

That old time religion

Hermiston resident leads musical services at Echo church

By ERICK PETERSON
East Oregonian

ECHO — Not every churchgoer appreciates the tide of change, according to one Hermiston resident.

Doug Fehrenbacher said there are many believers, like himself, who prefer hymns. They have been sidelined, in his expressed estimation. He is trying to bring them back to popularity with musical services at Echo Community Church on the first Sunday of every month at 5:30 p.m.

"I think a lot of older people, people who have been Christians for a long time, feel left out," he said. "The last thing an 80-year-old woman wants is to learn a new song. They like the ones they know."

He said people are allowed to sing the hymns they choose at his services from provided hymnals. Attendees are accompanied by Louise Sundvall, a fellow Hermiston resident.

"She is just absolutely outstanding," Fehrenbacher said. "Not only does she know all the songs, but she can run



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian
Doug Fehrenbacher flips through a hymnal Wednesday, Feb. 9, 2022, in the living room of his Hermiston home.

that keyboard so beautifully."

Sundvall said she has been playing piano for around 80 years, though she has not played hymns exclusively. She started with classical music, then played for churches.

"I add my style to it," she said of church music. She described her style as "Southern gospel" with "life and pep."

Sundvall plays piano, but it is Fehrenbacher who is the worship leader. He sings and directs the service.

He said he used to hold his services at a church in Hermiston; however, his services became a problem.

"As our numbers grew and grew, it seems like we were interfering with the other

ministries," he said.

He expressed his feeling the services were unappreciated, so he took them elsewhere. The Echo church invited him, he said, and has "bent over backwards" helping put this together.

"They've been just wonderful," he said. "I can't say enough about them."

In one of his Echo Community services, attendees sing six songs. Then, they have what Fehrenbacher calls "a special." One or two people will stand up in front of the congregation and sing by themselves.

He said the special gives a person an opportunity to shine, and sometimes the singer will amaze others

with their talent.

"It's a very unorganized and nondenominational," he said. "We have some Adventists. We have all the denominations, represented at one time or another."

The importance of hymns

He called his services important because music is vital to the Christian faith.

"I feel in so many church services they use the music as a means of bringing people from their problems and off the streets to where they can focus on the spoken word," he said.

In his services, however, Fehrenbacher puts total attention on the music, he said. His services do not even have a sermon. After the hymns and the special, there is only a fellowship get-together, which is at the end of the service.

He said people have a good time with this and travel from Richland, Washington, and Walla Walla to attend.

These hymns have served him, as well as his congregation, Fehrenbacher said. He added that hymns such as "It is Well with My Soul" have helped him during dark times. He said he will continue singing hymns and giving others opportunities to sing them for as long as he can.

COMMUNITY BRIEFING

Republicans welcome Vance Day

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Republican Party announced several upcoming events, including a pair of candidate forums.

Vance Day, a former Marion County Circuit Court judge, is the featured guest for a Lincoln Day dinner. He will speak about a project he's involved with for the James Madison Center for Free Speech. Day is touring the state to talk about constitutional rights and principles against tyranny.

Day served as the chairman of the Oregon Republican Party 2005-09. The Oregon Supreme Court in 2018 suspended Day without pay for three years for judicial misconduct after he refused to marry same-sex couples.

The event is Monday, Feb. 21, at the Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate. The doors open at 5:30 p.m., with dinner at 6 p.m. The cost is \$50 per person. An early reception with Day for the Pachyderm Club is at 4:30 p.m. It costs \$100, which includes dinner.

Reservations are required by Friday, Feb. 18. For more information or to RSVP, call 541-304-5477.

Also, the Republican gubernatorial Candidates Forum, which was postponed because of weather, has been rescheduled. It is Thursday, March 24, 6 p.m. at the Vert Auditorium, 480 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton.

In addition, a Umatilla County Commissioner Candidates Forum is Thursday, March 31, 6 p.m.

at the Pendleton Convention Center. Further details about both forums will be announced.

For more information about the local Republican Party, contact Suni Danforth, Central Committee chair, at 541-215-9389, ucrpchair@gmail.com or search www.facebook.com/groups/85685613647.

Little league registration deadline is Sunday

PENDLETON — The deadline to register for Pendleton Little League is Sunday, Feb. 13.

Monte Ludington, president of Pendleton Little League, in a press release also announced tryouts are Saturday, Feb. 26, at the Pendleton Little League Park. The time has not been set.

All information and forms, including the registration link and volunteer forms, are available online at pendletonlittleleague.sportngin.com.

For families not able to afford the cost of registration, there is a grant available through T-Mobile. If you apply and do not receive the T-Mobile grant, you can apply to the Pendleton Little League Board for a scholarship.

Pendleton Little League also needs coaches and umpires. If you volunteer to coach, you will receive one free registration for the child you are coaching. If you are interested in either coaching or umpiring, fill out the appropriate application for submission or email.

If you have questions, contact pendletonlittleleague@gmail.com or Ludington at 541-514-4683.

— EO Media Group

Caledonian shares 20th century love story

By TAMMY MALGESINI
East Oregonian

ATHENA — While the Scottish Gaelic expression ceud mìle fáilte — a hundred thousand welcomes — is a friendly greeting, it was more than a century ago when a special connection was made at the Umatilla County Caledonian Society Picnic and Games.

Now known as the Athena Caledonian Games, Sue Friese said the event's committee calls the story of Roy and Mysie Penland "the Caledonian romance of the 20th century."

Friese, who is the Caledonian president, said much research has been conducted on the late Helix couple. Information about the Penlands, she said was gathered from such sources as the East Oregonian, Athena Press, The Pendleton Record, the Fossil Journal as well as Pioneer Trails, a quarterly journal published by the Umatilla County Historical Society.

Highlights were printed in the 2021 Athena Caledonian Games Pocket Guide, which was sponsored by the Umatilla County Cultural Coalition.

"It is a sweet story," Friese said.

According to Caledonian history, George J. Cameron, an attorney, judge and Portland city councilman, was often called upon to find "Portland talent" to perform at Athena's Scottish heritage gathering. A proud Scotsman,



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File
Annie Pankratz performs the basic steps to the Sword Dance on July 13, 2019, during Athena Caledonian Games. The traditional Scottish dance was a specialty of Mysie (Sharp) Penland, who danced at the first Umatilla County Caledonian Society Picnic and Games in 1899 at Athena.

himself, among the featured Highland dancers in 1899, 1900 and 1903 was a young lass by the name of Mary Jane "Mysie" Sharp (1884-1961).

And just up the road 10 miles at Helix, a young lad, LeRoy "Roy" Penland (1883-1949), lived on his family's wheat farm.

Referencing an Oct. 30, 1903, article in the Fossil Journal, Mary Elizabeth, the Penland's daughter wrote about her mother's dancing skills in Pioneer Trails, Volume 7 No. 3.

"Mysie Sharp was up to her usual standard of excellence, which means the very acme of perfection. As usual,

she made a great hit with every performance, fluttered about with toes scarce touching the floor."

The Caledonian committee, Friese said, learned that the young performer's specialties were the Sword

Dance and the Highland Fling. However, it seems Roy literally swept his bride off her feet — they were married Dec. 12, 1906, in Portland — as Mysie never danced publicly again after they wed.

The couple lived on the family ranch in Helix. While Mysie no longer danced, they were involved in Caledonian. Roy Penland's name, Friese said, was entered in the membership rolls of the Umatilla County Caledonian Society on June 12, 1909.

Both are buried in the family plot at Olney Cemetery, Pendleton — along with "baby" Penland and Willard "Billy" Penland, who died as a teenager in 1931.

After a one-year hiatus because of the global pandemic, the annual event returned in 2021 for a condensed version of the usual multiple-day festival. The committee is in the planning stages for 2022.

"It won't be long until Caledonian time," Friese said, "the second weekend of July."

For more information, email athenacaledonian-games@gmail.com or visit www.athenacaledonian.org.

Kelly Thompson-Long

September 12, 1958 - February 6, 2022

Kelly Thompson-Long started her final journey on Feb. 6, 2022. Kelly was born Sept. 12, 1958, in Pendleton, Oregon, the third of five children to Cecil and Doris Scott Thompson. As a newborn she moved to San Francisco, California, where she spent her first 10 years, while her parents participated in the federal relocation program. The family returned to Pendleton in the late 1960s where she remained the rest of her life, raising her daughter, Doris Wheeler, amongst a large extended family.

Kelly worked in various career fields that provided opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, being a flagger, native plant nursery tech and a heavy equipment operator. As she aged, she maintained many customer service and clerical roles throughout the Confederated Tribes and the Wildhorse Resort & Casino.

In retirement, Kelly continued to serve her tribal community through various committee work including the election committee, water committee, housing committee and TERO committee. She was an active Nixyaawii elder, participating in local activities and traveling to many elder events across the Northwest. She loved her grandkids, gambling, traveling and watching Nixyaawii school sports.

Kelly is preceded in death by her father, Cecil, and brother, Warren Thompson. She leaves behind her daughter, Doris Wheeler, and grandkids, Monika Melendrez, of Hilo, Hawaii, and Anthony (Kate), Ian and Aaron Melendrez, all of Pendleton; her mother, Doris Thompson, of Pendleton; sisters, Lorena and Cara (Shay) Thompson, of Pendleton and Cathy Thompson, of Santa Fe, New Mexico; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews and good friends. She will be remembered for her sense of humor, her ready laugh, her playful pranks, her stylish wardrobe, and for being everyone's "favorite."



Ethan Thomas Bahr

October 25, 1993 - February 4, 2022

Ethan Thomas Bahr passed away unexpectedly at home from asthmatic complications at the age of 28, on Feb. 4, 2022.

Ethan was born on Oct. 25, 1993, to Dan and Vicki Bahr.

Ethan is survived by his parents, wife, Rachel, and beautiful 2-year-old son, Daniel Oliver Bahr. The proudest moment in his life was the gift of his son, Daniel. You could feel the love with every moment they spent together.

Ethan is also survived by brothers, Christopher, Nathan and Matthew, sister-in-law, Cassidy, and nephew, Bryson, grandparents, Daryll and Dorothy Bahr, mother-in-law, Teresa Luster, and brother-in-law, Caleb, plus numerous uncles, aunts, cousins and friends.

Ethan, an amazing gift from God, taken too soon but will never be forgotten.

Ethan's celebration of life will be at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 17, 2022, at Pendleton First Assembly of God Church, 1911 SE Court St., Pendleton.

In lieu of flowers if you wish to make a donation to his son's college fund, this can be made out to c/o Daniel J. Bahr or to the American Asthma/Lung Association. Burns Mortuary of Pendleton is in charge of arrangements. Sign the online guestbook at www.burnsmortuary.com.

