

Easterday sentencing delayed

By DON JENKINS
Capital Press



George Plaven/Capital Press, File
Cody Easterday

RICHLAND, Washington — An Eastern Washington federal judge Thursday, Jan. 6, postponed sentencing Cody Easterday to June 13, giving the ex-cattleman six more months of freedom to settle his contentious bankruptcy case.

U.S. District Judge Stanley Bastian described the ongoing dispute between Easterday, his creditors and his fraud victim, Tyson Fresh Meats, as a “mess.”

“I can’t find a better word,” he said.

Easterday, 50, pleaded guilty March 31 to defrauding Tyson out of \$233 million. Easterday supplied Tyson with cattle from his feedlot near Pasco. Over several years, he billed Tyson for about 200,000 head of cattle that didn’t exist.

Easterday faces up to 20 years in prison for wire fraud and must make restitution. His sentencing already had been postponed twice to give

Debby, and mother, Karen, claim they are entitled to a share.

The trial will sort out ownership of more than 80 parcels of land acquired over three decades by Cody Easterday and his late father, Gale.

Only Cody Easterday has the knowledge to help family attorneys prepare, Oreskovich argued. “It’s a monumental amount of work that is necessary,” he said.

Bastian agreed to delay sentencing until after the trial. “Mr. Easterday is doing what he promised to do when he pled guilty in this courtroom to try to help clean this mess up,” the judge said.

Bastian said he also wanted to sentence Easterday in person, not by video conference, and it’s unlikely that courtroom hearings will resume this month because of COVID restrictions.

He also noted that if Easterday had insisted on a trial, the trial would not have started yet because of normal delays. The case is still ahead

of most criminal cases, he said.

“And that’s because Mr. Easterday pled guilty and has taken the initial steps to accept responsibility for the mess that he created,” Bastian said.

Along with the Justice Department, Tyson opposed postponing sentencing.

In a court filing, Tyson said Cody Easterday wanted to stay free to steer “tens of millions of dollars in disputed sale proceeds to his mother and wife rather than to creditors.”

In a written response, Oreskovich disputed Tyson’s description of the bankruptcy case.

The Easterdays cooperated to sell their companies to raise money for creditors, including Tyson, Oreskovich said. The Easterdays face paying \$25 million in capital gains taxes, he said.

Tyson and other creditors are trying to stick the Easterdays with the tax bill and no money to pay it, Oreskovich claimed.

SHOOTING THE BREEZE When you have one shot, you better make it count

Approximately 80 years ago a young man we will call Ray was tending a band of sheep.

This country used to be full of sheep. Not only is the area well-suited for them, but many of the earliest settlers were Anglo-Saxon in heritage, and traditionally were sheepherders.



Dale Valade



Contributed Photo
A .25-20 cartridge (left) shown with a .22 Long Rifle for comparison.

When the local young men came of age they would hire out to ranchers as shepherds. Many of the stone fences they fashioned after the manner of the old country still stand today. It was a big job, to say the least, and could be rather lonesome.

Ray, our aforementioned protagonist, was herding sheep in the Black Canyon area. Per necessity, Ray carried a rifle to keep himself in fresh meat, and in the event of coyotes or other predators, he could protect his band.

His rifle was a bolt-action Savage in .25-20 WCF caliber equipped with buckhorn sights. The .25-20 was traditionally loaded with a .25 caliber, 86 grain flat nose jacketed bullet going only slightly faster than a .22 Long Rifle.

Somewhere, somehow in his travels, Ray lost the detachable five-shot magazine, making his repeater in effect a single-shot. No matter, he did without.

Water was scarce in the Black Canyon area, and Ray planned his travels to coincide with hitting the natural springs and creeks in the area day by day.

As luck would have it, one morning a sow black bear descended upon his flock with her eye on a mutton breakfast. Ray grabbed the Savage and snuck his way closer, knowing that he would have only one shot to kill the bear.

The sheep, which five minutes before had been peacefully grazing and watering up, were getting more and more nervous as the black bear made its way into their midst, searching for a young and tender lamb to snatch up.

The youthful shepherd got

as close as he dared without exposing his cover and possibly putting himself in the path of an aggressive, hungry predator. Resting on a flat rock, Ray took careful aim as the bear lumbered closer and closer. If she would just stop, he could shoot.

Ewes frantically gathered their lambs as the clamor of their bleats began to alert the whole band of impending danger. As Ray closed his left eye to focus on his sights and leaned into his rocky rest to steady the rifle, some pebbles gave way, betraying his position.

The sow bear stopped in her tracks and looked directly up at the young shepherd. He slowly let out his breath as he squeezed the trigger.

At the shot, the black bear dropped to the ground. Quickly Ray reloaded and made ready as he waited. After a few minutes, when he was sure the bear was dead, he walked down to the carcass. His bullet had hit her right in the eye, exactly where he was aiming, killing her instantly with a brain shot.

Necessity is always the mother of invention and innovation. While no sane person would consider a .25-20 to be an adequate bear rifle, young Ray Potter made his into one because that’s what he had to do. A cool head and a single well-placed shot will always carry the day.

Write to us at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com and check us out on Facebook!

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

US commits \$1B for meat processing

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration is going full bore with its billion-dollar efforts to increase competition in livestock markets to help producers and reduce food prices for consumers at the same time.

President Joe Biden issued an executive order in July on strengthening competition across the U.S. economy. He challenged USDA to take immediate action to develop tools to expand meat and poultry processing capacity, increase competition, increase farm income and create good-paying jobs in rural America, said USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack.

The American Rescue Plan provided USDA with the resources to commit over \$1 billion on several initiatives to expand independent meat processing capacity, he said during a virtual press conference on Jan. 3.

USDA will provide \$100

million to reduce the cost of inspections for small processing facilities.

“This is going to help us maintain the capacity we have,” he said.

The agency has awarded \$32 million in grants to 167 facilities to modernize and expand to be able to engage in interstate commerce.

“This is going to expand market opportunity and income opportunities for these processors,” he said.

USDA has deployed \$100 million in loan guarantees to address mid-level supply chain challenges, such as cold storage and warehousing, and to allow facilities to expand their operations.

“We believe the \$100 million will leverage nearly a billion dollars of investment,” he said.

USDA has announced an \$800 million commitment for grants and loans to address capacity, workforce and innovation challenges. It will make available \$375 million in grants

for expanded facilities and construction of new ones.

“Now, we want to get to work right away because farmers have been waiting a long time for this help,” he said.

This spring, \$150 million will be made available through a request for proposals for projects that are just about ready to go but need help to accelerate.

“So this \$150 million, we believe, will help to sponsor at least 15 new projects,” he said.

Another \$225 million will be made available this summer for projects that are in the infant stage.

An additional \$275 million will be provided to lending partners to create more affordable loans and financing available for facilities that are being built.

“Even if we build more facilities, we also need a trained workforce. ... So \$100 million of this resource is going to be used to support and create a pipeline of well-trained and experienced workers so that we

can expand this workforce in rural America,” he said.

USDA will also use \$50 million for technical assistance and research.

“We’re going to need a lot of innovation in this industry. We’re going to need new business models. We’re going to need new ways of innovation and technology to create greater efficiencies,” he said.

Small and midsize facilities need the opportunity to access that innovation, as opposed to the big four processors, he said.

But it’s not just about money, it’s also about rules and regulations, he said.

USDA is working on strengthening the Packers and Stockyards regulations, “Product of USA” voluntary labeling and its partnership with the Department of Justice on enforcement of antitrust laws.

“It’s exciting work, and we at USDA are really engaged in this and involved and working with our farm partners,” he said.

Michael B. DesJardin

Dentistry, PC

Preventive, Restorative & Endodontics

New Patients Welcome!

208 NW Canton
John Day
541-575-2725
mbddental@live.com
michaelbdesjardinmd.com

5273980-1

Your Rural Family Health Clinic

Grant County HEALTH Department

528 E. Main, St. E.
John Day

Monday - Thursday
7am - 6pm
Friday 8am - 5pm

Appointments available

Call and schedule your appointment today!

TOLL FREE
888-443-9104
or 541-575-0429

Grant County Health Department does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or age in admission, treatment, or participation in its programs, services and activities, or in employment.

Robbins Farm Equipment

3850 10th St.
Baker City
541-523-6377

62302 Pierce Rd.
La Grande
541-963-6577

1160 S Egan
Burns
541-573-6377

86812 Christmas
Valley Hwy.
Christmas Valley
541-576-2160

Patriot Plumbing American Standard
Sinks & Toilets,
Delta Faucets,
Brandford White,
Water Heaters
and Gear

245 N. Canyon Blvd., Canyon City
541-575-2144 • Mon.-Fri. 8am-4:30pm

Serving Grant County for 50 years!

Chester's Thriftway

Proud of being Locally Owned & Operated - 541-575-1899

Bank of Eastern Oregon

“CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF YOUR HOMETOWN” Member FDIC

John Day 541-575-1862 • 200 W. Main
Prairie City 541-820-3321 • 178 NW Front St. Equal Housing Lender

Eastern Oregon Realty

160 E. Main • John Day, OR 97845
Office: 541-575-2121
Home: 541-820-3721
JFranklin@easternoregonrealty.net
www.easternoregonrealty.net

Jerry Franklin
GRI, ABR, SRES
Broker/Owner

Blue Mountain HOSPITAL DISTRICT

Quality Healthcare Close to Home
170 Ford Rd., John Day, OR 97845 • 541-575-1311

Virginia McMillan, DDS PC

IMMEDIATE DENTAL COMFORT
LONG TERM VALUE
541-575-0550

PIONEER FEED & FARM SUPPLY

60561 HWY 26,
John Day, Oregon 97845
541-575-0023

The Outpost

Breakfast
Lunch & Dinner
201 W. Main
541-575-0250

Happy New Year!

I wanted to make you aware of some new developments here at the Chamber and touch on some others.

First, we have a new website! The web address has not changed, it is still www.gcregonlive.com. But it is definitely new and improved. As before, your business has a page. To find it, click on “Business Guide” at the center top of the Home page. Find your business and click on the box. Please review the content on your page and let us know if you want to change anything. If you have a logo that is not shown, please email it to me. We can also post photos and change any of the written content

Our Grant County Greenbacks program has been effect for six years now, and it’s still going strong! We started it in November of 2015, not knowing how it would go over here in Grant county. Well, to say the least, it has been a hit! Since November, 2015, we have sold more than \$120,000 in Grant County Greenbacks.

So far, eleven Chamber business members have taken advantage of the Business Enhancement Grant program that we started in October of 2020. We have provided matching funds of almost \$30,000!

We are working on our new Business Directory. Copies will be given to all Chamber member businesses and to people interested in relocating to Grant County. Information from your webpage will be used in the directory, so we want to make sure your information is correct. Please let us know if it isn’t. Please also make sure we have your most current email address. We often share important information that may be time sensitive. We wouldn’t want you to miss out.

We will be installing a new reader board sign in front of the office soon, so watch for it! We will display a lot of information including events, so make sure to let us know when you are planning an event so we can get it on our calendar.

Mark your calendars for May 11th. We will be reviving the Grape and Grain event. Watch for more details!

Our next Chamber Business meeting will be Thursday, January 20th at 10:30 AM at the Chamber office.

Stay Well,

Tammy Bremner
Executive Director

Eds

PROPANE
541-575-0804
OIL
541-575-1348
243 N. Canyon City Blvd.,
Canyon City, Oregon

Ed Staub & Sons

• etc •

A UNIQUE BOUTIQUE FEATURING LOCAL ARTISANS FROM GRANT COUNTY
133 W. Main, John Day, OR
541-620-2638 • etc.handmade@yahoo.com

Solutions

Certified Public Accountants

101 NE 1st Ave. John Day, Oregon 97845
541-575-2717

SUBWAY

eat fresh.
121 S. Canyon Blvd.
John Day • 541-575-0782

Duke Warner Realty

Dayville, Oregon
“Your professional Real Estate choice in Grant County”
www.dukewarnerrealtyofeasternoregon.com

Lori Hickerson
Principal Broker, GRI
Office: 541-575-2617

Sally Knowles
Broker, GRI
Office: 541-932-4493

Babette Larson
Broker, GRI
Office: 541-967-2363

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK!

161 E. Main, John Day • 541-575-0632

True Value

HARDWARE

LEN'S DRUG

541-575-0629
120 E. Main, John Day
www.lensdrug.com

We're here when you need us!

5268191-1

DAYVILLE MERC

207 W. Franklin Ave, Dayville
Cold Drinks • Groceries • Snacks
Gifts • Friendly Services
541-987-2133