

Critic appeals aquatic center permit

By BENNETT HALL
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — A vocal critic of plans to build a new community pool is challenging the validity of a permit for the project.

John Morris, who lives several miles west of John Day, has filed an appeal of a decision by the John Day Planning Commission to approve a conditional use permit for an aquatic center to be built by the John Day-Canyon City Parks and Recreation District at the Seventh Street Sports Complex in John Day.

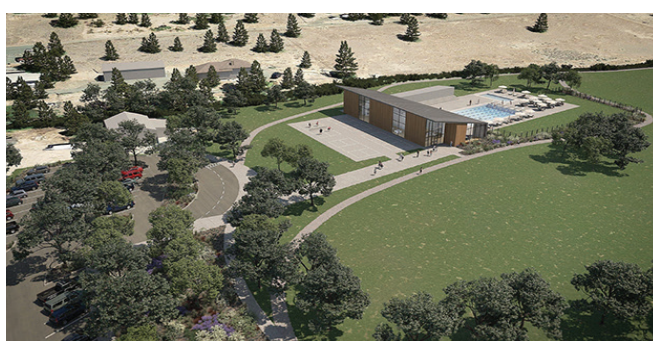
The appeal is scheduled to be heard by the John Day City Council at 6 p.m. on Jan. 5 in the John Day Fire Hall, 316 S. Canyon Blvd.

Morris was the lone person to speak in opposition to the project at the Planning Com-

mission's Nov. 9 public hearing. In his appeal, he claims the Planning Commission was biased and prejudicial in its decision to grant the permit because he was not given "the same opportunity to provide and to complete his testimony" as those who spoke in favor of the pool project.

As evidence of that claim, Morris cites the actions of Planning Commission Chair Ken Boethin. Morris notes that Boethin interrupted him at one point and asked if he had any concerns relating to the development code criteria the commission was using to evaluate the permit application for the pool, but did not ask the same question of the 15 people who testified in support of the project.

John Day Mayor Ron Lundbom and City Councilor Shannon Adair were among



Courtesy of Opsis Architecture

If funding for the project is approved by voters, the aquatic center would be built in the northwest corner of the Seventh Street Sports Complex.

those who spoke in favor of the proposed aquatic center at the hearing. By expressing support for the project, Morris argues, Lundbom and Adair have prejudiced his right to an unbiased and fair appeal before the City Council.

In addition, Morris argues that the acoustics of the meet-

ing room and the complexity of the development code criteria made it difficult for him to understand what was being said, putting him at a disadvantage.

The proposed aquatic center would replace the old Gleason Pool, located in a city park adjacent to the Kam

Wah Chung State Historic Site. That pool, which opened in 1958, has been closed the last two seasons due to COVID-19 concerns and has significant deferred maintenance issues.

The City Council recently approved the sale of Gleason Park, where the pool is located, to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The state is planning a \$4.5 million expansion of the Kam Wah Chung Historic Site on the park property.

Plans for the new aquatic center call for a six-lane, 25-yard competitive pool with spectator seating and an 8,000-square-foot structure to house locker rooms, a lobby and office space for parks and recreation staff.

The project has an estimated price tag of \$6 million, but the city has already

obtained \$2 million in state funding for the aquatic center project and is considering up to \$1 million more in cash and in-kind contributions for site improvements, including the money from the sale of the Gleason Park property. The city also plans to cover utility costs for the new pool.

The parks and rec district still needs to raise \$3 million to \$4 million to cover design and construction of the aquatic center. The district plans to put a bond measure on the ballot next year for either the May or the November election.

If voters in John Day and Canyon City (the area covered by the district) approve the bond measure, the new aquatic center could open as soon as the summer of 2023. If voters reject the measure, the pool would not be built.

Attorney paints Easterday as victim

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press

YAKIMA, WASHINGTON — Former Washington cattleman Cody Easterday, awaiting sentencing for defrauding Tyson Fresh Meats, may have been a victim of price-fixing by Tyson, a lawyer said in court Wednesday, Dec. 15, a claim rebuffed by a Tyson attorney.

Attorney Timothy Conway, representing Cody's mother, Karen Easterday, pointed to a lawsuit in Minnesota that alleges Tyson and three other packers depressed cattle prices.

The Easterdays sold cattle from the family-owned feedlot near Pasco to Tyson, until the company discovered Cody Easterday was billing it for non-existent cattle.

Nevertheless, if the anti-trust allegations are proven, the Easterdays could share in a large settlement, Conway told U.S. Bankruptcy Judge

Whitman Holt in Yakima.

Tyson attorney Al Smith called Conway's claim an "irrelevant cheap shot." He said the Easterday family was angling to dodge paying \$233 million in restitution to Tyson.

"They are trying to complicate things to avoid their own liability here," Smith told the judge. "Your honor, they are just trying to throw sand into the works."

Cody Easterday filed for bankruptcy last year shortly before pleading guilty to selling Tyson about 200,000 head of what federal prosecutors called "ghost cattle." He is scheduled to be sentenced for wire fraud in January.

Meanwhile, the family's extensive farm and ranch operations in the Columbia Basin are being sold. The proceeds have yet to be divided among Tyson, other creditors and the Easterday family.

OBITUARIES

Bill McNeil

July 25, 1923 — Nov. 15, 2021

Bill McNeil was born and raised in Tulare, California. In 1941 Bill enlisted in the Navy for World War II and was a machinist mate first class on the repair ship USS Whitney. In 1958 Bill started his own die casting company in Oakland, which is still family-run.

In the early 1970s Bill became obsessed with owning a ranch. Who knows why, but he loved John Wayne movies, Louis L'Amour books, and Bob Wills' music.

Bill bought his first ranch outside of Monument. He dragged his city-raised wife and teenagers on 13-hour drives to stay in a mouse-stained trailer in the middle of nowhere. Fortunately, just down the dirt road we had wonderful neighbors Bud and Osie Engle, who charmed us with authentic experiences of country life.

Later Bill sold the Monument ranch and in 1993 bought the former Oliver Ranch near John Day. In 1997 Shannon Voigt built his house, and for the rest of his life Bill never went anywhere but work, home, and John Day.

Bill had a 28-year partnership with Allan and Rozanne Mullin as ranch operators, and later as co-owners.

Save for his family it was Bill's most gratifying relationship. Bill loved going to the Squeeze-In to be served breakfast by Shawn Duncan and gather with a group of men he called "the old timers," including John Aasness and Jim Jensen. Bill enjoyed many meals at Snaffle Bit Dinner House. If Brenda Coley is wearing a MAGA hat, it was Bill who gave it to her. Bill loved sitting on his deck with a view of Strawberry Mountain, and driving in Allan's rig around the property.

Bill's beloved wife, Jean, died in 2015. He is survived by his three children.



Richard Guy Craven

Aug. 5, 1933 — Nov. 23, 2021

Richard Craven of Post Falls, Idaho, passed away at the age of 88 on Nov. 23 in the care of Guardian Angel Homes in Post Falls, Idaho. Born on Aug. 5, 1933, in Goldendale, Washington, Richard was one of five children Samuel G. Craven and Opal Nickerson Craven would have.

Richard graduated in 1951 from John Day High School in Oregon. He then enlisted in the Coast Guard the next October. While in the service, he trained at the Coast Guard Training Station for radio operation. He earned a National Defense Service Medal for his commitment and dedication to his county. Richard served just under four years, before being honorably discharged.

Richard married Flora Gae DeForest on Dec. 7, 1953, in North Bend, Oregon. Together they had three wonderful sons: Stephen, Larry and Timothy.

Richard was hardworking, a master gardener and member of the Oregon Rhododendron Society. He was instrumental in creating the Wonder Bread delivery routes for Lincoln City/Oregon Coast. He was very creative and had a talent for building violins, dulcimers, mandolins. Richard had an inquisitive mind and loved to study his family ancestry and genealogy.

Richard is survived by his spouse, Flora G. Craven, and his three sons, Stephen P. (Lorraine Turner) Craven of Idaho, Larry D. (Monica Dawson) Craven of Montana, and Timothy W. (Wendy Miller) Craven of Washington, as well as his sister, Judy (Craven) Hudson of John Day, Oregon, and his five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Richard is preceded in death by his father, Samuel G. Craven; mother, Opal Craven; two brothers, Allen and Samuel Craven; and his sister Connie (Craven) Beil.

There are no events scheduled. You can still show your support by planting a tree in memory of Richard Craven.

Warren Wilson

Warren Wilson, 81, of Seneca died Wednesday, Dec. 15, surrounded by his family. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home and Cremation Services. Online condolences can be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Alvin Cecil Hunt

Alvin Cecil Hunt, age 72, of Long Creek passed away Dec. 14 with his family by his side. A memorial service will be planned for sometime in the spring or early summer of 2022. To light a candle in Alvin's memory or to offer online condolences to his family, please visit www.driskillmemorialchapel.com.

The Blue Mountain Eagle office will be Closed Friday, Dec. 24th Closed Friday, Dec. 31st

Happy Holidays!

Blue Mountain EAGLE

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Last Week's Temps

John Day	HI/LO
Wednesday	33/29
Thursday	36/26
Friday	35/27
Saturday	39/25
Sunday	35/24
Monday	35/23
Tuesday	35/22

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. 22-28

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
42	37	36	32	27	30	28
34	29	28	24	23	23	20