

100 YEARS YOUNG

John Day resident celebrates centennial

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

John Day Mayor Ron Lundbom declared March 28, 2017, Bernice McPheeters Burdick Day.

That's the day the John Day resident turned 100 years "young."

Lundbom said in an official proclamation, "... in celebration of Bernice's 100th birthday the citizens and city council of John Day wish to extend their heartfelt congratulations on such a long and wonderful life."

A celebration, with five generations of family present, and plenty of friends, was held Saturday at the John Day Senior Center, with folks traveling from as far away as California, Nevada and Washington.

"It's hard to believe, believe me," Burdick said when asked what she thinks about her birthday.

Reaching 100 years of age has not kept her from a favorite hobby. Although her eyesight has dimmed some, she still keeps up her talent of china painting.

Considered an expert in the art, six ladies join her each Tuesday evening for lessons. She said the art involves painting on porcelain, such as plates and vases, with five to six firings between the layers of paint.

"It's something I've always enjoyed doing," she said.

She was born in Canada and moved with her parents to Portland when she was 10.

After graduating from Jefferson High School, she became an assistant nurse at St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland. This is where she met her first husband August "Red" McPheeters, who was a patient there with a significant arm injury. They married on April 2, 1938, when she was 19 years old.

She has fond memories of living at the Double O Ranch south of Burns, when she and her husband were first married. They lived with her sister-in-law while her husband's arm continued to heal. She remembers haying and walking all day with the sheep and cattle with her sister-in-law.

"I was a city girl, not a country girl, and I learned a lot from my sister-in-law, in-



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Bernice McPheeters Burdick turned 100 years "young" on March 28. Here, she displays one of her many china paintings, a hobby she's been involved with for nearly 60 years.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

A sampling of china paintings by Bernice McPheeters Burdick, as well as a birthday card, celebrating 100 years.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

A doll handcrafted by Bernice McPheeters Burdick.

cluding cooking," she said. "I think that was the happiest time of my life because my husband and I would get up and go horseback riding. I really enjoyed it out there."

Their son Errol was born the following year, and he was later joined by sisters Kathleen and Maureen.

August passed away in 1970, and Bernice remarried Alden Burdick, who died in 1990.

Bernice later enjoyed traveling to destinations such as England, France, Germany and Holland.

For the past 10 years, she has lived with her daughter and son-in-law, Maureen and Gerald Mesecher, in the John Day countryside. Bernice said she enjoys the weather and hearing the coyotes at night, also seeing deer in the yard and birds building nests.

She said she attributes her longevity to "living a clean life." She enjoys visits with friends and family and loves playing games such as Skip-Bo and Canasta.

"She'll beat you, too," her daughter Maureen said.

Bernice also continues to paint. A creative outlet she's been working at for over 50 years, she now has a lighted magnifying glass to help her with the fine details.

"I still can't give up painting," she said.

The Keeper of the West

Moss beats out Western singers and songwriters in international contest

By Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

A Grant County local won big at a Canadian poetry competition earlier this month.

Kathy Moss won the Keeper of the West award at the Kamloops Cowboy Festival in Kamloops, British Columbia.

She performed her poem "K T Diner" that she penned as a sequel to the famous song "Navajo Rug" by Ian Tyson.

Moss was one of 16 singers, songwriters and poets that competed in the audience-judged event. She described it as a friendly competition among top-tier talent like Kevin Davis and Joni Harms.

"It was like the Oscars in a small, Western way," she said.

The win came as a surprise to Moss. On her flight to Canada, she had rewritten the poem and subsequently got lost in her first public reading of it.

"Tears were just running down my face when they said, 'The winner of Keeper of the West is Kathy Moss,'" she said.

Poetry comes naturally to Moss. However, when it comes to what she's writing, Moss doesn't have a lot of say in the matter.

"I don't choose what comes to me," she said. "I would like to say, 'OK, I'm going to write a poem about this,' but it doesn't work that way. When it happens, it happens."

Her first poems were about stories her father told her about training horses, having to wear clothes for the first time and turning a \$50 horse into a \$1,000 horse.

She started writing to preserve those stories for future generations.

Moss has published two novels, three books and two



The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

Kathy Moss holds her Keeper of the West award she earned in Canada earlier this month. She performed her poem "K T Diner," which she penned as a sequel to the famous song "Navajo Rug" by Ian Tyson.

CDs of her poetry, some of which feature her own photographs as cover art.

She also works with rescue animals and runs Russell's Custom Meats & Deli with her husband, Tracy.

She's thankful for the opportunity "to travel the world and do different things and see, experience and share what I'm passionate about, and then I can come back to Grant County and just be the butcher's wife."

At times, Moss has second-guessed her choice of medium. She confided in her friend Billie Flick that she wished her art could be more tangible, like that of a saddlemaker or silversmith.

"I'm stuck with a doggone piece of paper and pen in my hand, and it just sits there until somebody wants to read it," Moss said.

On her stove, Flick had a single spur inlaid with silver her husband found in the desert. She said to Moss, "You see that spur? That spur is only a spur until the story is written."

The challenge of using words to bring to life to the beauty and mystery of a single silver spur found in the desert captivated Moss.

"At that point I knew, damn, I'm a writer," she said.

Attend a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Dinner and Benefit Auction

Where fun and fund-raising combine for a memorable evening.

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Time: 4:00—Doors open
5:30—Dinner
7:30—Auction
Place: Pavilion—Grant County Fairgrounds

Ticket Information:
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THE BOSS BABY PG
A suit-wearing, briefcase-carrying baby pairs up with his brother to stop the dastardly plot of the CEO of Puppy Co.
FRI & SAT (4:10) 7:10 9:40
SUNDAY (4:10) 7:10
MON-THURS 7:10

POWER RANGERS PG-13
A group of high-school kids, who are infused with unique superpowers, harness their abilities in order to save the world.
FRI & SAT (4:00) 7:00 9:35
SUNDAY (4:00) 7:00
MON-THURS 7:00

BEAUTY & THE BEAST PG
A young prince, imprisoned in the form of a beast, can be freed only by true love.
FRI & SAT (3:45) 6:45 9:30
SUNDAY (3:45) 6:45
MON-THURS 6:45

\$9 Adult, \$7 Senior (60+), Youth

PUBLICATION FOR SONSHINE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Sonshine Christian School will be accepting pre-registrations for the 2017/2018 school year. Registration fee for students is \$75.00

Pre School students must be 3 years of age before September 1 of the school year and able to attend to toileting without staff assistance. Their classes will be offered 2 days a week from 9-11am.

Pre-Kindergarten students must be 4 years of age before September 1 of the school year. Their classes will be offered 3 days a week from 9-11:30am.

Registration packets can be picked up at the Spring Roundup being held in the Trowbridge pavilion April 6, 7 & 8 at the Church of the Nazarene, Sonshine School information table. After these dates, you can receive these registration packets at the church office, 521 E Main Street, John Day. The office is open Tuesday-Thursday 9am-3pm. For information call (541) 575-1895 or e-mail Trace at the church e-mail address judy@johndaynazarene.com



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