

Christmas Bird Count planned Dec. 19

By Tom Winters
For the Blue Mountain Eagle

The 40th John Day Christmas Bird Count will be on Saturday, Dec. 19.

If they are open, we will meet at the Outpost Restaurant at 6:30 a.m., earlier if you want breakfast. If they are not open, we will meet at the Elks Lodge. Due to the risk of transmitting COVID-19, teams will be comprised of only persons that share space continually or are driving separate vehicles. We will return to the Elks Lodge (which has been closed for several weeks) at 5 p.m. to hand in checklists and briefly share the day's adventures. As has been the case for the Grant County Bird Club most of this year, there will not be the usual potluck dinner.

Participants should dress warmly and be prepared for that day's weather. They should also bring binoculars, field guide, lunch and beverages as most groups will be out the full day and out of town. Households that are within the circle's boundaries and have bird feeders are encouraged to participate by noting what species are visiting their feeders and your best guess as to how many different individual birds of each species were



Contributed photo/Peter Meyer

Barb Meyer spots a great blue heron during the Christmas Bird Count in 2018.

present during the day. For further information, contact Tom Winters at 541-542-2006 or tjwinters1951@gmail.com.

Since the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count began in 1900, it has relied on the dedication and commitment of volunteer citizen scientists. In other words, it all starts with anyone willing to spend some time counting birds. The Christmas Bird Count season is Dec. 14 through Jan. 5 each year and each compiler chooses a date within this period. There is a specific

methodology to the CBC, but everyone can participate. The count takes place within "Count Circles," which focus on specific geographical areas. Each circle is led by a Count Compiler, Tom Winters having been the compiler for the John Day count for over 30 years. The John Day "circle" boundaries are Four Corners and Beech Creek Road on the north, the John Day river crossing west of Mt Vernon, the Canyon Creek crossing five miles south of Canyon City and Hall's Hill to the east.

Prairie City pastor: 'We have to live with hope'

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

Pastor Robert Perkins continues his 40 years of pastoral work in Grant County.

Perkins, a veteran, moved to Prairie City with his wife, Patricia, from Arizona City, Arizona on April 5. He received a call earlier this year to see if he could help Grace Chapel in Prairie City and he accepted the opportunity.

Providing help and working with many people is one of the biggest joys Perkins has experienced in his 40 years as a pastor.

"Working with people and helping is the biggest thing," Perkins said. "There's no other reason to do this."

Perkins helped at many food banks in other cities and coordinated the efforts with churches. Shortly after Hurricane Katrina wreaked havoc in 2005, Perkins pastored in Mississippi and helped provide food.

"It worked out really well and the city worked with us and we took care of the people," Perkins said.



Contributed photo

Pastor Robert Perkins moved to Prairie City with his wife, Patricia, from Arizona City, Arizona, on April 5.

International headlines and ongoing developments of life with COVID-19 marred 2020 for many people, but Perkins said, while it's tough, the pandemic will not last forever.

The constant gloom that people face from the economic, health and other effects of COVID-19 has elevated his importance as a pastor to help people build hope for the future. He said, when they lose hope, there is nothing left.

"This is hard, but you have to have

your faith, and I tell people there are three things you have to do, which are read the word, pray and be in church," Perkins said. "And staying connected with others is important because so many people across America are living in fear, but we have to live with hope."

Perkins said staying connected with friends and family is important, as is connecting with people who may be alone.

"You help those people if they need a ride to get groceries or doctor's appointments and more," Perkins said. "It's all about ministering, and that's why I'm here."

Perkins enjoys the slower pace of life in Grant County. His two favorite activities are climbing mountains and golfing.

Perkins continues to see the changes that COVID-19 has on daily life as a minister and sees how it can affect parents, the elderly, mental health and more, but he wants to remind people to keep hope.

"The pandemic will not last forever and will come to an end one day," Perkins said. "We'll get through this one of these days."

American Legion Auxiliary meeting planned

Blue Mountain Eagle

The Ellis Tracy Unit of the American Legion Auxiliary will meet at 2 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 18, at the Grant County Chamber of Commerce office in John Day. All members are encouraged to attend.

Betty Ann Gerking Roach

10/11/1921 - 12/2/2020



Death finally called Betty Ann Gerking Roach on Wednesday, December 2, 2020, she had reached the age of 99. Her vision was poor, and she was ready to meet her Savior. A graveside service will be held on Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 1 p.m., at Olney Cemetery in Pendleton. She will be buried next to her husband, Fred.

Betty Ann Gerking was born in Heppner, Oregon on October 11, 1921, to Mart Braden and Lillis Slaughter Gerking. She was named Betty Ann after Granddad Slaughter's sister Betty and Braden's sister "Ann". At the age of nine days, she traveled with her parents by team to Hot Springs, Oregon. A post office, general store, a big hotel and also a dance hall were located there. Betty had one sibling, a younger brother, Clark, who passed away in 2005.

She rode four miles to a one-room school at Three Mile from the first through the fifth grade. Then her parents rented a ranch closer to Ritter and she finished the eighth grade at Ritter School. She then boarded at St. Joseph Academy in Pendleton, graduating from High school there in 1942. The high school she attended was taught by nuns and Betty worked her way through school by cleaning for the nuns. She also sold Clovine Salve during school years and after she married.

Betty grew up on the banks of Eight Mile Creek, where she learned to ride, rope, and handle a team. She spent many hours in the fields. Her dad had land across the North Fork of the John Day River and as she grew older, she did a lot of riding after the cattle, packing out salt and such. She developed quite a reputation as a horse woman. Like her father who was a rodeo rider for many years, she spent many hours on horseback and was well-known for her skill. Her favorite horse was Poka Dot. She attended her first rodeo in 1932, when she was 11 years old.

Betty studied and received a certificate from the Berry School of Horsemanship. She also went to Weather Bureau School in Seattle, Washington. Then worked as a filing clerk for the Thirteenth Navel District.

On March 4, 1944, Betty married Raleigh Weaver. They moved back to Ritter country and worked on various ranches. They divorce on December 3, 1962 and she married Fred Roach. She and Fred traveled extensively due to Fred's shearing sheep and falling timber. They made their home at Elk City, Idaho for some five years then moved to Hermiston, Oregon and bought an acreage as Fred had a job shearing feed-lot-lambs. They raised orphan lambs and calves.

They sold the place in Hermiston and moved to Boardman to care for Betty's parents. After the death of her parents in 1973, they sold the holdings in Boardman and moved to Helix. Again, they sold and moved up to the Wenatchee River area Leavenworth. They stayed there one winter and decided there was too much snow so moved back to Buck Gulch on the Middle Fork of the John Day river. After several moves, they settled in Fossil to make their final home. Fred passed on December 28, 1995.

In 1998 a life-long friend, Frank Andrus, came up and stayed with Betty. She took care of him up until his death on November 15, 2002. Betty continued to live by herself until she became ill and moved to Haven House Retirement Center in 2009. There, Betty joined in on activities, church services, Bible study, bowling, bingo, and such, even to the last two weeks of her life.

Although Betty had no children of her own, she became a "mom" figure to her husband's grandchildren and to children belonging to friends and other family. One of them, Penny Baldwin, became like a daughter to her and she and Penny became very close, sharing everything from sewing hints to Betty's personal history. Frequent visits from Bill and Kathleen, Lorie, and Zenith were always welcome at Betty's place.

She is survived by many friends, both within her church, (Fossil United Methodist) where she was baptized, and outside of it. Betty will be missed. She was a good friend to us all. Memorial contributions may be made to Haven House Retirement Center, PO Box 386 Fossil, Oregon 97830. Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in care of arrangements. You may sign the online condolence book at www.sweeneymortuary.com

Paid for by the family of Betty Roach.

OBITUARIES

Belva Mae 'Mickey' Reynolds

Nov. 28, 1922 - Nov. 29, 2020

Belva Mae "Mickey" Reynolds, 98, passed away Nov. 29, 2020, in Baker City, Oregon. A graveside memorial will be held at a later date.

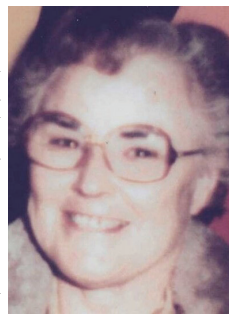
Mickey was born Nov. 28, 1922, to Chester Charles and Jessie Mae (Cowles) Warren in the Black Hills of South Dakota. She graduated from Laurelwood Academy in 1942. Mickey married Percy McDaniel Reynolds in 1948, and they had two children, Dennis and Julia.

In her 39 years of working as a bookkeeper, she worked at Tualum Lumber Company and for the Hudspeth Sawmill Company, retiring in 1983. Mickey enjoyed horseback riding, 4-H club work, ranch work, raising bottle calves, hunting, crocheting and baking pies. Mickey was a member of the Grant County 4-H Leaders Association. She enjoyed volunteering at the Grant County Fair and was a Baptist Church member. In 1947 Mickey was the Crooked River Round-Up Queen. In 1995, she received the 4-H Distinguished Service Award, and in 2001 she was very proud to be the Grant County Fair grand marshal.

Mickey is survived by her daughter, Julia Reynolds, of Fort Collins, Colorado; daughter-in-law, Julie Reynolds, of Canyon City, Oregon; grandsons, Percy D. Reynolds of Bend, Oregon, Beau Reynolds of Pendleton, Oregon, and Jake Reynolds of Canyon City, Oregon. She is also survived by her great-grandchildren, Jack and June Reynolds.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Chester and Jessie Warren; her siblings Adeline, Dorothy, Hazel and Buck; her husband, Percy M. Reynolds; and her son Dennis Reynolds.

Memorial contributions in memory of Mickey may be made to the Dennis Reynolds Memorial Scholarship through Grays West & Company Pioneer Chapel, 1500 Dewey Ave., Baker City, OR 97814. To leave an online condolence for the family of Mickey, visit grayswestco.com.



Vicki Hall Herburger

Nov. 29, 1922 - Dec. 6, 2020

Vicki Hall Herburger was born on Nov. 29, 1922, in Coos Bay, Oregon, to Ann E and Charles Hall. Vicki passed away peacefully on Dec. 6 surrounded by family. Though her family moved to Lake Oswego, Oregon, when she was 9, her many happy memories of Coos Bay and the small family cabin on Coos River remained in her heart throughout her life.

Vicki graduated from Lincoln High School in Portland and then attended Oregon State College. She was affiliated with Alpha Chi Omega sorority where she made many life-long friends. There Vicki met the love of her life, Jerry Herburger. They were married Jan. 23, 1943, on a cold and snowy day in Portland. Vicki and Jerry spent the next 58 years together. Their first child, Kappy, was born in 1945 while Jerry was recuperating on Guam from a severe injury sustained in battle on Okinawa. They were happily reunited when Jerry came home the following summer. Their son Tom was born in 1947. Vicki dedicated her life to making a home for her family and raising Kappy and Tom.

Jerry's roots were in Eastern Oregon where he introduced Vicki to ranching life and many family and friends there. She spoke often of her love for Eastern Oregon, taking great pride in sharing her love of this part of the country. Vicki and Jerry also enjoyed time on the Oregon coast, especially Rockaway Beach where they built a cabin and spent many happy years. Jerry preceded her in death in 2001.

Her love for her children and her grandchildren consumed her life. In addition to Tom (Suzie) and Kappy, she loved her grandchildren, Anna Villareal (Jerry), Peter Roper (Arienne) and Laura Herburger, and her four great-grandchildren.

In honor of Vicki, please consider a contribution to Hospice Care of the Northwest.

GRANT UNION STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Grade 7
Maleah Archibald
Parents: David and Camilla Archibald



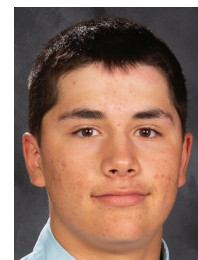
Grade 8
Monel Anderson
Parents: M.T. and Cori Anderson



Grade 9
Macy Carter
Parents: Mat and Jennifer Carter



Grade 10
Quinn Larson
Parents: Gordon and Julie Larson



Grade 11
Sam McCracken
Parents: Joe and Didgette McCracken



Grade 12
Parker Manitsas
Parents: Levi and Kathryn Manitsas

Last Week's Temps

Day	HI/LO
Tuesday	56/35
Wednesday	47/29
Thursday	42/23
Friday	38/30
Saturday	36/27
Sunday	35/27
Monday	37/28

24/7 FORECAST

AUTOMATED: 541-575-1122

ROAD CONDITIONS: 511; TRIPCHECK.COM

NOAA WEATHER RADIO FOR JOHN DAY

162.500 MHZ

WEATHER FORECAST FOR THE WEEK OF DEC. 16 - 22

Day	Forecast	High	Low
Wednesday	Rain	43	33
Thursday	Chance of rain/snow	41	26
Friday	Mostly cloudy	44	32
Saturday	Slight chance of rain	47	37
Sunday	Chance of rain	49	34
Monday	Slight chance of rain	46	21
Tuesday	Cloudy	44	21