

# Blessed: Cagle enjoyed his 27-year teaching career

**Continued from 1A**  
 "My mother had confidence ... she never conveyed any worry at all," Cagle said. "My brother and I were two happy little boys. Even though hiding in the jungle, we knew we were safe where we were."

After a couple years, the war started changing. Cagle noticed different planes flying overhead, American planes.

"It was a good sign for us," Cagle said.

On Feb. 3, 1945, the family's life changed again, this time for the better. That was the day U.S. forces liberated Santo Tomas during the decisive Battle of Manila.

In March, Virginia learned that the camp had been liberated and went back to find out if her husband had survived. It had been close to three years since they had seen him, and Cagle said his father, who stood 6 foot, 1 inch and weighed 250 pounds, had lost 100 pounds. As the war trudged on, conditions in the camp deteriorated and many prisoners starved.

"(He was) not in good health, but he had survived the war," Cagle said of his father.

After liberation, all American internees were given a choice to stay or return to the U.S.

"My dad chose for us to come to the United States because he felt we had a better chance of growing up in the U.S. than we did in the Philippines," Cagle said.

In April, they boarded a ship for a long, zigzagging trip across the Pacific Ocean. The war wasn't quite over, so the ship had to take a complicated route to avoid attack.

They arrived in the United States, landing in California. Cagle's father decided to settle in Oregon and started a new life with his family.

"This was a brand new country," Cagle said.

### A new life

The family moved to Vanport City — a town later destroyed by a



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Jesse Cagle talks about his children pictured with their mother, Joyce, in a newspaper article from 1971.

flood. Cagle hadn't attended school since before the war started, so he entered first grade as a 10-year-old.

He advanced quickly and was placed in fourth grade the next fall. Shortly after that, when Cagle was 12, his mother died during surgery.

Following his mother's death, the family moved to Tualatin where the boys grew up and made many close friends. At 17, Cagle decided he wanted to give back to his country and enlisted in the U.S. Marines on Feb. 1, 1952, during his freshman year in high school. He was deployed to Korea, but didn't see much action.

"I was there in the latter part of the war," Cagle said. "I arrived there right after the cease fire and served 14 months right there on the

DMZ (Demilitarized Zone)."

He was a "forward observer" attached to a rifle company and monitored the DMZ as part of a three-man crew.

"It was just the three of us and we alternated in manning the bunker, for 14 months," Cagle said. "Looking across the DMZ, we could see the North Koreans and Mongolians manning their side of the DMZ."

Needless to say, the job was tedious, but he said he enjoyed his three years of military service.

"I got to see a lot of the world, other than Korea," Cagle said.

### A blessed life

He was discharged in 1955, and later married his first wife and had a son and a daughter. In 1965, he married Joyce McConnell.

Originally an optician, Joyce convinced him he should be a teacher. He went back to school for

the career change.

He taught third grade and later special education at Oakdale Heights Elementary School and Morrison for 27 years.

"Teaching was a marvelous experience," Cagle said. "I think (it's) the fact that the children I worked with, to me, in my eyes, were jewels. They were just precious people."

Cagle said he hadn't shared his story publicly before last year, when he spoke of his childhood for the students at Salem Academy Christian School in Salem. Always a teacher, Cagle had the children participate, telling the story in chronological order and having the children stand who were the same age he was at each milestone in his journey.

Cagle said the students were attentive and respectful to him and the other veterans at the presentation, so much so that Cagle encouraged the audience to give them a round of applause.

"It was cool," Cagle said. "It was impressive."

Cagle will continue to tell his story, but it seems he will always come back to the same point: "Both Joyce and I are very fortunate," Cagle said. "Monetarily, we have never been rich ... but we've been blessed."



JESSE CAGLE/ for the Itemizer-Observer

Jesse Cagle, left, and his brother, Lonnie, spent the early years of their childhood in the Philippines, during World War II.

# Explosive: Cannonball was viable

**Continued from 1A**

After that, Boatwright placed the potentially dangerous explosive on the kitchen table in their Dallas home and didn't touch it again until calling in the Oregon State Police bomb squad.

"It was stable. It's pretty safe, like a gun shell," Boatwright explained. "It wasn't going to go off unless it had some encouragement."

When he made the call, a Polk County deputy re-

sponded to take a photo of it and sent it to OSP for identification.

"That's when everything got crazy," Boatwright said, adding he put the cannonball in a box and took it outside to make it easier for the squad to work with.

The bomb squad was at the home for four hours testing and examining the cannonball. Boatwright said they concluded it was in good condition and viable.

That's unusual, Boatwright said. Why?

Because it was likely made in the 1860s to 1890s, perhaps from the Civil War. An uncommon find, Boatwright asked if he could have it back after the testing and was given a firm "no."

Not only was it viable, but designed to explode into tiny pieces, causing enormous damage. He said the bomb squad carefully loaded it in a containment chamber and took it to safely blow it up elsewhere.

Trey, Schultz, and Dun-

mire consider themselves lucky that it didn't explode while they were playing with it. The thought gave Dum-

more a panic attack once she found out what it was.

"Some bad things could have happened when I was holding it," she said.

The group of teenagers can only speculate as to why it was in the middle of the street.

"That's the story we all want to know," Dum-

more said. "How did it get there?"

Independence/Polk County Service Club  
**HOLIDAY GIFT & CRAFT SALE**  
 Fri. Nov. 13th • 10 am - 6 pm  
 Sat. Nov. 14th • 10 am - 5 pm  
 340 3rd St., Independence  
 (Behind Chamber of Commerce/old Library)  
 Kitchen will be open to serve warm food, drinks & snacks. | Jamie Rockwell 503-399-8039 | Bobbie Molina 971-388-3328

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**Two Separate Programs with One Goal**  
 ~Serving the needs of local families~

*Below is a description of both programs; please use as a tool when determining the program appropriate for your family.*

**Dallas ADOPT A FAMILY**  
 Dallas Adopt A Family  
 Serving Dallas Families with Children

Adopt A Family matches Dallas Families with local community members, agencies, businesses, clubs, and churches who would like to adopt them for Christmas.

Each family who is adopted will receive a Christmas Dinner and one gift for each child (0-18) in the home, which will be distributed on December 15, 2015 at Evangelical Bible Church.

**How to be adopted:**

- Apply on Nov. 16th through Nov 20th anytime between 4pm -6pm. Or come in on Saturday Nov. 21st from 2pm -4pm at the Polk County Academy Bldg - 182 SW Academy Street Suite 220, Dallas, Oregon
- Bring ID or current utility bill to show Dallas home address

**How to adopt a family:**

- Call the Dallas Adopt A Family Committee beginning October 1st
- Wait to receive your adoption packet in the mail

For more information please call:  
 The Dallas Adopt A Family Committee  
 503-507-6269

Thank you!  
 Dallas Adopt a Family Committee  
 Dallas Adopt A Family Committee

**Christmas Cheer**  
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**Who we are:**  
 Christmas Cheer is a local non-profit organization that provides a holiday food box to families in need during the holidays

We deliver to your home on **December 24th between 7:00 am and 10:00 am** — make sure someone will be at that address before you apply.

**How we can help:**  
 Contact your school counselor or pick up an application at the Polk County Resource Center, Polk County Academy Building, Suite 220, Dallas Food bank or apply at our website

**How you can help:**  
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www.dallascc.org

Christmas Cheer Board of Directors

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