

First phase of McKee Bridge restoration starts

BY ROBERT E. VAN HEUIT

The first phase of the McKee Bridge restoration has begun.

The McKee Bridge Historical Society (MBHS) commenced raising matching funds when Jackson County agreed to apply for a grant to restore the bridge. The grant was made by the federal government on August 2, 2012. It totaled \$547,250, of which 10.27% must be raised as matching funds (\$56,202). MBHS is committed to raising all of the matching funds. Of that amount, \$12,000 was needed by January 2013 in order for the initial engineering work to begin.

By the beginning of December 2012, only about \$8,000 had been raised. The Mid Rogue Independent Physician Association and CareSource/Mid Rogue Health Plan came to the rescue with a

commitment to match up to \$2,000 in contributions. Spurred on by this generous commitment, MBHS received almost \$3,000 between the beginning of December and the first week of January. MBHS was able to deposit \$12,000 with Jackson County in January 2013.

The State of Oregon administers the grant and was able to proceed with qualifying engineering firms and then selecting the best-qualified firm to design the repairs for the bridge. Late in January, the state selected Oregon Bridge Engineering Company (OBEC) to do the engineering work. A fee for the work will be negotiated with OBEC in February 2013. Now that the matching funds are in place, the federal government's share of the funds will be sent to the state. It

is expected that the design of the repair, review by environmental organizations and the Department of Fish and Game, will take most of 2013 to complete.

During 2013, MBHS will be working hard to raise the remaining \$44,202. We hope to raise that amount of money by January 2014. If we do, the restoration project will go to bid in the spring of 2014 and the construction will take place during the summer of 2014. If we don't raise that amount of money by then, the repair will be delayed until the matching funds are raised. The board of directors of MBHS will be asking a number of charitable foundations to help us with the needed funds. However, all friends of McKee Bridge will need to help also. Look for our fund-raising thermometer next to the

Ramsay Realty sign in Ruch and the one at the bridge.

Your contributions can be sent to MBHS, P.O. Box 854, Jacksonville, OR 97530 or through PayPal at our website (www.mckeehistoricalcoveredbridge.org). MBHS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. We would like to thank all of the generous people who have already assisted in raising the initial \$12,000. Without your help we couldn't start this phase of the restoration. If you have questions or comments, please call Bob at 541-899-2927 or email rvanh2000@yahoo.com.

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FIREFIGHTERS

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What's in those alarm statistics? The lion's share of responses is medical—a traumatic injury, a motor-vehicle accident, a heart attack, or a broken leg several miles down a trail. Wildland and structure fire protection alarms include homes and other buildings, chimney flues, and power-line hazards. Mutual aid is the many federal, state, county and rural agencies that the AVFD cooperates with in emergency response for our safety. Thankfully there are very few false alarms.

To celebrate the successes of these exceptional men and women, each year there is an awards banquet hosted by the Friends of the AVFD. The Friends have been providing family events and raising additional funds to support our firefighters for over 30 years. They, too, are always looking for new recruits with fresh ideas to support our firefighters. Chief Fillis honored this year's award winners at the Friends banquet on February 1 (see box at right).

In the beautiful Applegate Valley, we live in wildfire country. This adds urgency

to our responsibilities to protect our homes and be prepared for emergencies. This time of year, most of the calls for help to AVFD are related to flue fires or escaped pile burns. We can support our community fire team by ensuring our homes and surrounding properties are as fire safe as possible.

There is a very useful safety checklist on the AVFD website at www.applegatefd.com. Take the time to review it and consider your family's preparedness. Be sure you have a current list of prescription drugs that each family member takes so that this can be handed to the emergency medical technician when aid is needed. Being prepared truly is your best defense.

Perhaps you have time to pitch in, help your community in times of need, support the Friends of the AVFD (they could use your help), or just stop by and say thanks to our firefighters. We salute them.

If you have any questions, call Carey Chaput at 541-899-1050.

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Friends of the AFVD 2012 Awards

Dick Rodgers	Firefighter of the Year
A.J. Zanitsch	Rookie of the Year
Cody Goodnough	Emergency Medical Technician of the Year
Dick Rodgers	Most Alarms District Wide (142 alarms)
Bill Dunlap	Most Drills District Wide (91% drills)
Tailese Goodnough	Officer of the Year
Randi Martin	Junior Firefighter of the Year
Brad Barnes	District Employee of the Year
William Schmidt	Fire Prevention/Public Education Presenter of the Year
Greg Gilbert	Instructor of the Year
Anthony Ryan	Annual Maintenance Award
Bob Ziegler	Annual Maintenance Award
Pattie Bakke	Spouse of the Year
Ed Temple	Spirit Award
Carey Chaput	Hall of Flame (Long-term dedicated service to the fire district and the citizens we serve)
Richard Goodnough	Chief's Award
Bob Etnier	Century Club Response to Alarms (115)
Landon Nistler	Century Club Response to Alarms (104)
Jack Lynch	High Drill Award (89%)

Tree School Rogue helps small-acreage owners

Registration opens on March 4 for Tree School Rogue, scheduled for Saturday, April 27, at Rogue Community College in Grants Pass. Tree School is a one-day mini-college for family forestland owners, small-acreage landowners, forestry contractors, and all natural resource enthusiasts interested in trees and forests. We're featuring 27 classes this year, including several perennial favorites and some new offerings, all taught by experienced resource-management professionals. Classes vary in length from 1.5 to 3.5 hours and you can participate in up to four over the course of the day.

Tree School attendees have enjoyed the wide variety of class choices offered in a single event. This is a chance to learn from experts while rubbing shoulders with like-minded landowners. You're guaranteed to pick up some practical tips and come home with something you can use on your own property.

The cost of Tree School Rogue is \$40 per person, or \$49 with lunch. The registration deadline is April 17. There is no walk-in registration. The Tree School program brochure is available

online at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/sorec/Forestry/>, or pick up a copy at the OSU Extension Service office at 215 Ringuette Street, Grants Pass, or 569 Hanley Road, Central Point.

Among the classes this year are:

- All about Water Rights
- Insect and Disease Problems of Southern Oregon Conifers & Hardwoods
- Managing Shrublands and other Non-conifer Plant Communities
- Log Sales: Maximize Revenue, Minimize Risk
- The Biscuit Fire—10 Years Later
- Floral Greens to Edibles: Non-timber Forest Products from your Woodland
- Small-scale Forestry Equipment and its Uses
- Commercial Truffle Cultivation in Western Oregon
- Noxious Weed Control: Yellow Star Thistle, Knapweeds & Thistles
- Revegetating Ground Disturbances with Native Plants

For more information, contact Max Bennett at 541-776-7371 x221 or max.bennett@oregonstate.edu.

Poetry Corner

Near Chehelam Pass

by Paul Tipton

Cows come down from red barns
Into the black mud of the swale.
Gray pine clapboard houses.
Berry fields and nut orchards.

Small squalls of rain
Move up the wide valley.
Small arrowheads of geese
Point across the large gray sky.

And all this green
Replaces an old woman's life
Whose hair has turned to snow,
Her mind into the poem.

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