

OUT OF THE PAST

March 30, 1916
Grant County Journal
100 years ago

J.L. Stalker has furnished the necessary bond and will soon be able to issue fishing and hunting licenses. This will be a great convenience to Prairie people. Last year it was necessary to send to the county seat to get a license, but now all that is necessary is to hand the statutory fee to Mr. Stalker and go out and catch them. Stalker also has everything else necessary to get the fish — except the patience. He states positively that the fisherman will have to furnish that.

March 28, 1941
Blue Mountain Eagle
75 years ago

Community Hall Planned
If the plans go through, and they will, Seneca will probably have the finest community hall in the county. It will be built of logs, standing on end, something like the famous forestry building that was built at the Lewis and Clark fair in Portland some 35 years ago.

It will meet all the needs and necessities of the community, with club rooms for women and one for men, billiards, reading room, dance hall and banquet room.

At a meeting held at Seneca on Friday night, a conference was held with the Hines officials, the county court, school district and Geo. Kennedy. They plan a tube or tunnel under the highway for a safety passageway.

March 31, 1966
Blue Mountain Eagle
50 years ago

Merrill Designs Tic-Tac-Toe Machine

Tic-tac-toe is a simple game. But try to devise a machine using 480 baby food jars and thousands of colored beads that will "learn" to play the game.

Yet, that is exactly what David Merrill, a Grant Union high school senior, has done.

In learning how to beat its human opponents, the machine is really demonstrating the laws of probability.

There is one condition an opponent must accept when playing against the machine, the machine always makes the first move. This eliminates the need for more than 500 additional baby food jars.

According to Merrill, there are nearly 480 possible moves in tic-tac-toe if the machine has the first move. If the machine was programmed to play by starting on the second move, an additional 500 or more possibilities exist.

To play the machine, Merrill places 60 jars on eight shelves on four tables. Each shelf contains jars with a certain odd numbered move. No fifth move jar would be on a shelf containing third move jars. All the moves are odd numbered because the machine makes the first move.



From the March 31, 1966, Eagle: Playing Tic-Tac-Toe — David Merrill, a Grant Union high school senior, is shown here taking a jar to see where he moves next in a game of tic-tac-toe. Merrill is operating a machine that uses 480 baby food jars and thousands of colored beads to play the game. The machine learns to play by trial and error. Once it knows all the moves, it will never lose. Merrill built the machine for his Advanced Science Research class. Merrill is shown here playing against Robert Valiant, his science instructor.

On each jar is a tic-tac-toe chart with all nine spaces marked with a colored "X" or an "O." Merrill operates the machine by taking the first jar and tipping it upside down. A bead will roll into a hole in the center of the lid.

By noting the color of the bead, Merrill then looks to see what position the color occupies on the chart. He places his mark accordingly.

The opponent makes his move.

Merrill checks the opponent's move. He then looks for the jar that has an identical game situation. He takes the jar and tips it upside down to see what color bead rolls into the hole. A quick look at the chart tells him where to move. This process continues until there is a winner or a stalemate.

Presently, the machine is easy to beat. But it is learning. When it achieves its maximum efficiency it will win or at least tie (cat) every time.

When Merrill turned a jar upside down during a game, he places it back on the shelf upside down. After a game is over he "awards" the machine by placing additional beads of the winning color in the jar. He "punishes" the machine by eliminating beads which resulted in bad moves.

The machine learns by trial and error. When the machine knows the game will end in a tie, it quits playing because there is no jar for the next move.

Stupid moves confuse the machine. But it is learning to play against illogical moves by an opponent. The machine itself will make an illogical move occasionally. But each time it does, Merrill takes out the colored bead which caused the move. Chances of the machine to make the same mistake twice are reduced.

The idea of the machine eventuated when Merrill began searching for ideas for a project for his Advanced Science Research class. Robert

Valiant is the instructor for the class.

Merrill was toying with ideas that were mathematical in nature when he came upon a tic-tac-toe machine story in the Scientific American magazine. This game him a start.

The tic-tac-toe machine described in the magazine was much simpler than Merrill's device. It also used matches instead of beads.

The Grant Union senior spent long hours planning a better machine. Once he conceived his idea he began playing tic-tac-toe in his spare time to determine all the possible moves in the game.

After collecting the jars and beads, he began to arrange the marked jars in a system. Merrill was ready to begin teaching the machine.

Merrill plans to enter Eastern Oregon College following graduation from high school. He plans to major in mathematics. After a year at EOC, he hopes to complete his education by transferring to Reed College in Portland.

March 29, 2006
Blue Mountain Eagle
10 years ago

Local players named to all-league teams

Eleven girls from the Prairie City and Monument/Dayville basketball teams

were voted members of either the first, second or honorable-mention teams by TriCo League coaches.

The panthers and Tigers boys teams had six members named all-stars.

For the girls, junior Madi Anspach and sophomore Tiffany Hunt from Monument/Dayville were voted to the first team as was senior Kayla Reid from Prairie City.

Senior Tiffnie Ashley and sophomore Amanda King from Monument/Dayville made the second team along with Prairie City junior, Danielle Ricco.

Senior Jill Martens, Junior Bradi Voigt and freshman McKenzie Purnell, all from Prairie City, were named honorable-mention all-stars as were senior Emma Winkelman and sophomore Elizabeth Inscore from Monument/Dayville.

Senior Yazzie Voigt from Prairie City and Senior Beau Cruise from Monument/Dayville were voted first team boys all-stars.

Earning second team honors were senior Guy Anderson from Monument/Dayville, Prairie City junior Levi Voigt and senior Craig Hunt from Long Creek.

Senior James Norris from Long Creek was voted to the honorable-mention team.

Something new is underfoot

Senior center kitchen gets new flooring

By Cheryl Hoefler
Blue Mountain Eagle

John Day — Don't look up — look down, if you want to see what's new at the John Day Senior Center.

The kitchen has a new, safer floor underneath the feet of busy cooks and helps preparing the twice-weekly senior meals and others who use the facility.

The flooring is a poured epoxy with a gritty, no-skid surface. It has a freshly mopped and shiny appearance that looks wet, but isn't.

It was prepared in a process that involved several layers and took about a week to complete, according to Grant County Senior Programs Manager Veanne Weddle. It was finished just in time for the Easter feast at the March 24 senior meal.

Shay Lewis, head cook for the senior meals, and assistant cook Lisa Pereira are the primary ones to benefit from the new, safer flooring.

Lewis, who has worked

for many years as a chef and cook at area restaurants, said, "It's the first time I've ever had a brand new floor to work on."

The long-overdue improvement was purchased with a \$4,200 grant from the Barbara Emily Knudson Foundation of Portland, the same charitable group that made a new double convection oven possible at the senior center two years ago.

Money leftover from that \$10,000 grant went toward new chairs at the center.

Weddle said they thought they might have to return those leftover funds, but the foundation allowed the grant to be modified for the chair purchase.

"We are grateful for their continued support," Weddle said.

Senior meals are served at noon on Mondays and Thursdays, except for major holidays. Bingo games follow at 1 p.m. on Thursdays.

The John Day Senior Center is at 145 N.E. Dayton St.

For information on meal costs and facility rental fees, call 541-575-1825 or visit the John Day Senior Center on Facebook.

 **Capital Bureau**
www.MyEagleNews.com

Committee Volunteers Needed

Grant County is now recruiting volunteers to serve on active boards and committees.

Obtain an Application to Volunteer from County Court, 201 S. Humbolt, Canyon City OR 97820; (541-575-0059); wrightl@grantcounty-or.gov

Applications are due by Friday, April 8th.

Committees are formal public bodies required to comply with Oregon Public Meetings Law ORS 192.610.

Library Advisory Board: Seven members serve four year terms and meet monthly to promote public awareness and support of library services, receive public input, review and update library materials, and coordinate activities with the Grant County Library Foundation. Membership is limited to one re-appointment.

Senior Citizens Advisory Council: Five members serve a three year term and meet quarterly to define the needs of older adults, promote special interests and local community involvement, and represent senior citizens as an advocate to the local, state and federal government and other organizations. Membership is limited to one re-appointment.

03627

A MAN WAKES UP in the morning after sleeping on... an advertised bed, in advertised pajamas.

He will bathe in an ADVERTISED TUB, shave with an ADVERTISED RAZOR, have a breakfast of ADVERTISED JUICE, cereal and toast, toasted in an ADVERTISED TOASTER, put on ADVERTISED CLOTHES and glance at his ADVERTISED WATCH. He'll ride to work in his ADVERTISED CAR, sit at an ADVERTISED DESK and write with an ADVERTISED PEN. Yet this person hesitates to advertise, saying that advertising doesn't pay. Finally, when his non-advertised business is going under, HE'LL ADVERTISE IT FOR SALE. *Then it's too late.*

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Grant SWCD Weed Control Dept. Working for You in 2016

Thanks to the Grant County Court and Northeast Oregon Forests Resource Advisory Committee, Grant Weed Control is able to offer **Noxious Weed Control on Private Grazing Lands**, through a Title II funded Grant Project. This program will provide a maximum \$5,000 of noxious weed control services to qualifying landowners. To be eligible for participation, the treatment property must not be irrigated and be primarily managed for livestock grazing, minimum of 20 acres in size, located within Grant County, and must contain priority noxious weed species. Applications for this limited weed control assistance opportunity will be ranked and funded according to a priority noxious weed list. **Contact the Grant Soil and Water Conservation District office at 541-575-1554 or visit 721 S. Canyon Blvd., John Day, OR 97845 for applications and additional information.**

The application deadline for this program is April 8, 2016.

03563

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