

Prairie City Boys basketball team named OSAA Team of the Month

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Prairie City Boys Basketball team put another trophy on their shelf last month as the Oregon School Activities Association awarded them Les Schwab Tires “Team of the Month.”

Each month throughout the school year, Les Schwab and the OSAA recognizes a varsity team and presents them with a trophy and a donation of \$100 to the team’s program.

The team is selected based on performance, dedication in the classroom and service to the community.

This year’s boys basketball team, who took sixth in the state in their fourth consecutive appearance, will go down as some of the greatest players in the High Desert Basketball League, but what they do off the court in their community is just as significant.

“Our kids are very active in FFA and hold several jobs as well during school,” Prairie City School District Superintendent Casey Hallgarth said.

Hallgarth said senior Cole Deiter raised money for the basketball program by organizing a three-on-three basketball tournament.

Hallgarth said Opie



The Prairie City boys basketball team was named the Les Schwab Tires Team of the Month.

McDaniel made several decorative tables and boards using different types and colors of epoxy for the Prairie City FFA Banquet.

Kaden Madden, said Hallgarth, used a computer-controlled cutting machine to make large-scale metal signs for families and businesses in the area.

Lucas McKinley and Carson McKay, who both earned Oregon FFA’s Agricultural Proficiency Award, have built businesses in the area in addition to busy school and sports schedules.

McKinley, a fencing contractor, and McKay, a licensed auctioneer, have developed, applied and achieved success in their respective fields.

McKinley, this year’s FFA State Star in Agribusiness, said he recently registered his business as a Limited Liability Corporation and has two employees. He said he has always been an entrepreneur.

“I started mowing lawns when I was 13 years old, and right after I started, I was mowing 25 lawns a week,” he said.

McKinley said what drew

him to owning his own business was the freedom to set his own schedule and make his own decisions.

He said, as an employer, he wants his workers to want to work and take initiative while they are on the job.

“I want them to think for themselves,” he said.

McKinley and McKay, longtime friends who have grown up together, have partnered on fencing jobs in the past. McKinley said he would like McKay to work with him as he grows the business.

McKay said he found his

calling when he was introduced to auctioneering in FFA.

McKay, along with friend and aspiring auctioneer Cinch Anderson, a senior at Grant Union High School, made the trek to the Midwest for an intense two-week crash course to hone their craft.

McKay said the course covered everything from developing an auction chant to voice control, care and effectiveness.

McKay, 16 years old when he earned his auctioneer’s license, said he has freelanced

for the last two years, working both charity events, like the CASA St. Patrick’s Day Dinner at the Elks Lodge and livestock auctions in and around Grant County.

“I love what I do, so I don’t mind doing it for free,” McKay said.

As the state slowly eases back into normal day-to-day life, McKay said he has not led an auction in over a month and that two that he had lined up were forced to cancel.

In the meantime, he said it looks like auctions are going online.

McKay said he is not upset about the abrupt end to his high school career. Like other seniors with passing grades across the state, March 13 was the last day of his high school career.

McKinley said, except for shop class, where he and other students fixed four wheelers and built go-carts, he is ready to move on with his life as well.

“I’ll miss seeing everyone all the time out in the shop,” McKinley said.

For McKay, it is the FFA livestock auctions, with friends and family in the audience, that he misses the most and where he has the most fun.

“It is always so much fun, McKay said. “I know everyone, and we are all close.”

Blood and Wells sign with Blue Mountain Community College to play basketball



Grant Union seniors Tyler Blood, left, and Kaytlyn Wells have signed letters of intent with Blue Mountain Community College to play basketball.

SHOOTING THE BREEZE The rookie season

All of us had to start somewhere. Some folks I know get into hunting and shooting at a very young age, while others — my mother, for instance — don’t get their start until later in life. Each of us has a rookie season to endure before we learn the nuances it takes to become a pro.

I know of no one who claims to be the perfect hunter, and no matter how long you do it, hunting and shooting will teach the truly humble of heart that there is always more to master, more to learn. Everyone has to make mistakes along the way to learn, adapt or change. And boy have I made my share of them.

My first year I was so gangly that even a light-kicking .300 Savage had me flinching now and again. I spent too much time looking for sign, which isn’t a bad thing to look for but ultimately only tells you where the game used to be, not where it currently is. I walked too fast, made too much noise, usually only seeing deer moving out. After missing four or five bucks, I got very discouraged but eventually did it right, shooting a 2x3 buck at about 50 yards. It was the fall of 1997, and I was 13 years old.

Since then I’ve made many more mistakes. Racking a round noisily into the chamber, or struggling to get the safety disengaged has cost me a couple of animals. Equipment failures, poor planning and oversights have been experienced by every veteran hunter I know.

Hastily taken shots, misjudging the range on long-distance shots and ill-advised shots at running game taught me some stomach-sickening lessons

over the years. Once in Idaho, I had been hitting it hard, putting in the miles trying to find a mule deer buck. On my way down a steep mountain I took a spill, tumbling like Chris Farley for some distance before landing in a pathetic heap. After inspecting my poor rifle I concluded that it was OK and went about hunting. The next day a nice symmetrical 4x4 muley stood up out of his bed at 150 yards and posed real pretty for me. After shooting at him five times to no avail he simply turned and trotted off unamused. At the range, my rifle was shooting two feet high and two feet to the left. Cheechako.

Lest this be reduced to some kind of contemptible confessional, I digress. There is a point to my dubious disclosure; it’s easy to get overwhelmed. It’s easy to give up because it seems too hard. But hunting and shooting, like life itself, is an effort. You’ll get what you give. The triumphs I have experienced have far outweighed the tragedies I’ve endured. The friendships forged and memories made last a lifetime and beyond if properly recorded and shared. The most experienced and effective hunter or huntress out there was once a greenhorn. An awkward, stumbling, confused but driven neophyte. Use these mistakes and failures to make a better informed decision next time. Don’t quit, build. Someday you’ll be glad you did.

What was your rookie season like? Write us at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com!

Dale Valade is a local country gent with a love for the outdoors, handloading, hunting and shooting.



Dale Valade

Cash for Your Home

Looking to buy small home in John Day or Canyon City 1200' or less

CASH BUYER

NO PROJECT, MOVE IN READY

In pride of ownership neighborhood. Serious sellers ONLY.

CONTACT MARY • 503-505-2725

187523-1

TOM CHRISTENSEN

CONSTRUCTION

(541) 410-0557 • (541) 575-0192

CCB# 106077

REMODELS • NEW CONSTRUCTION • POLE BUILDINGS
CONCRETE EXCAVATION • SHEET ROCK • SIDING
ROOFING • FENCES • DECKS • TELESCOPING FORKLIFT SERVICES

5185396-1

Balance Today with Retiring Tomorrow

No matter where you're starting from, COUNTRY can help you achieve financial security in retirement. It starts with listening to your situation. Then we help you build a straightforward plan with step-by-step guidance. Call me to get started today.

Debbie Ausmus

245 South Canyon Blvd.
John Day, OR 97845

OPEN WED. & THUR.

9 am - 5 pm

541-575-1113

24 hrs/7 days wk

debbie.ausmus@countryfinancial.com

COUNTRY FINANCIAL

092013-01265AC

5185395-1

dish

BRING EVERYTHING YOU LOVE TOGETHER!

Blazing Fast Internet! ADD TO YOUR PACKAGE FOR ONLY \$19.99/mo. where available.

2-YEAR TV PRICE GUARANTEE

\$59.99/mo. America's Top 120 Package 190 CHANNELS Including Local Channels!

CALL TODAY - For \$100 Gift Card Promo Code: DISH100

1-866-373-9175 Offer ends 7/15/20.

188855-1

One solution for oxygen at home, away, and for travel

Introducing the INOGEN ONE – It's oxygen therapy on your terms

No more tanks to refill. No more deliveries. No more hassles with travel. The INOGEN ONE portable oxygen concentrator is designed to provide unparalleled freedom for oxygen therapy users. It's small, lightweight, clinically proven for stationary and portable use, during the day and at night, and can go virtually anywhere — even on most airlines. Inogen accepts Medicare and many private insurances!

Reclaim Your Freedom And Independence NOW!

Call Inogen Today To Request Your FREE Info Kit

1-855-839-0752

inogen

© 2020 Inogen, Inc. All rights reserved.

MKT-P0108 5188857-1

YOUR PERFECT BUNDLE

BUNDLE NOW. SAVE ALL YEAR. Now save \$30/mo. for a whole year on a bundle with DIRECTV and AT&T Internet.

\$79.98/mo.

CALL YOUR AT&T Dealer Today! 1-877-441-1933

AT&T Preferred Dealer

188853-11

Prepare for unexpected power outages with a Generac home standby generator

SCHEDULE YOUR FREE IN-HOME ASSESSMENT TODAY! 877-557-1912

FREE 7-Year Extended Warranty* A \$695 Value!

Offer valid March 16, 2020 - June 30, 2020

Special Financing Available Subject to Credit Approval

GENERAC

238861-1

Tax Problems: RESOLVED

There are many ways we can tackle IRS or State tax relief together:

✓Tax Levies & Liens Release

✓Wage Garnishment Release

✓Stop Penalties and Interest

✓Tax Debt Negotiation & Settlement

✓Resolve Back Taxes

✓Payroll Tax Negotiation

✓Tax Preparation & Bookkeeping Services

Call us now for your FREE tax consultation & evaluation: 844-945-2056

188860-1

100% Satisfaction Guarantee

Call us now for your FREE tax consultation & evaluation: 844-945-2056

Anthem Tax Services

Imagine The Difference You Can Make

DONATE YOUR CAR

1-844-533-9173

FREE TOWING TAX DEDUCTIBLE

Get Prevent Blindness A Vision Screening Annually

Heritage for the Blind

Ask About A FREE 3 Day Vacation Voucher To Over 20 Destinations!!!

188858-1