



Bill Wallner with a nearly 100-year-old F-12 tractor engine. (Photo by Christina Hill)

Engines keep his motor running

By CHRISTINA HILL
Correspondent

With nearly 90 years of life experience under his belt, Illinois Valley resident Bill Wallner has seen many changes during the decades, especially when it comes to advances in engines and tractors.

But nothing gets this “old-timer’s” engine running better than restoring a century-old F-12 tractor engine, an International engine, or an Eclipse power plant.

Wallner, 89, has been collecting and restoring gasoline engines, diesel engines and tractor engines during the past four decades.

His expertise and experience has landed him in the Early Day Gas Engine and Tractor Association Hall of Fame. He also earned the prestigious title, Member of the Year in the national association.

“I’ve helped people all across the United States and in seven foreign countries,” he said. “I guess that’s why I got this plaque. I shared my knowledge with lots of people. I’ve restored engines and made a lot of parts for people, too,” said Wallner.

At one point, Wallner’s property on Laurel Road looked like a museum.

“I had over 100 engines and several tractors,” he said. “I’ve gotten rid of a lot of them. My health has been on the rocks the last few years,” he said.

Wallner, who underwent triple bypass heart surgery slightly more than two years ago, hasn’t let his health stop him though. He’s “slowed down” quite a bit, but he still likes to tinker every once in a while.

Wallner also attends monthly meetings of the

Early Day Gas Engine and Tractor Association Branch 9, the group he single-handedly started in Cave Junction in the early 1980s. Wallner also opened a couple other clubs in California.

Besides starting clubs, Wallner, with the help of a friend and the late “Debb” Potts, started Pottsville near Grants Pass, where annual engine and tractor shows are held on Father’s Day.

“Somebody told us old Potts had a lot of equipment we might be interested in, so me and a friend went out there and saw a guy welding in a shop wearing raggedy old coveralls, and he said, ‘What can I do you for?’

“We told him we wanted to use his property to have a show that would educate the public and show them how things worked 100 years ago. He said, ‘I like what you guys stand for, the place is yours.’

“We helped build that place up to what it is now. Old ‘Debbs’ got interested in it too and started participating,” Wallner recalled.

Wallner’s passion for antique engines has always been there, he said, but he wasn’t able to turn his love for engines into a full-time hobby until he retired 33 years ago.

“I retired after working construction in Alaska for 35 years,” he explained. “We moved here in 1976, and that’s when I really started collecting and restoring engines full time,” Wallner said.

Wallner, who was born and raised in his first 25 years in Yankton, S.D., moved West when times worsened.

Before relocating, Wallner worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps for 18

months in the Black Hills, where he built fire trails, roads and did surveying.

“I left the farm in South Dakota in 1941 because we had several years of crop failure,” he noted. “I came out West and was picking berries, starving to death. I couldn’t get a job anywhere because I wasn’t union; then finally I got a job constructing Elmdorf Air Force base in Alaska. There weren’t any Air Force bases there until the ‘40s,” Wallner explained.

Wallner worked on the base until he retired and moved to Cave Junction. He lived here with his wife, until she died a while back.

“I was getting lonely and prayed to God and said, ‘Please don’t let me die alone. Then not too long afterwards I got a letter from Fae,” Wallner said.

Fae was Wallner’s neighbor, who had grown up on a farm across the street from him in South Dakota.

They hadn’t seen each other in several decades. Fae was writing him to find out how many of the “old-timers” remained.

“We had dated when we were younger; then after she went through a couple of husbands and I went through a couple of wives -- over 60 years later, we got back together,” Wallner said with a laugh.

They were married in April three years ago. Fae had lived in Yankton, where she was born and lived 86 years before moving here three years ago.

Wallner has five children of his own, and Fae has three. Together they have several grandchildren, great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren.

that “the council does not believe the general fund should again subsidize” either the water or sewer departments.

Increased costs for operating the systems, plus maintenance and repairs, are listed among reasons for the rise in fees. The full new rate table is at city hall.

name for Hanby Lane.

The council said it’s possible that there might be a problem with the name, as there is a similar one in Grants Pass.

Seniors getting their produce

A record number of low-income seniors statewide -- numbering more than 21,000 -- have an opportunity to take advantage of the state’s agriculture bounty this summer and fall through the Senior Food Direct Nutrition Program.

Now in its fourth year, the program is a partnership of the Oregon Dept. of Human Services (DHS) and the Oregon and U.S. Departments of Agriculture.

Eligible participants can buy fresh produce from authorized farmers at farmers markets and farm stands through Oct. 31. Each participant receives 20 \$2 coupons.

Kerbyville Farm in Kerby is a participant.

“I am pleased to report that more and more Oregon seniors are taking advantage of this nutrition program and

that they are able to access fresh produce from Oregon farmers” said Gov. Kulon-goski. “It is a relationship that is grounded firmly in the Oregon tradition of helping those who are most in need with our own resources and products.”

Seniors who meet the following guidelines are eligible for the program:

*60 years or older.
*Enrolled in food stamps and/or Medicaid as of April 1, 2005.

*Living at home or with family, not in a facility where meals are provided.

*Monthly income does not exceed \$1,077 for a single person or \$1,443 for a couple.

DHS program coordinator Lauren Mitchell said that four years ago the program had limited participation and minimal interest. “Now the

demand has exceeded our capacity,” she said.

This year, out of 40,000 eligible low-income seniors, federal funds covered only 21,184. Mitchell attributes this year’s record participation not only to outreach and education, but also to word-of-mouth.

“The basis of most of the inquiries we get are from folks who learned about the program from their neighbors,” she said.

The program not only benefits at-risk families and low-income seniors, but supports local farmers markets and farmers. Oregon has more than 70 participating farmers markets and 412 farm stands located throughout the state.

Marion County leads the way with 53 farm stands, followed by Lane County with 42.

OSU Extended Campus highlights usage of long-distance education

The number of students taking courses through OSU Extended Campus, the award-winning distance education program at Oregon State University at Corvallis, has almost tripled during the past five years.

It has happened with a surge in course offerings, new degrees, an influx of students from all over the world, and a fundamental change in the nature of higher education, OSU said.

The traditional college student, educators say, is becoming a minority.

And in few places is that trend more evident than the enormous recent growth and interest in distance edu-

cation, especially at OSU. It is making college accessible to new generations of students.

“It’s now estimated that more than 75 percent of the students in higher education in the United States are those referred to as nontraditional, something other than the traditional 18-22-year-old resident student,” said Bill McCaughan, dean of OSU Extended Campus.

Dramatic improvements have occurred in the methods used to deliver distance education, said McCaughan, and many students indicate that online courses have provided them a more personal experience than their

face-to-face classes.

Distance education can provide a good fit for working students; people who hope to finish a degree options; older-than-average students; or those who can’t find the programs they need in their local area.

“Perhaps the most compelling aspect of distance education is that distance simply doesn’t mean much,” McCaughan said.

“It doesn’t make much difference whether a program is 30 miles away or 3,000 miles away.

“What students want are quality educational programs that meet their needs,” he said.

Home Valley Bank, Evergreen Federal, Kathy Mechling, M.D., & Wild River Brewing & Pizza Company Present

Siskiyou Bluegrass Festival

Benefit for Illinois Valley Chamber of Commerce

Lake Selmac • Saturday • July 30
10am to 10pm

Featuring

Joe Ross / Roots of Bluegrass, Gold River, The Goldman Family, Jefferson, Swing State, Nancy Spencer, The Kuzins, Blue Biscuit, Moon Mountain Ramblers, Siskiyou Summit, The Emmons Sisters

Kids' Jam

Wild River Brew Garden, Taylor's Sausage Food, Selma Center Desserts

This is a Family Event
Prepare for HOT weather
Dogs on Leash ONLY
Bring Lawn Chairs

Tickets at the Gate
Under 5 yrs. FREE
Adults \$10
5-18 yrs. \$5

20 minutes south from Grants Pass on Hwy. 199 to Selma
Turn left at the Lake Selmac sign and follow the signs to the Trout Pavilion

Camping/lodging information: Lake Selmac Resort 597-2277; Josephine Cty. Parks 474-5285; Illinois Valley Chamber 592-3326

Water, sewer rates rise for Cave Junction

Approximately \$72,000 will be realized by the city of Cave Junction with new water and sewer fees that will be reflected with Sept. 20 billings.

The Cave Junction City Council voted 4-0 to approve the revised, increased rates during its meeting in city hall Monday evening.

Senior assisted care project planned in CJ city

An 86-unit senior assisted care project is to be considered Monday, Aug. 8 by the Cave Junction City Council.

Manor Communities

July 25. Councilman Dan Fiske was absent.

Water rates will rise from \$25 to \$28 for the first 500 cubic feet; a 12 percent increase. Sewer fees will go up from the current basic rate of \$25 to \$31, a 24 percent increase.

The ordinances for the price revisions each note

Development Corp., led by Larry Osborne, plans the project on 10.32 acres between N. Old Stage Road and Hwy. 199. Prim Rose Lane is the planned new

A new feature, The Community Calendar, debuts in this issue on page 16. The page offers businesses, organizations and individuals exciting opportunities to reach the valley community -- and beyond!