

OSU Extension agent says farewell

By D. "Bing" Bingham
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Pawelek

If Bob Pawelek seems a little distracted these days, it's because he is. Right now he's focused on selling his house in Madras and buying a house close to his new job in Ohio.

Pawelek, a born and bred Texan, came to the reservation in 1992 after kicking around South Texas for years. He's worked on the family homestead, handled elephants in a zoo and run a 4H program that worked with 1,400 kids. He even tried his hand at rodeoing.

"When I was in college, I did some bare back and saddle bronc," he says.

But that didn't work out so well. One time he got a little cocky at a jackpot and the horse did a tap dance on him.

"[I] woke up in the hospital and my mom showed me the back of my shirt and it had hoof prints on it," he continues, "I said, 'OK, I quit.'"

After that a "real" job looked pretty good.

Years later when he was being interviewed for the extension agent job on the reservation, he asked, "Do you get much snow around here?" They replied, "No, it's pretty mild."

"When I got here it reminded me a lot of San Angelo, Texas," he says, "I said, 'this ain't going to be so tough.'"

He arrived on the reservation in summer of 1992. In December it started snowing. And it kept on snowing that winter. It was a winter that locked up most of central Oregon and is still talked about. Pawelek admits there were times that winter when he was more than a little concerned about his wel-

fare. Still, when the reservation thawed out, he saw a lot of potential. "I saw a lot of potential for the grazers to make a little more money," he says.

One of the things he's most proud of is the increased percentage in the living calf crop.

"When I got here it was down around 35 percent and I think it's closer to 65 percent now," Pawelek says.

While it'd be nice to take credit for that increase, that's not what happened.

"That [increase] is not really anything I did, it's a matter of what the ranchers did," he continues, "they realized that even if it is a hobby, there's money to be made when the market is right."

Pawelek feels that most ranchers on the reservation have a pretty good grip on how to graze cattle in riparian zones, he notes: "but it's still up to them to decide how to graze...after all, it's their land."

He's really glad to see the tribes had their first annual horse sale. He'd like to see it happen again—maybe a little sooner in the year next time.

"When the grass is green and it's nice and warm, the colts are crow hoppin' and lookin' good...when there's a little more

bloom on the colts," he continues, "I would coincide it with Pi-Um-Sha, that weekend would be perfect, you've got all the tourists coming in...I think there'd be money to be made."

Still other projects never quite made it off the ground.

"For instance, Idaho fescue, not long ago was fetching \$36 a pound," he says, "It's still untapped and I think it's a great opportunity for folks on the reservation."

He notes that some high value crops offer more opportunities, like native grass seed for marketing to BLM in Nevada.

"They're always looking for grass seed," he says.

However there is one glaring project that needs lots of "tender loving care:" 4H.

"I kind of regret the fact that I was never really able to get 4H off the ground," he says, "part of that was that I only had a 10 percent 4H responsibility and I, pretty much, blew that at county fair."

Pawelek suggests part of that problem might be solved by giving his predecessor a larger allocation of time to devote to 4H.

However, for Pawelek, that's all water under the bridge. As

he looks forward to his new job in Ohio, Warm Springs will soon be a memory for him.

"Oh yeah, I'm going to miss the desert...I'm going to miss the drive [across Agency Plains] to work every morning and I'm going to miss the people," he says, "the folks [at Warm Springs] have been really good to me and I'm not going to forget everyone who helped me."

So Pawelek should be settled into his new digs by the first of the year. There's no word about what the snow forecast is for Ohio yet. He should have plenty of time to write a letter back to Oregon if the snow gets too deep.

CPS collecting gifts for kids

Children's Protective Services is accepting toys and other gifts on behalf of children of the community.

Drop off sites for donations are the tribal administration building, IHS, the Museum at Warm Springs, and

Warm Springs Forest Products Industries. The ages of children are from newborn up to 17 years. If your gift is wrapped already please identify and mark your gift for a girl or boy and their age. CPS can be reached at 553-3209.

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Green onions can cause problems

Green onions have been in the news recently with the hepatitis A outbreak in Tennessee, Georgia and Pennsylvania. The Food and Drug Administration and Center for Disease Control have traced the contaminated green onions to several farms which ship from or through Mexico. Mexican officials have been very responsive during the outbreak and are looking into practices at these farms to determine what might have contributed to the contamination.

Until the results of the investigation are made clear to the public, consumers are advised to thoroughly cook green onions to minimize the risk of illness by reducing or eliminating the

virus. Steaming, boiling or sauteing the green onions for at least two minutes should be sufficient to deliver the temperature and time of exposure needed to kill the virus.

People should maintain good hygienic habits by thoroughly washing fresh fruits and vegetables before eating. They should wash their hands and utensils such as knives and cutting boards before preparing meals and after any contact with raw foods. Hepatitis A is a liver disease that develops six weeks after exposure to the virus. Symptoms may include jaundice, fatigue, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhea and fever.

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