

Celebrating 100 Years

By Dotty Miles

17 members and many visitors gathered in Haines to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Rock Creek-Muddy Creek Mutual Improvement Club on Feb. 10, 2016. Tables were sparkling in gold and white cloths with lighted tapers in gold candelabra. Flowers filled several vases. Some members dressed in period gowns. A display of styles, events, and news of the founding year 1916 caught everyone's interest, and dresses from that era hung nearby.

Following the traditional salad luncheon for members, there was a short meeting. Thank yous from the Haines school for making the Christmas popcorn balls and the desserts taken to the Haines School Chili Feed were received. A thank you for the donation to the Neighborhood Watch was also received. Several letters from members far away were received.

A homemade valentine and letter from Sue Proebstel Fisher to member Margory Peck told of growing up together on Neill-Peck Lane, both their mothers belonging to Mutual Improvement Club was read. It also contained a \$100 bill for the Club, one dollar for each year.

The Centennial cookbook committee is working hard and meeting often. Any recipes you want to see published in it, please send to the Secretary Dotty Miles. They should be available for Christmas giving.

More guests arrived for the Open House to visit, see the displays, and celebrate with the Club. Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash and his wife Katie

were present. Sheriff Ash spoke briefly and offered congratulations on our 100 years. His children attended the Haines School and his wife is the Haines Librarian. He was in Haines the day before to help apprehend a machete-wielding felon on Front Street.

A skit depicting the first Club meeting in 1916 with 13 charter members was given, depicting the ladies of long ago trying to decide what their new Club should do or be in the years to come. At the sound of a bell, door prizes were drawn for throughout the program.

The Centennial Quilt, made by members in a garden motif, was drawn for and won by an area native, Edna Godlic, who bought the ticket while in North Powder for the Huckleberry Festival and school reunion. It will be mailed to her. Katie Ash won the designer scarf made by Tina Edwards, and Gina

Perkins won the painting by Evelyne Fisher. The 100th Birthday cake was served to all and the Club flower, Shasta daisies, were sent home with each guest.

The March meeting will be hosted by Ruth Cole March 9, 2016 at 2 p.m. at the Methodist Fellowship Hall.



Photos by Gina Perkins
Above, 100th Celebration Quilt Mutual Improvement Club.
Below, Sheriff Travis Ash visits with Debbie Cole and Sue Maxwell during the Open House.



Baker Fifth Graders are Champs

Baker AAU fifth grade basketball girls took first place at the Sisters Shootout Tournament this past weekend. This was the second large victory for the team, the other being the Pepsi Shootout in La Grande the weekend of Jan. 30. The girls are coached by Russ Elms and Nate Moore.



Sisters Shootout
1st place



LaGrande Pepsi Shoot out 1st Place

Top row (L-R) Rylee Elms, Skylar Roy, Josie Ramos, Macey Moore; Bottom Row Taylor Gyllenberg, Brooklyn Jaca, Makenzie Flanagan, Campbell Vanderwiele; Coaches Not pictured: Russ Elms and Nate Moore

Top Row Coach Russ Elms, Campbell Vanderwiele, Rylee Elms, Skylar Roy, Macey Moore, Josie Ramos, Coach Nate Moore; Front Row: Taylor Gyllenberg, Brooklyn Jaca, Carmen, Makenzie Flanagan



Baker City

SUBWAY

February Specials

Simple Six Menu!
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February 19 - 25

DEADPOOL R
A man is subjected to an experiment that leaves him with accelerated healing powers, adopting the alter ego Deadpool.
FRIDAY 7:00 9:30
SATURDAY (4:00) 7:00 9:30
SUNDAY (4:00) 7:00
MON-THURS 7:00

HOW TO BE SINGLE R
Comedy. Friends learn how to be single in a world filled with ever-evolving definitions of love.
FRIDAY 7:15 9:40
SATURDAY (4:15) 7:15 9:40
SUNDAY (4:15) 7:15
MON-THURS 7:15

THE CHOICE PG-13
Neighbors in a small coastal town wind up in a relationship that is tested by life's most defining events.
FRIDAY 7:10 9:35
SATURDAY (4:10) 7:10 9:35
SUNDAY (4:10) 7:10
MON-WED 7:10

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Good luck teams!

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WINDY RIDGE continued from page 1

Wellersdick did get another opportunity to return to her place before the fire reached her property to save more items including computer disks which she later found contained photos of her barn and equipment shed that she could show to insurance adjusters.

"I also grabbed my pillow and a chain saw that I really liked," she added.

"I'd always had this plan that in case of a fire, I would have wet down the roof of the house. But they'd turned off the electricity early on and it wouldn't have been possible without a generator. It wouldn't have worked anyway," said Wellersdick.

She stayed in a motel for another night and then moved into the travel trailer for a short time and then found another, larger temporary place to stay. She knew she needed to make a more permanent decision.

"It took me a couple of weeks to decide to abandon the place. But it was very difficult. It was the place I wanted to be. It had been my dream. I had everything there exactly the way I wanted it. But I knew it would never be the same and I also knew that I would have to leave there in the near future anyway because the workload was becoming too much. Friends and neighbors had been up to see it and told me it was a moonscape. I wanted to see for myself, before the adjuster came. I'd been prepared about what to expect and friends went with me. Oddly, I didn't cry and wasn't emotional. I was able to compartmentalize it. It had happened, and I had to move forward," Wellersdick said pragmatically.

Only one outbuilding was left standing, a garden shed Wellersdick had built herself.

She said everything was well covered with an excellent policy through Gregg Hinrichsen of State Farm in Baker City.

"They tried to make the situation better," explained Wellersdick. "They gave me a check right away for the outbuildings, clothes, essentials, and even the shrubs." Some things, however, which were not attached to her vehicle, like the snow plow and \$1500 snow tires, were lost and not covered by insurance.

She waited two months for a check to arrive for her house because of changes at the corporate level and the adjuster she'd been working with initially, left suddenly.

It just so happened that a house close to where she was living was for sale. It was a nice house, semi-secluded with lots of trees, and she decided she wanted to purchase it after a consultation with a realtor, Fred Warner, Jr. The closing date had been set and the fact she hadn't received her check for the loss of her home, began to cause quite a bit of stress. Finally, the check arrived, hand-delivered, the morning of her closing.

Wellersdick who has always prided herself in being self-sufficient said it was really hard to ask people for help. But she is forever grateful. She said how appreciative she is to people like Morgan Morris, Dan's daughter, who drove her car and tractor down to the neighbor's house, out of harm's way. She appreciates Tom Reese, her new neighbor who had become a friend she could count on and helped her in so many ways. She appreciates Shelta Young who rescued her when she needed immediate help and Bill and Cathy Treadway who generously provided a longer-term place to stay, helped with moving into the new house and continue to be supportive. When colder weather was coming in and her horse had no shelter in her pasture at Shelta's, long-time friends Jack Fors, a former co-worker, and his wife Suzen solved the problem by offering a pasture with a big run-in shed.

Sheriff Travis Ash, who happens to be her new next door neighbor, put up panels for her horse on the new property and he and his wife Katie loaded hay into the barn. Ash also helped her move in and sawed and split firewood. He and Katie hosted Wellersdick and others for Thanksgiving, a day which she thoroughly enjoyed.

Other new neighbors, Bill and Cathy Treadway, who had provided a temporary place to stay, have since become new friends along with so many people who took the time to call and hug her when they would see her in town.

But it was her dear friends, Candy Arledge and her husband Dan Brassard, who made her cry. Wanting to ease the burden for Marilee regarding her lost place on Dry Creek, they offered to purchase the property and have plans to rehabilitate it and put it on the market in the future.

"I'd been able to compartmentalize and look for the silver lining up to this point. I'd looked for the positive things amidst the tragedy and even found some of the things funny. The fact that Dan and Candy were willing to do this for me for no other reason than to lighten my load and help me, that's when I cried," said Wellersdick. "The tears began to flow."

Insurance money helped to pay for clean-up of debris on the charred remains of the Dry Creek property, salvage logging has been done and Brassard has begun restoring fences and removing burned trees that were not logged. It also was aerially seeded recently.

It's taken Wellersdick a little bit to get used to her new home. For one thing, she is much closer to town, her neighbors are quite a bit closer and she misses seeing the abundant wildlife.

"But the neighbors are so nice and have been so very helpful. It's not bad having someone from the fire department and the sheriff as your neighbors," Wellersdick said.

Looking back, she believes there are things people can and should do to be more prepared for such a disaster.

"While I did a lot to create a defensible space around my home, I could have done more. For one thing, I would not have a composition roof and I should have taken out the several large pine trees that were fairly close to my house. I think it would be a good idea to have a list of things to take in case you need to leave your house quickly. I didn't have a list," she said.

Wellersdick did have photos of her contents which were kept at her insurance agent's office and she did have photos of the outbuildings. She also had excellent insurance coverage which most definitely eased her burden. Nonetheless, the fire was a life changing--but fortunately, not life ending event. Her house pets and horse were saved, as well. She did have to leave behind three outdoor cats. Two survived the fire but later disappeared.

She's gained new friends and even stronger bonds with old friends. Her long-time friend Leslie Wood, who lives in La Grande, was always there on the cell phone when there was a need to unload.

"I grieved for days as I thought about things I'd lost and what would never be the same. But I also thought about the positive things--expensive and difficult projects I wouldn't have to do and the mile of road I would no longer have to plow in the winter," she added.

"And I'm forever grateful to everyone who has helped me."



Submitted photo of Marilee's Moondance Ranch as it looked before the Windy Ridge Fire.