to the property's dairy origins into a sparkling tasting room on Vino Lane off Sunny Slope Road northwest of Marsing.

The family business

Marsing native blazes own wine trail at Dunning Estates

Heather Dunning grew up off Jump Creek Road with a view of Lizard Butte.

She loved the agricultural life on the farm with mother and father, Tony and Brandy Welton, and she grew to love wine.

"I had a desire to know more about the wine industry from the age of 21," Heather said, adding her grandmother, 1962 Marsing High School graduate and town native Ann Ayers, taught her to appreciate

wine.

She actually wrote her senior paper on the history of Ste. Chapelle, which is now a neighboring business to Dunning Estates Winery on the Sunny Slope Wine Trail.

But the 2009 Vallivue High School graduate had no idea that desire would ferment into a business — even when she met a guy in a Boise State University aerobics class (the only man in the class) named Brayden Dunning.

"It's a crazy divine story and puzzle why I had that fascination (with wine), and fast-forward 10 years and it becoming so integral in my life," she said.

Brayden, who wound up at BSU from Corvallis, Ore., comes from a wine-making family. His parents — Holly and Kyle — established Dunning Vineyards in Oregon's Willamette Valley. They launched

— See **Dunning**, Page 12

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Although the grand opening is set for this weekend, Dunning Estates has already played host to good times in late winter, such as this birthday celebration.

✓ **Dunning:** Milking parlor becomes tasting room

From Page 10

Knotty Brothers Wine — named for Brayden and his brother Parker — years later.

“The Dunnings were grape growers in the Willamette Valley for 30 years before relocating to Idaho. Both Parker and Brayden grew up stomping grapes, tending the vineyard, and riding in the harvest truck with their mom to drop fruit off to local wineries,” Heather said.

“The work started young for these boys, and Holly and Kyle did a fantastic job showing their sons the value of hard work and the beauty of great wine. The knowledge and passion the Dunnings have for wine has been present long before I had the

Dunning Estates Winery

Address: 19937 Vino Lane, Sunny Slope (Caldwell)

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opportunity to become a Dunning.”

The journey to establishing Dunning Estates Winery, with its tasting room in a renovated century-old dairy cow milking parlor on Vino Lane off Sunny Slope Road, didn’t start out as a business venture when Heather and Brayden moved back to

her stamping grounds in 2020.

“The town (Marsing) was much different back in the 1990s, but the charm has never gone away, and is one of the main reasons why we moved back to the Sunny Slope

— See **Dunning**, Page 25

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South Board of Control who's who, 2024

Gem Irrigation District board of directors



Chair

Chris Landa
Division 5
Homedale
Joint board
delegate
Serving since
2013

Term expires

Dec. 31, 2024

Chris Landa



Vice-chair

Ryan Criffield
Division 4
Homedale

Serving since
2013

Term expires

Dec. 31, 2024

Ryan Criffield



Division 1

Rick Smith
Marsing

Serving since
2011

Term expires

Dec. 31, 2024

Rick Smith

South Board of Control



Division 2

Steve Clapier
Homedale
Serving since
1997

Term expires

Dec. 31, 2024

Steve Clapier

Division 3 — Vacant

SBOC manager Carl Seiders announced during the March 12 meeting that Dennis Turner of Homedale resigned his position.

Turner's current term was to end on Dec. 31, 2025, and he had sat on the board since 2008.



Manager

Carl Seiders
Adrian

Ridgeview Irrigation District board of directors



Chair

Sterling Johnston
Adrian

Serving since
2022

Term expires

Dec. 31, 2024

Sterling Johnston



Vice-chair

Bret Nielson
Ridgeview
Joint board del.

Serving since
2007

Term expires

Dec. 31, 2024

Bret Nielson

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Ditch riders

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No. 22 Dave Bowman, (208) 899-7581

No. 24 Gerry Milburn, (208) 960-3058

No. 25 Jeff Woodside, (208) 748-8404

No. 26 Daniel Simmons, (208) 861-5411

Maintenance supervisor

Mike Miller, (208) 989-2179



Director

Mike Pendergrass
Adrian

Serving since
2024

Term expires

Dec. 31, 2024

Mike Pendergrass

SBOC directors

Chair — Chris Landa, Div. 5

Vice-chair — Ryan Criffield, Div. 4

Director, Div. 1 — Rick Smith

Director, Div. 2 — Steve Clapier

Director, Div. 3 — Dennis Turner

Dir., Ridgeview — Sterling Johnston

Boards' secretary/treasurer

Sherry Maxwell, Homedale

Watermaster

Ryan Nash, (208) 412-2065

Office address — 118 S. 1st St.

W., Homedale, ID 83628

Office phone — (208) 337-3760

Email — office@

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Next meetings — Starting at

7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 9 at the

South Board boardroom, 201 W.

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Owyhee's other irrigation boards

Owyhee County's other boards, including when directors' terms expire, and meeting and contact information.

Reynolds Irrigation District

Div. 1 — Dean Young, chair (2024)

Div. 2 — Lou Sanchez, vice-chair (2026)

Div. 3 — Adam Duckett (2025)

Secretary

Brad Huff, (208) 495-2950

Ditch rider

Kris Davis, (208) 250-0193

Meeting time — First Thursday of the month, 1 p.m., Wilson School House

Opaline Irrigation District

Div. 1 — Zenaïdo Ponce (2026)

Div. 2 — Zachary Sevy, vice-chair (2024)

Div. 3 — Dan Birmingham, chair (2025)

Div. 4 — Wayne Johnson (2026)

Div. 5 — Elias Jaca (2024)

Secretary

Pam Howard, (208) 880-9695

Email — opalineirrigationdistrict@hotmail.com

Watermaster and ditch rider

Andy Howard, (208) 869-1746

Meeting time — First Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., 7300 Opaline Rd., Melba

Grand View Irrigation District

Div. 1 — Mark Frost, chair (2024)

Div. 2 — Buster Ridley (2026)

Div. 3 — Kenny Unruh (2025)

Secretary

Dixie McDaniel, (208) 834-2350

Ditch rider

Evan Shaw, (208) 580-3336

Meeting time — First Tuesday of the month, 11 a.m., Grand View Irrigation District Office, 645 Idaho Ave., Grand View

Snake River Irrigation District

Div. 1 — Ron Ridley (2026)

Div. 2 — Dan Whitted, vice-chair (2024)

Div. 3 — George Bennett, chair (2025)

Secretary

Dixie McDaniel, (208) 834-2350

Ditch rider

Cory Carnahan, (208) 599-2828

Meeting time — First Wednesday of the month, 1 p.m., Grand View Irrigation District Office, 645 Idaho Ave., Grand View

Grand View Mutual Canal Co.

Chair — Rohl Hipwell (2026)

Vice-chair — Randy Hipwell (2026)

Director — Jerry Meyers (2024)

Secretary

Dixie McDaniel, (208) 834-2350

Ditch rider

Lance Smith, (208) 599-2310

Meeting time — First Monday of the month, 1 p.m., Grand View Irrigation District Office, 645 Idaho Ave., Grand View. Shareholders meeting first Monday in February (call office for details).

Upper Grand View Canal Co.

Chair — Steven Nichols (2026)

Vice-chair — Billy Wolfe (2026)

Director — Charles Enszt (2024)

Secretary

Dixie McDaniel, (208) 834-2350

Ditch rider

Lance Smith, (208) 599-2310

Meeting time — Annual meeting is held the first Monday in February. Special meetings as necessary.

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Owyhee County is Idaho's second-largest county by size and there is a lot of range for cattle to graze on. Photo by Paul Nettleton for Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Cattle is king in Owyhee County

Ranchers, farmers alike work for future
of industry and ag land

by Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

When it comes to agriculture in Owyhee County, cattle is king.

At 7,700 square miles, Owyhee is Idaho's second-largest county by size, and there is a whole lot of wide-open space and range for cattle to graze, according to Owyhee County rancher Ted Blackstock.

"Most of the land in the county is grazing land, essentially," said Blackstock, who also raises and sells some hay. "We have a lot of wide-

open space for beef cattle."

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, the county's cattle and calves sector brought in \$116 million in farm-gate receipts during the 2017 census year, making cattle the county's top ag commodity in terms of total revenue.

There were 157,193 cattle and calves in Owyhee County in 2017, according to the ag census.

"The money crop here is cattle," says Owyhee County rancher Paul Nettleton, who also raises hay, corn

and grain. "There is a lot of range in the county, and it's good range, too."

Besides all the land, the climate in the county — fairly low elevation and winters that are usually not too harsh — is also favorable for raising cattle, Nettleton adds.

"It's just a nice area to raise cattle," says Nettleton, a member of the Owyhee County Farm Bureau board of directors. "Owyhee County is mainly cattle area, and we definitely think that's the future here, too."

The county also includes a pretty fast-growing dairy industry.

— See **Cattle**, Page 17



✓ **Cattle:** Beef, dairy bring in the most ag income

From Page 16

According to the 2017 ag census, farm-gate receipts for the dairy sector totaled \$94 million in 2017.

“Beef cattle and dairy cattle are the biggest income generators for agriculture in Owyhee County,” says Blackstock, who also serves on the county Farm Bureau board.

While cattle is big in Owyhee County agriculture, there is plenty of farming going on, too.

“There is a fair amount of row crop farming in the county,” says

Owyhee County Farm Bureau president and Marsing Mayor Hayzen Corder, who does custom haying and works in ag retail.

According to the ag census, there were 71,000 acres of hay grown in the county in 2017, 28,000 acres of corn, 9,000 acres of wheat and 2,500 acres of sugar beets.

Mint, potatoes and sunflowers are some of the other crops grown there, Corder says.

According to the 2017 ag census, there were 565 farms in Owyhee

County in 2017 and 727,338 total acres of land in farms. The average size of a farm in the county — 1,287 acres — is much larger than the statewide average of 468 acres.

Families own and operate 97 percent of the county’s farms.

A total of \$273 million in farm-gate receipts were recorded in the county in 2017, ranking Owyhee No. 10 in Idaho in that category.

While the county isn’t experiencing

— See **Cattle**, Page 31

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Corn for dairy cattle feed is harvested southwest of Homedale.

Owyhee's receipts fall as expenses rise

Fewer county farms according to 2022 survey

With reporting by Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

Owyhee County's farm and ranch roll call is shrinking, but ag operations are either going big or going micro.

According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, more than 100 farms and ranches shut down in the five years since the 2017 survey.

Of the farms and ranches remaining in operation in 2022, there were 53 fewer 10- to 49-acre spreads than

in 2017 (126 down from 179), and seven fewer of 1,000 acres or more (79 down from 86).

Four micro farms (one to nine acres) were added between 2017 (82) and 2022 (86).

Although 18.4 percent of the county's ag operations (104 farms) were lost, the farmers and ranchers who stuck it out put more acreage into production, growing the productive lands by nearly 2,000 acres between the time the 2017 data was collected and the most recent census was completed.

There were 729,407 acres in production in the 2022 census, up from 727,338 reported five years earlier.

The average size of an Owyhee County farm grew by nearly 300 acres (from 1,287 acres to 1,582 acres), but the median size shrunk by three acres from 73 acres to 70 acres.

The average land and infrastructure value of an Owyhee County ag operation soared by 52.3 percent to \$3.2 million in 2022 (\$2,025 per acre) after clocking in at \$2.1 million (\$1,628 per acre) in 2017.

Farmers and ranchers sold \$273 million in products in 2017 (almost \$484,000 per farm), but that number plummeted to \$61.6 million in 2022 (\$124,500 per farm).

— See *Owyhee*, Page 19



✓ Owyhee: Cropland acreage actually increased

From Page 18

And as receipts fell, expenses rose, nearly doubling in the five-year period.

Farmers spent \$441,000 per operation in 2017 (\$249 million in total expenses across the county).

In 2022, county farmers spent \$378 million per farm or \$820,000 per acre.

Overall, the Idaho Farm Bureau reported, Idaho lost 2,119 farms, or 8.5 percent of the total, between 2017 and 2022.

Data from the 2022 ag census was released Feb. 13, and it showed there were 22,877 farms and ranches in Idaho during the 2022 census year.

That was down from 24,996 farms during the 2017 census year.

The data shows there were 1.9 million farms and ranches in the United States in 2022. That was 7 percent, or 142,000, fewer farms than during 2017.

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years and is the only source of uniform, comprehensive and impartial agricultural data. It provides millions of potential data points on U.S. farming, down to the county level.

The 2022 census shows there were 11.55 million acres of total farmland — this includes crop and pasture land — in Idaho during the recent

census year. That is a 1.2 percent, or 144,000-acre, drop from the 11.69 million acres of total farmland in the state in 2017.

Nationwide, the amount of total farmland in 2022 was 880 million acres, down 2.2 percent from 900 million acres in 2017.

While presenting highlights of the recent ag census during a livestream event Feb. 13, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack said the loss of American farms and farmland is concerning to him.

“Survey after survey continues to show a decline in the number of farms

— See *Owyhee*, Page 31

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✓ **Resource:** Ranchers on ground floor of project

From Page 3

from OCD board of supervisors chair Andrea McRae inside the Owyhee County Community Center in Homedale acknowledged two conservation projects that will preserve the natural resource vitality of the family's spread of private and Bureau of Land Management rangeland.

For more than a decade, Joyce Ranch has done its part to push forward the Sage Grouse Initiative to preserve habitat for the tiny bird as well as improve the rangeland for all wildlife.

Tate Walters from the Natural Resource Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture was the keynote speaker at the OCD banquet, and he spotlighted the efforts to eradicate juniper stands on the Joyce Ranch.

"The cool thing about my job is I get to meet folks like this and go see their country," Walters said.

Paul Nettleton and the generations of his family before him have been working diligently to preserve that country through everyday work with beef cattle as well as long-term conservation projects.

The Nettletons' multi-year effort to improve the resource and habitat began in 2011 and eventually cleared about 2,000 acres of the invasive "woody weed," as many a land manager calls juniper trees.

"We're getting rid of that woody noxious weed, and it's really helped with what we're trying to do with conservation," Paul Nettleton said.



One aspect of the Joyce Ranch juniper eradication project deployed chain saws to lop off the invasive trees. These photos show the before (above) and after (below) appearance of the treated landscape. Photo courtesy NRCS



Junipers devastate the landscape, Walters said.

The trees push into a habitat, drawing up water vital to sagebrush and shading out a lot of forbs that sage-grouse use for sustenance. The loss off the cover of sagebrush

also makes the bird susceptible to predators.

Much like his trailblazing fight with the federal government over stock water rights, Nettleton jumped

— See **Resource**, Page 21



✓ Resource: Cattle, wildlife aided by Joyce work

From Page 20

in line to help the SGI implement the eradication plan.

“Paul was one of the first to say, ‘Let’s give it a whack,’ ” Walters said.

The habitat and rangeland bounced back because removing junipers meant the return of natural springs and the chance for wet meadows to re-emerge.

“There were lots of forbs, and when you go there you see springs come back and water running,”

Walters said. “There’s more forage for cows, and you see the wildlife come back.”

It also made the Nettletons’ job easier when it came time to get the herd together.

“You can imagine trying to gather cows in country like that,” Walters said while comparing a 2011 slide of Brunzel Field, which was overrun with 640 “black dots” representing juniper trees to a photo from last year in which all the junipers had been cleared out.

Similar gains were seen in Tiddie Springs between 2014 and 2023 and the Pedracini portion of the ranch’s range between 2011 and 2023, Walters demonstrated.

The transformation was drastic once junipers were wiped from the area.

“It kind of changed the whole landscape,” Walters said. “One day you can walk into a field (with juniper infestation), and the next day

— See *Resource*, Page 23



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Another Joyce Ranch project brings water to cattle on the Fossil Butte winter range. The tire trough (above) is fed from a tank (below, left), sometimes with a solar-powered pump (below, right). Photos courtesy NRCS





✓ Resource: Improvements are built to last decades

From Page 21

it could look kind of foreign.”

And Walters saw the transformation in real time.

“I remember sitting on a hill with Paul watching Silvino and his crew, and you could just see the trees fall as they went along,” he said.

Walters said the young juniper seedlings that have returned won’t produce seeds for more than a decade. But there are plans to keep the infestation potential at bay.

“We’ll take one more whack at it,”

he said. “One more treatment should do some good.”

The Nettletons did more to improve the water supply on their winter range, too.

A solar-powered pump was installed along with a 12,000-gallon storage tank and an 1,100-gallon tire stock reservoir to bring water to cattle wintering on a 45-acre piece of Joyce range.

“It’s pretty dry country,” Walters said.

NRCS funding helped pay for the

project, which features a gravity-fed supply of water to the stock tank, too.

The Fossil Butte range project helped keep cattle moving while looking for winter forage, which helps preserve the resource.

The plan is to help wildlife, too, as the reservoir will remain full during the summertime.

“We built it to last, and it’s going to be there for decades and help our operation for decades,” Chad Nettleton said.

— JPB



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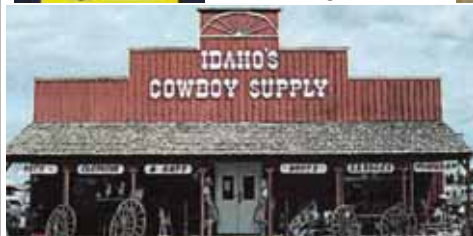
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AG 2024



Next-gen cattle rancher eager to contribute

by Matea Jaca

My name is Matea Jaca. I'm 19 years old. I come from a very rural small-town ranching community in Reynolds Creek. Our family's operation has been going on since 1906, and I am proud to be the sixth generation to carry forward our 118-year-old cow-calf operation, farm, and feeder cattle feedlot.

I graduated from Melba Jr./Sr. High School in 2022 and currently attend the College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls set to graduate in the spring. My pursuit includes associate degrees in General Agriculture, Animal Science and Agribusiness.

Remarkably, I will graduate from CSI with three associate degrees in just two years, totaling 90-plus college credits.

My roots in the beef industry run deep, undeniably shaping me into the person I am today. I am deeply involved in our operation, handling tasks such as feeding, cattle movement and sorting, irrigation, fence construction, calf vaccination, cattle handling, and even formulating and adjusting feed rations for our feedlot. I am the embodiment of a rancher, living and breathing this way of life. My unwavering passion for agriculture sets me apart from my peers, driving my commitment to sustaining family ranches, including our own, in an ever-changing economic landscape.

Growing up in this industry has solidified my dedication to this lifestyle. As a child, I would awaken to the early-morning sunrise and the sound of birds chirping as I prepared



Matea Jaca participates in a branding in Junayo in 2023. Submitted photo

to ride out for the day's ranch work. From a young age, I accompanied my dad on various tasks, whether it was enduring bumpy tractor rides while farming, checking cows, inspecting the feedlot, irrigating, or moving cattle. I was always by his side, eager to learn and contribute.

Choosing to pursue agriculture-related degrees was a natural progression for me, driven by a desire to expand my knowledge of the latest issues facing the agricultural world. I aim to bring new innovative ideas back to the ranch and assess their potential impact. The idea of returning to the family business to continue the legacy for future generations has always been my goal.

The influence of my grandparents, Elias and Inez Jaca, and my parents, Martin and Susan Jaca, played a significant role in my decision to pursue a college education. They encouraged me to explore the world, meet new people, establish networking connec-

tions that I will cherish forever and frequently look back upon. They also instilled in me the assurance that the ranch would be waiting for my return.

Looking ahead, my plans involve introducing fresh ideas to our operation and evaluating their effectiveness. Technological advancements have revolutionized agriculture, and I am eager to leverage these innovations to enhance our practices.

Despite the daily challenges we face in producing agricultural commodities, the rewards are immeasurable. Each obstacle we overcome brings us closer to our goal of serving the world with quality agricultural products.

I am deeply thankful for my upbringing in the beef industry, and my passion for agriculture and beef production is unwavering. I eagerly anticipate the opportunity to return home and immerse myself in this industry every day!



✓ Dunning: Brothers, wives continue family legacy

From Page 12

region in 2020 from Boise when we found out we were pregnant with our first child,” she said. “We wanted to afford him the same country lifestyle both my husband, Brayden, and I grew up with.”

The landing spot was the old Claire Leavitt dairy farm, 60 acres of raw ag land with little infrastructure.

“We really had no idea we were going to build a business on this land when we first stepped foot onto it,” Heather said.

The work began when Brayden called Parker and his sister-in-law Kacie, and Holly and Kyle began renovating the milking parlor.

“It was a little overwhelming at first, but we felt a divine pull to the land and decided the work was worth it,” Heather said.

Now the focal point of the winery, which has its grand opening this

weekend, the milking barn, once with dirt floors and Holsteins, has been transformed into a tasting room with a polished western interior. There are still nods to the dairy past, but the wide-open layout features the tasting bar, a sitting area with a fireplace and a long wooden table for group gatherings.

The Dunning brothers and their wives are business partners in the winery, which has been open since November and features Knotty Brothers pinot gris and rosé from the Willamette Valley and Dunning Estates Tempranillo from the Snake River Valley.

• Parker is head of production and a Level 1 sommelier.

“His talents are endless and his creative input towards any project are just the tip of the iceberg on what makes him so valuable to the team,” Heather said.

• Kacie started at Domaine Serene

in Oregon and runs the tasting room.

“Both her wine knowledge and palate is unbeatable, and something our customers benefit greatly from in the tasting room as she curates pairings and suggestions,” Heather said.

• Brayden heads up the winery’s business relations.

“His ability and desire to navigate intimidating projects, passion for the industry, and business background make him an absolutely critical player when it comes to the success of our winery,” Heather said.

• Heather runs business operations and The Slope, an all-natural farm stand and Christmas tree lot.

“I like to think I keep the waters smooth for the rest of the team to showcase their incredible skill sets,” she said. “I feel and felt back in 2021 divinely led to this endeavor, and I have seen God’s fingerprints all over this journey.” — JPB



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Elections loom for conservation supervisors



The red line marks the Owyhee Conservation District boundaries.

It's an election year for some supervisors in the conservation districts serving Owyhee County.

Two supervisors each in the Owyhee Conservation District and the Bruneau River Soil and Water Conservation District are up for election.

Owyhee district administrative assistant Ali Brezenski said the election will take place during the board of supervisors meeting on June 11. The meeting is open to the public, and anyone living within the district is welcome to come participate in the election.

The meetings are held at noon inside the U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center, 250 N. Bruneau Hwy., in Marsing.

Supervisor John Cossel and board chair Andrea McRae are up for reelection this year.

A third supervisor spot is open, Brezenski said. Joe Mansidor resigned and moved out of state, she said.

"We welcome anyone with agriculture conservation interests to attend one of our meetings and see if they would like to become a board member," Brezenski said.

Members serve at-large and must live within the district boundaries.

McRae has served since 2016, and Douglas Hipwell is the newest member, having joined in 2022.

Cossel has been a supervisor since 1980, and current secretary/treasurer Tim Volk joined the board in 1985.

In the Bruneau River Soil and Water Conservation District, board vice-chair Russ Turner and supervisor Dale Hooley are up for reelection. Russell Schiermeier is the board chair, and the contact number for the district is (208) 845-2299.

Bruneau board members chair Mark Frost, secretary/treasurer Chris Black, and supervisor Sid Erwin have three years left on their terms.

The candidate filing deadline ended on Friday.

The Balanced Rock Soil Conservation District also has county ties:

- Rick Rodgers, Castleford, board chair. Term expires 2026. Serving since 1996.

- Rick Pearson, Buhl, vice-chair. Term expires 2024. Serving since 2004.

- John Hurley, Castleford, secretary/treasurer. Term expires 2026. Serving since 2026.

- Kurt Loomis, Buhl. Term expires 2024. Serving since 2016.

- Rylee Reynolds, Castleford. Term expires 2024. Serving since 2024.

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✓ Efficiency: Projects help reduce water contaminants

From Page 7

furrow/gravity to a sprinkler system adding further benefits towards water quantity savings and water quality improvements.”

Jump Creek is currently not supporting its intended beneficial uses because of high amounts of sedi-

ment loading from agricultural fields and drains in the area, OCD officials said. No specific best management practices are referenced in the Agriculture Implementation Plan pertinent to Jump Creek, but rather, any and all practices that can reduce sediment loading are desired, offi-

cials said.

The flood irrigation-to-wheel lines project will reduce sediment flows into Jump Creek by 14 tons per year, reduce phosphorous by 23 pounds per year and nitrogen by 45 pounds per year.

“Both of those projects turned out fantastic. They’re so impressive,” OCD board of supervisors chair Andrea McRae said.

“Everything is improved for the end-user, we’re saving water, and we’re going to see water quality benefits as well on Jump Creek and the Snake River.”

— This is part of an article originally published in the August 2023 edition of “Conservation the Idaho Way,” the ISWCC’s newsletter.

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About the Owyhee Conservation District

The Owyhee Conservation District was organized in 1953. At that time, producers in the Owyhee district focused on raising beef cattle, dairy cattle and sheep, along with hay, grain, and pasture.

Farmers and ranchers turned to the district for help with livestock water developments, grazing management, Halogeton and brush control, erosion control, irrigation improvements,

and aid in reducing salt and alkali concentrations.

Since the 1950s, the district's programs have grown and changed to meet the needs of today's modern farming and the diversified area. Producers now grow livestock and forage, sugar beets, potatoes, field and sweet corn, orchards, onions and beans — among the most common crops seen today.

Intensive farming occurs in the valleys along the Snake River while livestock and rangeland grazing dominates the higher elevations. Now, the district is focused on the natural resource issues involving water quality/quantity, soil health of rangelands, healthy riparian areas and crop lands, preserving wildlife and creating habitat, and controlling noxious weeds.

With ongoing drought conditions still affecting portions of the state, Owyhee's focus on water quality and quantity issues play a large factor in the natural resource priorities at hand, officials said.

— Steve Stuebner

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OCD info

Board of supervisors

Chair — Andrea McRae (joined 2016)

Secretary/treasurer — Tim Volk (joined 1985)

Supervisor — John Cossel (joined 1980)

Supervisor — Douglas Hipwell (joined 2022)

Note — There is a vacancy with the departure of Joe Mansidor

Meetings — Noon, second Thursday of each month at district office

Administrative assistant — Ali Brezenski

Address — 250 N. Bruneau Hwy., Marsing

Phone — (208) 880-6284

Email — alib.ocd@gmail.com



Other projects spring up in Reynolds, Jump Creek

by Steve Stuebner

Idaho Soil and Water Conservation
Commission

The Owyhee Conservation District won two additional Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA) grants in 2023 to convert an old concrete open ditch canal to an enclosed pipeline and to implement an irrigation efficiency project.

Shovel-ready for the current off-season, the Bailey Road Pipeline project will apply a \$135,000 WQPA grant and funding from the Owyhee Watershed Council, NRCS, and the Reynolds Creek Irrigation District to replace approximately 7,100 feet of a dilapidated concrete ditch. Currently, the concrete ditch conveyance system is broken, missing large chunks, and earthen in multiple locations because of old age and loss of structural integrity, district officials said.

The ditch was installed in 1967 with an estimated 30-year lifespan. After more than 50 years of use, the Reynolds Creek Irrigation District looks to continue its implementation efforts and convert this old system to a buried pipeline.

Reynolds Creek Irrigation District has been working to convert all canals in the district to an enclosed pipeline. The district already has replaced nearly 4,100 feet of cracked and worn-out cement ditch with new irrigation pipe. This project will directly tie into the work the district has already completed, officials said.

The project will directly benefit five landowners for a combined 550



Water quality improvements on farm fields below Jump Creek canyon will benefit the creek and the Snake River. Photo by Steve Stuebner

acres, officials said. However, after implementation, roughly 15 water users in the district will benefit from the efficiency improvements made.

The Bailey Road Pipeline is the third phase of the irrigation district's infrastructure overhaul.

"Considering that a large majority of our state is faced with the challenge of replacing aging irrigation infrastructure, the (OCD) feels that the impact made by this piping project will have an immediate effect on water quantity savings in an area plagued by ongoing and worsening drought conditions," district officials said.

"By putting the water in an enclosed delivery pipeline, the proposed

project will eliminate current water losses and help reduce the electricity that is used to pump water to the Reynolds farming area."

Another \$130,000 WQPA grant involved shovel-ready winter work with producer Gordon Trout near Jump Creek to convert a 42-acre field from flood irrigation to pivot irrigation. Trout is contributing \$64,158 to the \$194,000 project.

Two pivots, irrigation equipment and infrastructure will be installed, officials said. The pivots will increase water efficiency by 80 percent.

"The 42-acre parcel is currently irrigated through siphon tubes and leaky gated pipe," officials said. "The parcel directly borders Jump Creek. The project will provide immediate benefits to Jump Creek and the lower Jump Creek sub-watershed. The landowner plans to grow corn, an intensive row crop, for one to two more seasons and then convert to a long-term alfalfa rotation."

Expected benefits from the Trout pivot project include reducing sediment flows by 44 tons per year, reducing nitrogen by 70 pounds per year, and reducing phosphorous by 141 pounds per year.

The Owyhee district has been working on making water quality improvements to Jump Creek for more than a decade. However, more work needs to be done, officials said.

—This is part of an article originally published in the August 2023 edition of "Conservation the Idaho Way," the ISWCC's newsletter.



Producers preserve fields with OCD rentals



Farmers in the Owyhee Conservation District can rent the Oteco pivot track filler to restore the ruts left behind by the movement of their pivot irrigation systems. Photo by Owyhee Conservation District

by Steve Stuebner

Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

The Owyhee Conservation District's mission to improve resource and water quality also includes new equipment.

The OCD Board of Supervisors has purchased new equipment to rent out to producers for a fair price.

The two pieces of equipment include an Oteco pivot track filler and a Verminator machine to combat gopher infestations, a common problem in the area.

Board chair Andrea McRae really likes the Oteco pivot track-filler.

"That's the coolest little piece of equipment I've ever seen," she said.

Repeated passes by pivot sprinklers compacts the soil, she noted, and sometimes the wheels of pivots can get buried in soft and wet ground, causing erosion and operational issues. The pivot track-filler drops gravel into the pivot tracks to provide a more robust surface to keep the pivot sprinkler at the proper elevation to do its work most efficiently.

"It's amazing how much gravel you can use to fill those tracks," she said.

The Oteco pivot track filler costs \$200 per day to rent, and the Verminator costs \$50 per day to rent.

For more information about the Owyhee Conservation District, contact Ali Brezenski, alib.ocd@gmail.com or (208) 880-6284.

— This is part of an article originally published in the August 2023 edition of "Conservation the Idaho Way," the ISWCC's newsletter.

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✓ Cattle: Educating next generation keeps ag vital

From Page 17

near the growth that nearby Ada and Canyon counties are seeing, growth, development and loss of farmland is becoming a concern in Owyhee County, Blackstock says.

“We’re worried about all the growth and houses coming in and the farms getting subdivided,” he says. “It’s coming this way.”

Blackstock says there’s no simple solution when it comes to preserving

farmland, and private property rights — a landowner’s right to sell their property if they choose to — will always be respected in Idaho.

At the same time, he adds:

“If we want to continue to produce food in this valley, we need to figure out something.

“I’d rather have a big farm than houses any day.”

A good deal of the county Farm Bureau organization’s focus is

on supporting youth and educating them about agriculture, Corder says.

“The goal is educating our kids about agriculture so they know our roots and where we came from,” he says.

Another major focus, Corder says, “is being there to support and protect the producers in any way we can and educating the newcomers about agriculture and why it’s important to the county and state.”

✓ Owyhee: County farms twice as big as state average

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and in farmland,” he said. “The amount of farm decline is significant. It’s particularly significant in this survey.”

To put the loss of 20 million acres of U.S. farmland in perspective, Vilsack pointed out that would equal the land mass of every New England state, with the exception of Connecticut.

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation president Bryan Searle, who farms in Shelley, said the loss of farmland is also of concern to Idaho’s agricultural industry and shows why it is important for IFBF and other farm organizations to continue to find ways to try to slow the rate of farmland loss in the state.

According to a University of Idaho study released this year, agriculture is directly and indirectly responsible for 13 percent of Idaho’s total gross state product, one in every nine jobs and 17 percent of the state’s total economic output.

“It’s heart-wrenching to learn we lost

more than 2,000 farms and 144,000 acres of farmland,” Searle said. “As Idaho Farm Bureau joins other organizations in trying to find a way to slow the loss of the state’s precious farm ground, this latest ag census data serves as sort of a wake-up call on the importance of those efforts.”

The Census of Agriculture was first conducted in 1840. Data is available for the national, state and county levels, as well as by congressional district, ZIP code and by watershed.

“For decades, the information provided through the Census of Agriculture has helped us understand American ag,” Chavonda Jacobs-Young, USDA Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, said during the livestream event.

She said the data is critically important in supporting sound policy and decision-making.

“Bottom line, we need data to make well-informed decisions,” Jacobs-Young said.

Other national and Idaho highlights

of the 2022 Census of Agriculture:

- The average size of a farm in Idaho during 2022 was 505 acres, up 8 percent from 468 acres in 2017.

- Nationally, the average size of a farm in 2022 was 463 acres, up from 441 acres in 2017.

- Canyon County had the most farms in Idaho in 2022 with 2,311. Twin Falls County ranked second (1,169), followed by Ada County (1,142) and Bingham County (1,081).

- When it comes to total value of agricultural production, Cassia County ranked No. 1 among the state’s 44 counties with \$1.15 billion in 2022. Twin Falls County ranked second (\$1.14 billion), followed by Gooding County (\$1.12 billion), Jerome County (\$944 million) and Canyon County (\$829 million).

- The average age of an agricultural producer in Idaho was 56.6 in 2022, up slightly from 56.4 percent in 2017.

- Nationally, the average age of a farmer ticked up from 57.5 in 2017 to 58.1 in 2022.

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