

## SHOOTING THE BREEZE

## FLINTLOCK FOOLERY

When I was growing up, there was a song on the radio called "Yodelin' Fool" by a band called Wylie and the Wild West Show. It was the ballad of a young man who annoyed his small town neighbors by constantly practicing his yodeling, hoping someday he would hit the big time. I won't ruin it for you, look it up.

The song reminds me of another young man I knew back then. He loved to shoot. It's all he ever wanted to do. Like the Yodelin' Fool he too annoyed many of his small town neighbors with his constant noisy practicing. He loved to hunt deer and quail, and when he couldn't do either, he spent all of his spare time practicing to hunt deer and quail. In this little pile of rocks, an elderly man took to mentor the young man. The kind-hearted gentleman had a shop out behind his house



Dale Valade

that had all the perfect trinkets befitting proper gun nuttury.

One evening the old man was showing the boy a flintlock rifle he had built from scratch. Every meticulous detail had been hand carved,

hand fitted and hand finished. It was the old man's pride and joy. The young man saw that rifle, and having never fired a muzzleloader immediately wanted to do so. As it was near dark on a weeknight, the old man was hesitant at first, but seeing the excitement in the eyes of this young protégée he relented. The only caveat was that the old man wanted to be in charge of loading the gun.

After agreeing with the youngster to this one rule, he went out into the back yard to perform the perfunctory task of insuring they were technically out of city limits before shooting. It was getting dark so he grabbed the appropriate size stone and heaved. Marking the spot where it landed, he stepped inside his home to tell his wife to plug her ears.

Inside, seeing the light gradually fade, the young man in spite of his

promise, grabbed the powder horn off of the wall and began pouring. He counted out loud to three while pouring, figuring that would be the right amount of black powder. Finding a patch and a ball he sat them with the ramrod and quickly poured the pan full of powder just like he had seen in the movies. He anxiously stepped outside, and not seeing his old pal anywhere, he decided to shoot before the light failed.

When he squeezed off the shoot, all hell broke loose. The flash was blinding, the report sounded more like an explosion and being temporarily deaf and blind, he dropped the rifle in the gravel to hold his head with both hands. The smoke, now everywhere, made it appear as if the town was itself engulfed in fire. The old man stumbled down the steps, looking skyward periodically as though he expected to

feel pieces of his young friend raining down from the sky. Neighbors began running down the street, and upon seeing the young man, they cursed him. Noisy fool!

The Flintlock Fool as he was called no longer haunts that poor little bend in the river. Just like the boy in the song, the day he disappeared, the townsfolk surely cheered, for now they never had to hear him make noise again. I run into him now and again, and he still enjoys shooting to this day. He never made the big time but still enjoys shooting muzzleloaders, properly loaded, of course, in full daylight.

Do you shoot muzzleloaders? Write to us at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com!

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

# SENIOR Outlook

## Chester's

### Prairie City Seniors

Rose Coombs



Just when the grass was getting green, it started snowing again! We have 8 inches in the yard so far. PTL! And the

electricity is on! Hallelujah! What more could we ask for?

The meal today was designed to warm you up. Cooks Angie, Laura, and Tom served up chicken enchiladas with Spanish rice and refried beans. Dessert was a pineapple dream cake. That sounds delicious! This meal was also sponsored by the Senile Sisters. Thanks so much ladies. Thanks to Ginger and Mary for doing the home deliveries, Pam at the registration desk, and Tom for clearing the parking lot.

We didn't get to eat any of this meal because we had to be in Burns for an appointment at 12:30 p.m. We pulled over at the Silvies Valley Ranch Rest Stop, but they had closed it for a while, I guess. Anyway, the thing that was of note was the mailbox keys that were hanging out of the littler doors on the big mailbox there. Oh dear. Other items of note were the absence of little trees on the Canyon Creek Fire Complex. How come? It was nice to see the beaver dams on the creek at the bottom of Canyon Mountain and on Canyon Creek. Closer to Canyon City there is an old mine entrance, I presume, on the west side of the creek. Never heard anyone say anything about it. Do you know anything about it?

We have a mystery in Prairie City. Some (I can't come

up with a good adjective to put in here) individuals absconded with the two old, comfortable wooden captains chairs that were put in the lobby of the Post Office for the convenience of the patrons. Now that's just downright obscene! What would possess a person to do such a thing? All the good that the hard-working people of our town have accomplished in the last few years has been tainted due to this theft. C'mon man. Bring them back.

WE do have good news to report. The new Head Cook for our center is home-town girl Pam Woodworth. She will begin her new duties March 1, and we are so very glad to have her join us. I remember when she had a little lunch counter on Front Street, and we had a lot of lunches there.

So why did we go to Burns? To see the miracle ear people. When I have to turn the TV up to its maximum and Derrol is frantically turning his hearing aids down, it is time to do something... The ladies brunch people asked if I had been lip-reading all this time. Yes, and masks sure didn't help!

The ensemble got to do their Christmas Presentation on Valentine's Day with all members present and reasonably healthy! And we had snow! How appropriate. We'll see what happens at Easter time.

*Psalm 37:5-6 "God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding. He says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth,..."*

*Psalm 38:22 "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow....?"*

### John Day Seniors

Dusty Harris



Well, here we are a few days from March, you know that means spring is just around the corner.

We have had so many good meals! We have the best cooks. And what do

you think of our Desserts?!

February 25 we're having pork chops, baked potato, and apple spice cake. I'm sure a lot of you got your vaccine for the virus. Can't wait 'til we can get back to what we're used to.

*Psalm 25:4 Show me the path where I should walk, O Lord; point out the right road for me to follow.*

### Monument Seniors

Soo Yukawa



Terry Cade and Carrie Jewell, our most wonderful cooks, made a lunch of mac and cheese with ham, garlic bread,

carrots, and blueberry sheet cake. We thank them for their hard work and diligence. I did not partake of this meal because I actually was actually trying to do my chores (hubby was busy) and I did not get done until almost 1pm. It was hard moving around in the heavy snow, even with the four-wheeler.

We thank our faithful volunteers. Kristi Guimont filled out the paperwork. Jan Ensign and Bob Cockrell counted the money and made sure everything was in order. Sylvia Cockrell passed out the meals to the patrons at the door.

Well, it looks like we got a nice heap of snow, oh but it sure looks beautiful on the trees, on the ground, and on the mountains all around us. The snow seems to be melting slowly and seeping into the ground, praise the Lord! It is a little weird though, in some areas, there is like tons of snow and then you turn a corner, and there is no snow?

The snow got real heavy on the previous Monday, and collapsed the roof of our dog kennel next to the house. My hubby and I were shoveling the snow out and it was very wet and heavy. The weight of the snow broke the arches of the dog kennel roof. 1st kennel was mangled by a falling tree, now our second kennel got its roof broken from the heavy snow. Praise the Lord the dogs

did not get buried!

So, the day I missed lunch, I was busy making pathways for my little goats. I know it sounds silly but I felt sorry for them having to trudge along in the deep snow. I was walking with my heavy snow boots and pushing down the snow, making pathways to their water, from their goat shed, and to different parts of the pen. I would say I got a pretty good workout because I was sweating afterwards. Ha. I don't know if they appreciated it or not. The sad part was, I think it snowed a couple of days later and buried those pathways with another 6 inches of snow, sigh, all that work for nothing.

I need to put some backbone into some hard work come this Spring. I think I need to rearrange garden beds, yank out a bunch of weeds, transplant, and dig the ground. I am not looking forward digging in the ground for I will most likely be hitting lots of rock. I have to time it such that I dig in that time period where the ground is still soft from the melting snow, before the summer hits and the ground gets hard. That will be interesting.

So many things to plan and do, yet I can't do anything right now, it is at a standstill because of the winter snow. I will just have to be satisfied plotting in my head for now.

*Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*

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