



Monument/Dayville's Senior
 Zachary Ferguson



Monument/Dayville's
 quarterback Jordan Hull,
 a senior



Kellie Ridenour/Contributed Photo

Retired rodeo clown Gerald "Pinky" Christopher poses in full clown attire with a group of children in 1973 at the Deschutes County Fair Rodeo in Redmond.

Dayville/ Monument falls to Joseph 20-6

By STEVEN MITCHELL
 Blue Mountain Eagle

MONUMENT — Joseph proved to be too much for Dayville/Monument to handle as the Eagles defeated the Tigers 20-6 on Friday, Sept. 17.

Zachary Ferguson, a senior, told the Eagle that there was good sportsmanship all around in the football game.

"They (Joseph) were courteous, and it was not like they were targeting anyone. They were just playing the game, just like us," he said. "They were just having fun."

Dayville/Monument coach Tim Auty said in the team's next game against Echo, he wants the Tigers to start the way they finish.

"We finished much stronger than we started," Jordan Hull, Dayville/Monument quarterback, said.

Dayville/Monument is 0-3 on the season so far, having lost their Sept. 10 game to Huntington 20-6 and falling to Prairie City 54-0 in their first game on Sept. 4.

Next up: Dayville/Monument will host Echo on Friday, Sept. 24, at 1 p.m. at Dayville High School.



Dayville/Monument football
 coach Chris Carlin

A lifetime of making the crowds laugh

By NICK ROSENBERGER
 East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Gerald "Pinky" Christopher has spent his life making others laugh. With fritzzy eyebrows and wire-rimmed glasses peeking out from under his cowboy hat and a mischievous grin crowned by a white horseshoe mustache, Christopher is the definition of old school cowboy.

From his red kerchief to his cowboy boots, the soon-to-be 87-year-old's life as a rodeo clown is etched into him. His youthful energy goes against a lifetime spent helping build the foundations of Oregon rodeo.

Born in Kansas in 1934, Christopher wasn't even a year old when he and his mom, dad, two brothers, and uncle piled into a Model-A truck and moved across the country to Oregon, where they settled in the Willamette Valley. Outside of Eugene, his father owned a ranch that ran up against the nearby logging camps during World War II, but sold it and moved to Redmond after the war ended.

"On Friday I was going to high school in Elmira, Oregon, and Monday I was going to Redmond, Oregon," Christopher said, "and so I finished high school in Redmond."

It was as a senior in high school when Christopher truly began a lifetime in rodeo. When visiting Tygh Valley for a rodeo, he drew War Paint — the famous saddle bronc who won the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Bucking Horse of the Year Award in 1956, 1957 and 1958 and is preserved at the Pendleton Round-Up Hall of Fame.

"I rode him to the whistle, and then I went sky and up in the air and 40 feet forwards," Christopher said. "And I think I won all of \$25."

Christopher said he did bareback and saddle bronc and a few bulls before deciding to become a clown "to be in front of them instead of on top of them."

It was the early 1950s when Christopher started his clowning career in the small town of Yoncalla in Douglas County. When the rodeo had no bulls, he asked the organizer if he needed any help with entertainment



Kellie Ridenour/Contributed Photo

Retired rodeo clown Gerald "Pinky" Christopher, 87, poses with tribal members on Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021, at the Pendleton Round-Up.



Kellie Ridenour/Contributed Photo

Retired rodeo clown Gerald "Pinky" Christopher poses with War Paint, a renowned bronc he rode in the early 1950s, at the Pendleton Round-Up on Sept. 15, 2016.

and in return got his entrance fees covered.

There was one lady, he said, who owned about two-thirds of the businesses in Yoncalla and had brought

her grandson to the rodeo who was crying and whining and bawling.

"I started going by and I'd get up on a fencepost and sit there and he'd shoot me with his cap gun and I'd fall

off and stuff," Christopher said, "and pretty soon, before the second day was over with, why he was a-laughing and having a good time and his grandmother was enjoying the show."

Christopher would spend the next 30 some odd years traveling around Oregon to rodeos, working as a bullfighter and rodeo clown, ingraining himself into Oregon rodeo life. It made him happy to help others have a good time, forget their troubles and enjoy the show, he said.

"If you just make them laugh for 10 minutes and forget their troubles," he said, "why it was well worth it."

Christopher said it was different then versus nowadays, where rodeo clowns, bullfighters and entertainment are separate. Back then, "you were the rodeo clown, you were the bullfighter and you were part of the entertainment, too."

"He was a prankster, oh my god I could tell you a million stories," said Robert Cosner, a retired member of the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office who has known Christopher for more than 40 years.

One of these included building a washtub on a saddle and adding a sack of flour to the bottom. They'd sprinkle flour on Christopher, and he'd hop in the tub on top of a bucking horse with his legs poking out. He'd get bucked out and flour would go everywhere, Cosner said. He strapped heavy thick sponges to his back and the back of his legs to help avoid getting too banged up.

"Sometimes you get the wrong way, you know, eating a little dirt," Christopher said, "but usually you tried to land on your feet."

Christopher did anything he could think of to get people hooting and hollering and enjoying the show.

"Whatever you can come up with to keep the people entertained," he said.

Even now, at 87 years old, Christopher never misses a rodeo, according to his daughter, Kellie Ridenour. He still loves making others laugh.

"I enjoyed it, the people enjoyed it," he said. "If they were happy, I was happy."

SPORTS ROUNDUP

Panthers pick up second win of the season

PRAIRIE CITY — The Panthers improved their record to 2-1 in league play with a 36-18 win over South Wasco.

Nick Thompson, Panthers head football coach, said he had some players that showed up to play Friday.

He told the Eagle Monday that the team played really "physical," which, he said, was what the squad was lacking in their loss to Wheeler on Sept. 10.

He said the team had over a dozen missed tackles against Wheeler the week before compared to two in their game against South Wasco.

Thompson said the team watched the game on film and worked on what they needed to

in practice, and the scoreboard reflected that hard work.

He said another significant improvement this week was the offensive line putting down blocks and staying with them.

On defense, Wes Voigt had eight and a half tackles, including a sack and two tackles for a loss of yards. Thompson said he credits a half to a player if they share in a tackle.

Additionally, he said Eli Wright had six and a half tackles, one sack, and two tackles for a loss; he said one was a forced fumble that Brock Haak recovered. Trey Brown had five tackles and one sack as well.

Offensively, Thompson said Voigt was three for 10 on passing for 65 yards and one touchdown. He told the Eagle John Titus scored one touchdown and had 45 yards.

Wright, he said, had two receptions for 20 yards. Tucker Wright had three carries for five yards and Voigt had a carry for five yards as well.

Cole Teel carried the ball 21 times for a total of 367 yards and scored four touchdowns.

"(Teel) is starting to prove that he needs to be in the conversation in this league," Thompson said. "He really balled out this week."

Grant Union girls volleyball team improves to a 9-5 record

HEPPNER/BAKER CITY — After a 3-0 win over Heppner on Thursday, Sept. 16, the Lady Pros won three out of six games at the East-West Classic Volleyball Tournament in Powder Valley on Sept. 18-19.

The Eagle was unable to reach Shanna Northway, Grant Union's volleyball coach.

Prairie City volleyball wins two in a row

PRAIRIE CITY/ELGIN — The Lady Panthers won back-to-back games on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 17 and 18. On Friday, the girls team blanked the Bees 3-0 and on Saturday overpowered Elgin 3-1. The Eagle was unable to get in touch with Jordan Bass, Prairie City's volleyball coach.

Grant Union drops season opener to Lost River 51-26

LOST RIVER — Grant Union lost its first football game of the season to Lost River 51-26. The Eagle was unable to reach Grant Union coach Jason Miller for comment.

SPORTS SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, SEPT. 23

Grant Union football vs. Irrigon, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 24

Prairie City football vs. Joseph, 7 p.m.

Prairie City volleyball vs. Joseph, 5 p.m.

Grant Union cross country @ Lebanon, champions invitational, 3 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 25

Prairie City volleyball @ Elgin, 1 p.m.

Grant Union volleyball @ Stanfield/Weston-McEwen, 1:30 p.m.