

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

The deadline for What's Happening items is 5 p.m. Friday. Call the Eagle, 541-575-0710, or email editor@bmeagle.com. For meetings this week, see our list in the classifieds.

## Saturday, Feb. 8

### Wyatt Simmons benefit dinner and silent auction

• 5 p.m., Mt. Vernon Community Hall  
The event benefits Wyatt Simmons, a 6-year-old boy from Mt. Vernon, who is receiving treatment for kidney cancer in Portland. For more information, contact Allison at 530-520-0472.

## Saturday, Feb. 15

### Sweetheart shoot

• 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Kimberly Rock Products pit  
A fundraiser for the Grant County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue, the shoot will also feature a raffle, baked goods and concessions. Lunch will be available. For more information, call 541-934-2143.

## Sunday, Feb. 16

### Prairie City seniors potluck

• 1-3 p.m., Prairie City Senior Center  
All are welcome to enjoy music, dancing and food. The Old Time Fiddlers from Grant and Harney counties will provide music.

## Saturday, Feb. 22

### Monument seniors sewing class

• 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monument Senior Center  
A sewing class will be held with a potluck lunch at noon.

## Saturday, Feb. 29

### Seneca PTA bingo fun night

• 5-8 p.m., Seneca School gym  
Food and prizes will be available. For more information, contact Jessica Moore at 541-620-1640 or Dana McLean at 503-798-3249.

## OUT OF THE PAST

### 75 years ago

#### John Day Bank Thief Asks Lighter Sentence

Patrick Bushman, 36, one of three bandits serving terms at Alcatraz for robbing the John Day bank in July, 1937, has filed a petition in federal court here asking a lighter sentence.

He has served eight years of a life sentence. Similar petitions submitted earlier by his partners were denied.

### 25 years ago

#### Will Idaho Wolves Spread West?

With wild, widened eyes and ears pinned flat, the cow moose made it abundantly clear that she means business. Her feeble, young bull calf tucked tightly to her flank, the old matriarch snorted and stamped the ground menacingly, hoping to send an advancing threat away in search of an easier meal.

Meanwhile, the youthful yet fully grown wolverine sized up the situation from his crevice in the rocks. He really wasn't a player in this game but, given his nosy nature, he couldn't help but watch scant yards from the pair stood two large gray wolves. Their icy gaze fixed on the weak-legged offspring. So far the cow's warnings had gone unheeded. You see the wolves had young to feed too.

A typical Alaskan scenario?

Just another day at the office in Canada's Northwest Territories? Perhaps. Or maybe this is a new drama that will soon premier right in the mountains of Northwest Oregon.

While the concept seems far fetched now, it could be coming to a reality sooner than we think — right down to the wolverine. In fact, the wolverine would have to be the one component that we could count on right now.

Actually native to the mountains of our region, wolverines are sighted, or reported as sighted, rather frequently these days. Such reports reach from the Ochoco Mountains of central Oregon, the Blue and Wallowa Mountains of northeast region.

"We've had two wolverine reports in the region since last fall," said Oregon Department of Fish and wildlife biologist Mark Henjum. "And although these were unconfirmed sightings, both were made by biologists."

Henjum said one report was actually of wolverine tracks found near Freezout

Saddle in the Hells Canyon area.

The other was an observation of the animal itself as it held in the biologist's headlights one night near the Starkey Experimental Forest in the Blue Mountains. As for the wolves, Henjum said that, despite repeated reports of sightings, to his knowledge the department has not substantiated a single report of a wild wolf in Eastern Oregon.

"Now there are people who do raise these things and even hybrids which could get loose, but in every case so far the animal was not of wild origin."

In one case Henjum said what appeared to be a wolf was killed several years ago in the southern Blue Mountains. Even after close examination a biologist agreed the animal appeared to be the genuine article. However, further testing by the Smithsonian determined the specimen was not a wild wolf. Of course, that situation could eventually change if the gray wolves recently reintroduced in to north-central Idaho decide to expand their range.

One of the animals has already been killed near Salmon, Idaho, when it strayed from the target area and killed a newborn calf. Henjum thinks that as the wolves re-invade those portions of Idaho and Western Montana they could easily link up to the ideal wilderness habitat in the connecting Hells Canyon and Wallowa Mountains of Oregon.

"All that's between us and a wolf population in Idaho is a river," he said. "And that's just not something that will stop a wolf."

It certainly hasn't stopped the moose.

A couple years ago the column reported reoccurring sightings of moose in select areas of northeast Oregon. Particularly the Hells Canyon area. According to ODFW Wallowa District Wildlife Biologist Vic Coggins, his office continued to do field reports of moose along the Snake River last year, including repeated sightings of a single bull near McGraw Creek on Hells Canyon Reservoir.

"I hope we'll continue to get moose reports," said an encouraged Coggins. "The frequency of these sightings is increasing. Hopefully someday things will be right for some of the animals to stay and we'll have a population here. The moose you know is a pretty good pioneer."



## Community HEALTH BEAT

## Quality Healthcare Close to Home

170 Ford Road, John Day • 541-575-1311 • www.bluemountainhospital.org

## Do I Need a Valve Job?

Bruce McLellan, MD

Blue Mountain Hospital Visiting Specialist / St. Charles Heart & Lung Center

Heart valves perform the same function as the valves in your home plumbing, your car, or an industrial plant, that is to prevent backflow. Right in the middle of your heart, we have two Mercedes Benz insignias, the aortic and pulmonary valves. The most common heart valve operation in adults is replacement of the aortic valve (the valve between the heart's main pumping chamber, the left ventricle, and the big artery leaving the heart, the aorta). A small percentage of these cases are for a bicuspid aortic valve, a congenital abnormality of the valve (the person was born with only 2 leaflets, instead of the normal 3; no Benz!). Even fewer cases are because the valve became infected or the aorta is aneurysmal (severely enlarged). Most commonly, though, the aortic valve degenerated with time. As we enter our 60s, 70's, and 80's (those so-called golden years), the valve starts to show signs of wear from the 100,000 cardiac cycles/day (over 2 billion openings and closings by your 60th birthday!). This degeneration appears as valve leaflet thickening and then calcification when evaluated by echocardiography (or echo, ultrasound of the heart structures and function). It is, by far and away, the most common cause of new murmurs in older individuals (by older, I mean those of you with acquired wisdom).

The valve can fail in 3 ways: stenosis (narrowing of the valve opening because the leaflets won't open fully), regurgitation (leakage because the leaflets don't fully close), or both. The most common complaints include chest pressure with exertion, heart failure (shortness of breath with exertion), or passing out. If you develop these symptoms, your primary care practitioner will become suspicious based on your exam because you will have a prominent heart murmur (a whooshing sound caused by turbulence during each heart cycle). Most of the time, the murmur is noted years before any symptoms develop. The echo study is noninvasive, free of radiation, and often diagnostic for the cause of the murmur.

Surgical replacement of the aortic valve has been around for over 50 years. In fact, the first surgical valve replacement was performed in Portland by Dr. Albert Starr, and until the 1990s, the mechanical valve he designed was still being implanted. Surgical Aortic Valve Replacement (SAVR) is the 2nd most common open heart procedure performed (after coronary bypass surgery), and both mechanical valves (carbon leaflets) and tissue valves (pig heart tissue) are used. The type of valve is chosen is based on the patient's age, life expectancy, risk of taking blood thinners (for the mechanical valves), and for young women, anticipation for future pregnancy.

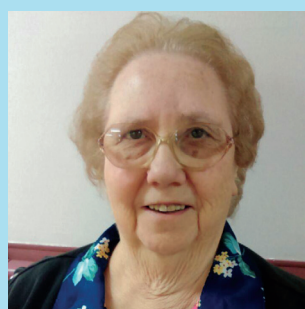
Despite 50 years of experience and advancements in surgical and anesthetic techniques, there remains serious risks to the operation and being on the heart-lung machine while the heart is stopped. In 2005, the first aortic valve replacement not requiring cutting open the chest was performed in France. This less invasive procedure, Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR), was approved in the US in 2011. Early on, patients who were turned down or high risk for SAVR, were the only ones approved for the new procedure. In 2016, however, new research led to FDA approval for moderate risk patients and low risk patients are currently being studied. Because the transcatheter procedure can only implant tissue valves, which only last 10-15 years before needing replacement, there will always be a need for the surgically placed mechanical valves (which can last for more than 30 years). At St. Charles Heart & Lung Center in Bend, we have two experienced doctors (Drs. Matt Slater and Dr. Saurabh Gupta, both recruited from OHSU) who have been seeing potential candidates for TAVR in the Valve Clinic since last summer and performing TAVR since the fall.

I believe that if we lived to be 150, we would all need an aortic valve replacement, and Drs. Slater and Gupta would be our mechanics.



February  
Visiting  
Specialists

**Baker Podiatrist** - Dr. Rushton 2/3, 24  
**Bend Neuro** - Dr. Tien 2/4, 21  
**Bend Cardio** - Dr. McLellan 2/5  
**Bend Dermatology** - Dr. Wisco 2/11  
**Bend Ortho** - Dr. Lilly 2/13



Blue Mountain  
Care Center  
Resident of the Month  
**Marilyn Randall**

Marilyn was born on May 7, 1940 to Oscar and Ruth White, in Weiser, Idaho. She has two older sisters, Lola and Ileta. Marilyn and her family moved to Bates, Oregon, when Marilyn was a baby. She went to school in Bates, 1st grade through 8th grade and later to high school in Prairie City.

Marilyn married Vern Randall on September 27, 1957 and they had four children; Ruthie, Kenny, Jimmy and Ricky. They raised their children in Mt. Vernon, Oregon on a small ranch. Marilyn was a stay at home mom.

Marilyn enjoys crocheting, canning, decorating, helping her good friends Ruby and Maureen clean each others homes, anything involving her kids or grandkids; sports, 4-H and many others.

Marilyn has traveled to Disneyworld, Hawaii and enjoyed taking family trips to Minnesota. Marilyn came to the Blue Mountain Care Center on July 9, 2015.