

PARADES

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"She's really good at horseback work and haying," Delmas said.

At one time, he ran a crop dusting business. He became involved in the town's Fourth of July celebration in the '80s, piloting an airplane with parachutists.

"The paratroopers would land right on the main street," he said. "Some laws came along, and they had to do away with it."

Delmas' grandparents John and Gerty Ray homesteaded on Dixie Mountain near Prairie City, and his parents Ross and Irma Ray settled in Prairie City during the Depression, when Del was just 1 1/2 years old.

"I've lived most of my life right around here," he said. "I've always liked the country and most of the people."

"It's a nice, small community," Mary said. "We have a lot of friends around here, and it's a nice ranching community."

Dayville

Longtime Dayville School educators Skip and Cindy Inscore retired this year.

They've been active in school, community and church activities since they moved to Dayville 34 years ago.

"I like that it just feels like family sometimes," Cindy



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

The Dayville 4-H Club travels down the Dayville parade route with Austin Walker driving.

said of Dayville. "I grew up in a suburb of Portland, so when we moved here, it had a good home, family feeling."

She taught grades kindergarten through third the past seven years, and also taught preschool, fourth grade and Title I.

Skip was a history teacher, athletic director and coached sports.

"We've seen kids grow up and come back, and we've taught their kids," Cindy said. "That's been a blessing. Our lives have revolved around school, sports and church."

The Inscores have two grown children. Skip said they haven't missed many of the Dayville Fourth of July celebrations in the last 30 years.

"It's a time of community," he said. "People come home, and we touch base with kids



Contributed photo/Jeanne Strange

Desiree Robison leads out the Fourth of July Jubilee Parade in Monument on Monday.

we've taught and their parents and families."

The best part, Cindy said,



Contributed photo/Tanni Wenger Photography Studio

Staff members of the Blue Mountain Care Center walk with residents in Prairie City's parade on Monday.

is gathering for breakfast at the Dayville Community Church.

"Some of the most enjoyable times have been when the older folks have met up at that breakfast at the church and told stories about how Dayville used to be," she said.

Monument

Mitch and Jennie Mund said the festivities in Monument give them an opportunity to visit with friends and honor the country.

They've lived in Monument for 30 years, since Mitch's transfer with Oregon Department of Forestry. The couple have three grown children.

Jennie recently retired after 21 years as administrative assistant of Monument School.

One of the best parts about the town's celebration, she said, is the fireworks display.

"They're big and beautiful, and everybody's gathered in one spot, and it's fun to hear them visit," she said. "Monument is a nice community to live in."

Mitch shared his thoughts on honoring the country for Independence Day.

"The Fourth of July is all about our country being founded," he said. "Even though we're a very small part of it, we are part of it. It's very important that we celebrate that. There are so many people who have given their lives, their service, their work so that we can have the rights and privileges we have to live in this country."

TOURISM

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months, and the local travel industry was eager to see tourists return.

If May and June are any indication, neither fear of flame nor politics are keeping travelers away.

The 8 percent transient room tax, which is assessed on each booking of a hotel room, RV park space and campsite in the county, is one method for tracking how many people are visiting the county. It has steadily climbed since the chamber began collecting the funds in 2012, with roughly \$90,000 brought in April-September of 2015 compared to \$59,000 in the same time period in 2012.

The chamber receives 75 percent of that money, and has used it and funds saved since the executive director position was eliminated in June 2014 to increase its advertising reach. Bremner said the chamber spent \$30,000 on ads in its last fiscal year, targeting even out-of-state and international audiences through the travel magazines.

Travel Oregon, the state's tourism commission, also gave Grant County a boost in 2014 when it highlighted the Painted Hills in neighboring Wheeler County in its "7 Wonders" campaign. As people venture

east from Bend, south from Pendleton or west from Boise to visit the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument, Bremner says they find their way to other corners of the county.

"They come here and they want to see it all," she said. "They don't realize how big this area really is."

One of John Day's top tourist draws is the Kam Wah Chung & Co. Museum, operated by the Oregon State Parks from May to October, which pays homage to the 2,000 Chinese immigrants who lived in the county a century ago.

Christina Sweet guides tours at the state park and said this year has already seen 400 more visitors than last year, 300 more in June alone. Each day Sweet and Carol Faulkner can take about 60 people, eight at a time, on a free tour of the immaculately preserved medical clinic/general store/com-

munity center. During Memorial Day weekend every ticket was spoken for before noon.

This year they have already had visitors from 43 states and many international travelers, fascinated by the history of the American West. Chinese tourists in particular have come to visit the site of the third largest Chinatown in the United States, knowing their great uncles came to the states looking for a better life.

Matt Wastradowski and Alicia Like from Portland were on an afternoon tour of the Kam Wah Chung house, and are spending the weekend in the Fall Mountain outlook the Malheur National Forest. He said the furthest east in the state he had previously been was Bend.

Wastradowski followed the standoff at the Malheur Wildlife Refuge through news media, he said, which made him realize that rural Oregon issues

are real issues to a lot of people.

"I felt like I needed to get east of the Cascades and explore the rest of the state," he said. "We're different, but we all fly the same flag."

While tourism has seen consistent growth in recent years, it will see a massive spike next summer.

A total solar eclipse, which will completely envelope much of Grant County on Aug. 21, 2017, has every room and campsite in the county already booked. The chamber of commerce has been working to find additional places for visitors to stay, including local ranches willing to convert to campgrounds for the occasion.

Local stakeholders have begun meeting to address issues like fire safety, porta-potties, traffic control and opportunities to give visitors a positive experience while in town. Bremner said they are a little ahead in their planning efforts, but it will be a big task to keep things running smoothly next year.

Bremner has heard from Travel Oregon that half of the visitors will be from other countries, giving the county a chance to spread its tourism brand even further.

They have already adopted a tagline for an advertising campaign, "Come for the eclipse, stay for the starry nights."

SHOOTING

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On Sunday afternoon, Grant County Undersheriff Zach Mobley spotted Kodesh's vehicle in Prairie City, and detained him.

Rand made the arrest with assistance from Mobley and Oregon State Police.

A weapon has not been recovered, Rand said.

In a separate case, Walker was arrested in John Day Sunday afternoon, for probation violation and possession of methamphetamine.

Both Kodesh and Walker are in the Grant County Jail in Canyon City.

Kodesh was scheduled to appear in Grant County Circuit Court for arraignment Tuesday, past press time.

DUNCAN

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worked hard for the school district. Every superintendent before me had nothing but good things to say about Joe. People visiting Monument had nothing but compliments for Joe on his grounds and buildings."

A longtime Monument resident, Duncan stayed involved in the community.

In August of 2004, Joe and his wife, Alice, and Barbara Hawkins hosted an ice cream social in the city park to introduce new students to the school and town.

When a lawn mower race was held in September 2004 to support the local fire department, it was noted that Mayor Duncan was "OK after being run over twice."

Duncan smiled and said, "Next year, the advice will be to stay away from the lawn mowers."

Jerry Boyer, a Monument business owner, added his thoughts.

"We really appreciate his dedication for all his volunteer work and all the extra stuff he did behind the scenes," he said. "He will be missed."

Darlene Muzzy of John Day said she and her husband, Wally, developed a friendship with Duncan through church.

"He was so handy — he could fix anything — and he was always helping someone else," Darlene said.

A funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, July 9, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in John Day, followed by interment at the Monument cemetery. A luncheon will then be held at the Monument Senior Center.

Duncan is survived by his wife, Alice.

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