



Dick Mason/The Observer, File

ReedCo Forestry on Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, works to create a firebreak at the Mount Emily Recreation Area near La Grande. The Union County-based company in January 2022 was awarded a contract to do forest management work that will include some logging in the 300-acre Red Apple area of MERA.

## MERA

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In 2021, it created a 6-mile firebreak along MERA's Mainline Trail.

Chambers said ReedCo did an excellent job of creating the firebreak, adding that the forest management project will be much different because the firebreak work involved clear-cutting but the work in the Red Apple area will not.

He said that trail corridors of the Red Apple, Rock Garden, Lower Hot-shot and MERA loop trails will be flagged to help ReedCo identify them, avoid damaging them and limit the crossing of them.

Chambers said any damage that may occur will be repaired by the county. He added that in the interest of safety, there will be some closures while work is being done.

"These closures will be limited and may allow for weekend access, something to be coordinated with the contractor," he said.

The project area — 300 acres — is about 8% of MERA's total acreage of 3,700 acres.

Forrest Warren, a member of MERA's advisory committee, said he does not like the idea that the management project will be completed over two winters because it means the Red Apple trails may be tied up over a longer span. Still, he sees an upside because the work will be done when there is frozen ground and snow cover.

"It will be a lot better on trails," he said. "There will be a lot more no-trace logging."

Warren, echoing a concern expressed by many in late 2021, said he wishes more public input had been given serious consideration before the decision to move forward on the forest management plan was made, but he said he is impressed with Chambers'

concern for MERA.

"Sean has the best interest of MERA at heart," he said.

In his address to the Union County Board of Commissioners on Jan. 5 before its vote, Chambers noted there were a number of meetings over the last two years where plans for forest management work at

Red Apple were discussed, including a Union County Board of Commissioners work session in August 2020 that was followed by a field review at the Owsley Canyon Trailhead not long after that meeting, as well as a field review in November 2021.

The parks coordinator believes the county has

been transparent about the development of its plans for a forest management project meant to protect a cherished portion of the Mount Emily Recreation Area.

"We all appreciate what a gem this is for our community," Chambers said, "and we are intent on making it shine brighter."

## Miles Franklin Thompson

October 22, 1947 - December 24, 2021

Miles Franklin Thompson, 74, of Elgin, OR, died December 24, 2021, at St. Mary's Hospital in Walla Walla. At his request there will be no services.

Miles was born October 22, 1947, in Nyssa, Oregon, to Mabel McDaniel Thompson and John Frank Thompson. He attended school in Parma, Idaho, graduating from Parma High School in 1966.

After graduation, Miles enlisted in the Army where he became a Sergeant in the military police, spending a year in Korea during the Vietnam War, and receiving several medals and commendations before receiving an honorable discharge. He then became an appliance repair service technician for Sears Roebuck & Co. in Boise.

Miles married Larrissa Schmidt and later became the proud parents of Miles (Mick) Thompson. After moving to Baker, Miles and his father-in-law Marv Schmidt partnered in the appliance repair business of "S & T Service" for years. Miles took over the business after Marv retired.

Miles later married Marilyn (Scott) Helman in 1979 in Baker, where they lived until after they finished renovating her childhood home outside of Elgin (at Cricket Flat) in 1994. They lived out at "The Ranch" where Miles loved more than anything to walk out the back door to hunt with his dearest friends and family. They remained married until Marilyn's passing on July 29, 2021.

Miles was always known for being a hard worker both at his job and out at the ranch. He worked for Arrow store in La Grande, doing appliance repair for almost 30 years, working up to the two weeks prior to his death.

During his many years in Baker you could usually find Miles with his family and friends up at Phillips Lake riding his "suped up" jet skis on the weekends. The jet skis were never new, they were always

traded for work he'd done on someone's appliances, but he rebuilt them in ways that always made them the fastest, most popular to ride, (and likely the most dangerous) on the lake.



Miles will probably be best remembered for his athleticism by both his fellow softball team members and his grandkids as he was the first to let them know that he was the fastest runner you ever met, followed by a foot race to prove his point. He loved playing softball on teams in Baker and La Grande, traveling throughout the state for tournaments. He was usually the oldest (and sometimes the fastest) on the team and was affectionately known as "Pops" by his fellow teammates.

He also spent over 25 years as a member of the Baker Elks Drum and Bugle Corps, playing the trumpet and making lifelong friendships with his fellow band members. For many of those years, Miles played the difficult trumpet solo known as "The Bull." He loved the Corps and had endless stories of the antics and shenanigans that occurred during their many trips across the Northwest for performances.

Miles loved his grandchildren and great-grandchild very much. Survivors include his sister, Charlotte of Alaska; son, Miles (Mick) Thompson of Boise; his step-son, Darin Helman and step-daughter, Kristi Helman both of Baker City; his grandchildren, Lindsey Helman, Logan Hagey, Connor Hagey, Eian DeLint, Shaun (Lucy) Roland, and Evann Brown; a nephew, Jeff Cremer; and a great-grandchild Jackson Gonzales.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Mabel and John Thompson, his wife, Marilyn Thompson, his brother, Pete Thompson, his step-daughter, Kari DeLint, and his granddaughter, Katie Helman.

Miles and Marilyn's ashes will be spread over the ranch in the spring where they can bicker together eternally.

## Norman Payne

September 21, 1924 - December 21, 2021

Norman Payne, age 97, of La Grande, died December 21, 2021 at his home. Those who wish may make contributions in his memory to the Back Pack Program through Daniels-Knopp Funeral, Cremation & Life Celebration Center.

Norman was born on September 21, 1924, the son of Charles and Cora Mea Payne in Millersville, Tennessee. He moved west and worked in CCC Camps and working hops in Yakima until he was an adult. He married Mary 'Marie' Sisco

Ellis in 1951. He worked for Boise Cascade as a millwright and later drove forklift until his retirement. He was a devoted husband. Marie preceded him in death on March 7, 2020.

Survivors include his children, Odis Ellis of Woodburn, Oregon, Bennie Ellis of La Grande and Rose Morton of Huntville, Tennessee; 7 grandchildren; several great-grandchildren and other relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by brother, Charles and son, Otto Payne.

## Dillon Lee Rogers

January 20, 1983 - December 17, 2021

Dillon Lee Rogers, 38, of Elgin passed away on Friday, December 17, 2021, at St Alphonsus Regional Medical Center, Boise, ID. A celebration of life will be held in the spring at his Nana's house in Reno.



Dillon was born on January 20, 1983 at St. Mary's, Reno, NV, to Bruce and Heidi Rogers. He resided in Reno, NV, Gardnerville, NV, and Elgin, OR. He attended Veterans, Scarcelli, Pa Wa Lu, and Douglas High School, where he was on the basketball and football teams.

Dillon was employed at Local Harvest, Timber's Feedery, and Michael's Motor Sports, Reno, NV. Dillon was a kind and humorous man that had a deep love for his family. He loved his mom's cooking, shooting with his dad, Jeopardy, reptiles, Shark Week, Atlantis Sunday Brunch — prime rib and crab. Most of all, he loved sharing his knowledge and time with this nephew, Timber.

Dillon is survived by his parents, Heidi Rogers, of Cove, OR, Bruce Rog-

ers of Elgin, OR; sisters, Harvest Rogers-Cocke (David) of Elgin, OR,

Karina Heavilin (Justin) of Reno, NV and Sydney Heavilin of Reno, NV; 4 nieces and nephews, Timber and Maple Cocke and Phoenix and Luna Baker; aunts and uncles,

Jared and Debbie Rogers, Susie and Casey Harris, Peggy and Dan Morris, Steve Frandsen, Christy Frandsen-Oiz, Tracey Nelson, Scott and Lynda Frandsen, Lisa Webb, Michela and Robert Leighton, Kathy Brill and Leslie Rogers; grandmother, Billie Jean Rogers; Nana, Joy Jacqueline Frandsen. Dillon had 33 cousins that rallied together in prayer, love, warmth, laughter, and comfort in the last few weeks of his life, just as they have always done for one another. He will be missed by all. He was preceded in death by his grandfather, Jared "Bud" Rogers; grandfather, Jerold Lee Frandsen; cousin, Cambria J. Leighton and Aunt, Elyane Frandsen.

Online condolences may be made to the family at [www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com](http://www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com).

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A household is defined for the purposes of the Lifeline program as any individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline service is not transferable, and only eligible consumers may enroll in the program. Consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain Lifeline telephone or broadband service can be punished by fine or imprisonment and can be barred from the program.

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