

# Brown sounds the alarm over water supplies

Timing is everything in politics. The same is true for moving public attitudes. Many have wondered when California would get serious about the severe drought. That moment arrived last week when Gov. Jerry Brown announced an executive order aimed at reducing the state’s water usage by 25 percent.

To emphasize the dire circumstances, Gov. Brown made his announcement in a location in the Sierra Nevada above 7,000 feet. Instead of being covered by snowpack, the ground was bare. It was a vivid depiction of drought.

As our sister publication, the Daily Astorian, noted in a recent editorial about antiquated water laws, the West suffers from a systemic impediment to smarter allocation of water resources. Even so, there is a lot that a governor can accomplish.

Brown announced a rebate program to push replacement of older generation washing machines and other appliances. The state Water Resources Control Board has issued orders to curtail lawn watering, and the Los Angeles Times said that 50 percent of Los Angeles water goes onto lawns. Clearly, there’s room for improvement in the ’burbs.

In addition to use restrictions,

there are new planning guidelines in place that aim to feed the aquifer underneath L.A.

California was a desert when it was settled. Massive water projects fueled Los Angeles’ growth. That kind of aqueduct building is of another era, and was followed by an era when Pacific Northwest senators pressed defensive legislation to prohibit the study of transferring water out of the Columbia River.

Today the idea of more populous states tapping Northwest supplies seems even more out of sync. In Oregon and Washington, the watersheds that feed the Columbia River also have record low snowpacks, and much of this region is grappling with its own drought concerns.


All of the Western states should be looking at the broad array of conservation techniques known to hydrologists to conserve water use in urban settings and streamline delivery to agriculture for critical food production. Water conservation projects under way now in rural settings like Grant County are a step in the right direction, but as the new California restrictions make clear, this is a responsibility that all of us – urban and rural – must share.



## CORRECTION

• A photo caption in the April 1 issue of the Eagle gave an incorrect name for the winner of a 2015 Jeep on the TV game show, “The Price is Right.” The winner’s name is Quinn Lundbom. The photo is reprinted on Page A8 this week.

Readers can report errors to the Blue Mountain Eagle at editor@myeaglenews.com, or by calling 541-575-0710.



Blue Mountain

EAGLE

195 N. Canyon Blvd. • John Day, OR 97845

541-575-0710 • Fax 541-575-1244

USPS 226-340

Grant County’s Weekly Newspaper

John Day, Oregon

MEMBER OREGON NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

PUBLISHER

EDITOR

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

COMMUNITY NEWS

SPORTS

MARKETING REP

CUSTOMER SERVICE REP

Marissa Williams, marissa@bmeagle.com

Scotta Callister, editor@bmeagle.com

Kristina Kreger, kristina@bmeagle.com

Cheryl Hoefler, cheryl@bmeagle.com

Angel Carpenter, angel@bmeagle.com

Angel Carpenter, angel@bmeagle.com

Kim Kell, ads@bmeagle.com

Lindsay Bullock office@bmeagle.com

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY:

EO Media Group

Periodicals Postage Paid at John Day and additional mailing offices.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (including online access)

1 year

Grant County

\$40.00

Elsewhere in Oregon


\$48.00

Continental U.S., Outside Oregon


\$55.00

Outside Continental U.S.

\$60.00



Subscriptions must be paid prior to delivery



See the Blue Mountain Eagle on the Internet

www.MyEagleNews.com

POSTMASTER — send address changes to

Blue Mountain Eagle

195 N. Canyon Blvd.

John Day, OR 97845-1187

Copyright © 2015 Blue Mountain Eagle

All rights reserved. No part of this publication covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means — graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, taping or information storage and retrieval systems — without written permission of the publisher.

## Q. When Will Hillary Announce for 2016 ?

## FARMER’S FATE

# A friendship composed of drops of kindness

By Brianna Walker  
To the Blue Mountain Eagle

We cannot tell the precise moment a friendship was formed. It’s like filling a vase drop by drop, until at last one drop makes the vase overflow.

A series of kindnesses will also at last make the heart run over and you suddenly are aware of your friendship.

Such is the case with a neighboring cattleman. I’m not sure when we first met, nor do I remember when he stopped being just “one of my husband’s” friends, but somehow he made his way into my life, my cellphone and quite often into my kitchen – the effects of several of his visits still fill my pantry.

“Hey kid,” he asked one day, “Ya like onions?” Hardly did I know that my yes was going to result in a half a bin of onions on my porch the next day. I dried, froze and ate onions on everything for weeks.

Being that my husband hates onions, I think he was less than appreciative that Jim’s generosity gave me onion breath. To which Jim laughed “He’s the only vegetarian I know that won’t eat vegetables.” Jim often brought us homemade pickles, tomatoes, cucumbers and

Brianna Walker

squash, but his generosity extended far past garden produce – he was generous with his time. That doesn’t happen often in this day and age; maybe it never did. There are never enough hours in the day, especially in agriculture. Work is forever calling – but Jim always took the time to answer a call from friends and neighbors.

And call they did. Sick, dead, or dying animals, he would be there. Often he’d bring his wife and whatever supplies he thought you might need. Morning, afternoon, night, even on holidays – it didn’t matter, friends knew that Jim was just a phone call away.

Thanksgiving Day we found ourselves with new baby lambs and no trailer to bring the sheep home. Not a problem. Jim and his wife left their turkey to help us herd sheep in the dark, all the while smiling and teasing.

He’d never begrudge you his help, or make you feel obligated to him. He may cuss at you, but never without a smirk and maybe a wink. The minutes passed quickly when Jim was around. He’d been around the world and it was always fun to

compare places we’d been and the different experiences we’d had.

We always had a good time BSing with each other. We’d tell jokes, talk religion, politics, guns, agriculture, wolves; he had an opinion or story about them all, and before we’d know it, minutes would often turn to hours. But at least we had solved the world’s problems in the meantime. He had the vocabulary of a sailor, the wardrobe of a redneck, and a heart to rival any saint. As I stood watching the pallbearers lay down their boutonnières on his casket, I felt a deep aching in my heart.

They just don’t make people like him very often. Looking around the tissue-clad attendees, I think the community must have agreed.

The tears continued to fall, and probably will at unexpected moments, but missing someone gets easier every day. Because even though it’s one day further from the last time you saw each other, it’s one day closer to the next time you will. And until that day, may we take a lesson from Jim: take time for the people that matter, and in so doing, we’ll spread our own drops of kindness.

Brianna Walker contributes columns on the Farmer’s Fate occasionally in the Blue Mountain Eagle.

## STEP BACK IN TIME

Note: This column of items from the Blue Mountain Eagle archives is compiled by Eagle staff writer Cheryl Hoefler.

100 years ago  
– April 1, 1915, Grant County Journal

• Charles F. Meier, formerly of this place (Prairie City) but now residing in Portland has held options on a large amount of the land on lower Dixie Creek and along the John Day River below the mouth of the creek for some time, and has been making efforts to interest capital and get a gold dredge installed. Mr. Meier said Prairie people have shown a disposition to help him in every possible way, and it is well that this is the case, for the installation of a dredge on these properties means much to the town.

78 years ago  
– April 9, 1937, John Day Valley Ranger

• The Monument High School senior class has announced their annual play, a three-act comedy, “The Ready Made Family,” will be Saturday night, April 17. The cast is: Gertrude Hallam, Delbert and Reta Stubblefield, Norma Gabler, Elaine Dahl, Homer Williams, Fern Gilman, Gilbert Burke, Helen Round and Merle Legler. A dance will follow, with Fletcher’s Round-Up band as the musicians. Long Creek High School students are having a contest to select a queen for their May Day carnival. Ballot boxes

have been placed in various stores in town. Votes are sold, 10 for one cent. The standing of the candidates, Kathryn Porter, senior; Billy Gibbs, junior; Oral Crowley, sophomore; and Chloris Crowley, freshman, will be posted daily.

70 years ago  
– March 23, 1945, Blue Mountain Eagle

• Wise use of leftover kitchen fats is the first step in helping to increase collections of used household fats critically needed to make up a deficit in 1945 fats-oils supplies, according to Grant County Agent Wm. K. Farrell. Farm women and homemakers in small towns have been called on to contribute a large share of the 250 million pounds of used fats set as this year’s goal, Farrell says.

50 years ago  
– April 1, 1965, Blue Mountain Eagle

• Modern dial telephone service for the customers of the Juniper Telephone Company in Baker, Malheur and Grant counties will be a reality when Public Utility Commissioner Jonel C. Hill authorized the sale of the company to the Oregon Telephone Corp. at Mt. Vernon. Oregon Telephone serves about 850 telephones in the Bates, Dayville, Mt. Vernon and Prairie City areas.

30 years ago – March 28, 1985, Blue Mountain Eagle

• Grant County’s recently renovat-

ed jail is already filled to near capacity. The jail holds six male prisoners. There are now five inmates. The Grant County Sheriff’s Department is studying the possibility of solving overcrowding by shortening sentences of model prisoners and increasing credit days for prisoners doing trustee work.

20 years ago  
– March 30, 1995, Blue Mountain Eagle

• The message from Grant County voters was clear Tuesday evening, almost three to one, in support of a ballot initiative refusing to recognize federal authority over public lands within the county. The initiative had a commanding margin with 1,375 votes in support, and just 560 voting against it. The measure enacts no new ordinance, and reflects only the feeling of voters.

10 years ago – March 23, 2005, Blue Mountain Eagle

• Grant Union’s bats were booming, and a total of 28 runs crossed the plate as the Prospectors opened the 2005 baseball season with a pair of wins at the Grant Union Icebreaker Tournament. On Friday, Toby Thomas tossed a two-hitter and struck out nine, and his teammates banged out 12 hits, including six for extra bases, as the Prospectors rolled to a 20-1 win over Oakland. In Saturday’s game, starting pitcher Kerry Ashmead was equally tough as the Prospectors topped Seaside, 8-1.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Skeptical about roads

#### To the Editor:

Concerned citizens need to question the reasons the Forest Service gives for road closures when they deny they are closing roads to meet a road density quota that someone sitting in an office somewhere pulled out of their magical hat. Though it’s doubtful that the closures met all the required government guidelines, including public involvement, skepticism should exist for the generic overused and abused reasons given for such closures: water quality and wildlife issues. There is a strong possibility that folks find the redundant reasons given to

be a bit flaky and unsubstantiated.

I recreate in the Silvies area and spent two years surveying and inventorying roads so feel qualified to address here one specific road system that traverses high desert scab flats that grow rocks, sandy soil, some sage brush, and an occasional juniper. One short spur that connects two main roads across these open flats is being closed to prevent wildlife harassment. Really? I take exception to a rock and sand road designated for closure to protect water quality. Also, many roads have already been closed prior to any required environmental or road closure documents at the direction of an overzealous government employee who

headed up the planning interdisciplinary team.

A question is raised when six roads embedded in this area of the Silvies watershed are listed for closure under the Marshall Devine Environmental Assessment (EA) 12-17.

Another question waiting to be answered is how many citations were issued by law enforcement agencies representing the Forest Service for folks “violating” forest road closures when those roads were not legally closed. Questions, questions, questions, and not a substantiated answer in sight.

Judy Kerr  
Canyon City