

"Save the soil" is the password of 1972 Soil Conservation Man of the Year



Soil Conservation Man of the Year, Melvin Moyer stands by one of his first silt dams. The dam has silted in almost to the top of the dam and Mel is now farming behind the dam.



In this picture, Mel stands on the silted flat in front of one of the newer silt dams. The dam is somewhat taller than he is yet.



Left front shows the beginnings of a new diversion ditch. Down the draw can be seen three silt dams.



Harold Kerr indicates how high the grass is on this grassed area. Dale Boner right and Mel Moyer, center.

Council Draws 700 Women

Women who attended Oregon Homemakers Conference, OUS, Corvallis, May 2-3-4, found three full days and evenings of activity awaiting them. Attending the conference were Mrs. John Graves, Mrs. Elmer Palmer, Heppner, Mrs. Norman Nelson, Lexington, Mrs. Ernest Heliker, Ione, Mrs. Weldon

Witherite, Pine City, Mrs. Arnold Hoffman, Boardman, and Birdine Tullis, Extension Aide.

MRS. JOHN GRAVES was elected District Director for the Extension District VII, comprised of Morrow-Umatilla and Union counties, to serve a three year term on the Homemakers State Council.

MRS. NORMAN NELSON served as song leader for the conference. She also assisted with a slide presentation of the ACWW Triennial in Norway which she attended last year. The women attended banquets, business sessions, and educational workshops. Guest speakers were Dr. Robert MacVicar, Dr. Lee Kolmer of the Extension state staff, and Dr. Robert Dyer, Brigham Young University.

Melvin Moyer was named Soil Conservation Man of the Year Tuesday evening at the spring meeting of the Morrow County Wheat Growers at Lexington Grange.

He was selected by a secret committee who inspected a number of ranches before making the difficult decision.

Melvin Moyer's ranch of 1200 acres lays at the head of Black Horse Canyon. He is working towards an overall plan of conservation practices. While he first started a number of years ago, his efforts have increased in the last two or three years.

His silt dams and diversion ditches show up very well against the new green wheat as you break over the top from Sand Hollow into Black Horse.

How did he start the program? He tells how he'd read and heard how many tons of top soil are lost per acre each year so he built the first silt dam to see. "Yes, they were right. The evidence showed up in a hurry. That first silt dam started filling up that first season."

In 1969 Mel signed up for the first time with the ASCS but no diversions were built until 1970. Some earlier attempts of building dams had been by trial and error but after he signed up he received engineering help from the Soil Conservation Service.

He has six silt dams altogether and four up one draw. Dams and ditches are seeded to grass as soon as they are finished. He says he was lucky because he'd just harrowed over the seed and then he got a good rain. They are heavily grassed. A silt dam is primarily to keep silt from the main stream of water.

The moving of soil to form the silt dams makes a big hole that forms a reservoir behind the dam. One of the first dams built in 1965 is silted in within a few feet of the top of the dam and Mel is now farming that area. The newer dams on down the draw show a broad area of

dried silt that has accumulated behind the dam and is still 10 feet below the top of the dam.

The 172 acre field is sown with Paha wheat. This new club wheat is said to be higher yielding and less susceptible to lodging.

Mel makes his own diversion ditches. The bottoms are left wide and flat for a better distribution of water so there's less washing.

He tells of making his first dam built in 1954. He laid down bales of straw and kept adding to it as it filled. This dam has since filled with silt and he is now farming behind it.

In other conservation practices he has seeded to grass extra acres. According to his conserving base, he has seeded the maximum allowable acreage of grass seedings under his present farm program.

He follows a practice of stubble mulch except for about 150 acres. When he feels it is necessary, he uses a moldboard plow, to kill the cheat grass that grows when stubble mulch is used. A chisel plow is used for stubble mulch and a moldboard turns the dirt over completely.

On the less steep draws, Mel has planted grassed waterways. In some instances he has developed patches of native grass. He has reclaimed one slope where the grass had been killed out due to the beat of the hooves of 40-50 horses. A watering trough stood on this slope for many years and the horses pounded out all the grass. He has brought it back with crested wheat grass, alfalfa and native bunch grass.

Mel was the first one in the county to use the new weed control chemicals. He says, "They really worked."

He has a few cattle on the ranch and the Bellamy boys have their FFA stock on his pasture.

Moyers came to Morrow County before the turn of the century. Mel's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Moyer came by train from Tennessee

in 1893. They brought with them sons, Frank (Mel's father) Joseph and Ernest and one daughter, Effie.

His other grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Connor came from Missouri in 1900. They had three daughters, Laura (Mel's mother), Nora and Effie and two sons, Percy and David. They homesteaded in Gooseberry country where one of the Bergstroms now ranch.

When they grew up, the three Moyer brothers, Frank, Joseph and Ernest, ranched together.

Frank Moyer and Laura Connor were married at Toppenish where Frank ran a livery stable. In 1904, they bought the first part of the place that Mel is now farming and started farming in 1908 and bought the rest in 1910 where the house stood. The house has since burned. They Moyers were away from the ranch in the 1920's and were on a hay ranch near Merrill where Melvingraduated from high school. He went to Oregon State for two years and has been on the ranch off and on since 1929. His brother Ellis is in Spokane.

Melvin has two sons, Bruce Moyer, a data processor for the Montana State Department at Missoula who is married and has two children; Dean C. Moyer in Walla Walla who has three sons and one daughter, Francine whose husband is in the Air Force stationed in Oklahoma. They have four children.

This year Mel has started doing something he's wanted to do for a long time... Learning to fly. He is going to ground school classes each Mon. night in Hermiston. He likes to do a little hunting, elk and deer. He is handy with mechanics and repairs all of his own equipment except for the major repairs.

After a whirlwind courtship last winter, he married Ruth Irwin Stoddard on New Year's Eve. Both of them were proud and pleased with Mel's honor of being chosen "Soil Conservation Man of the Year."



And they lived happily ever after, Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Moyer.

The Big Night in FFA



Greg Duff has just presented Judy Bennett with a pocket knife for being the outstanding beginning student.



Ted Bellamy receives the Chapter Swine Production award. The plaque is provided by Bank of Eastern Oregon.



Carl King receives the Bank of Eastern Oregon plaque for Placement in Sales and Service.



Greg Duff of Pendleton, state FFA vice president was in Heppner to present awards at the annual FFA banquet recently. Here he is presenting Kirk Robinson the DeKalb award for having the outstanding Senior Project program.



Kyle Robinson on the left holds the Greenhand award provided by First National. Ted Bellamy holds his Swine & Production award, provided

by Bank of Eastern Oregon and Kirk Robinson, right holds the Beef Production award, also provided by Bank of Eastern Oregon. Greg Duff has made the presentations.



Tom Cutsforth receives the Placement in Ag Production award also sponsored by Bank of Eastern Oregon.



Kirk Robinson receives the Chapter Star Farmer award. First National provides the plaque.

Roberta Frasier Anderson conducted a workshop on communications, Ken Meier, Director of the 4-H Foundation, spoke on developments at the 4-H site near Salem. Theme of the International Banquet was "Mexican-American Neighbors". Special entertainment and information for this banquet included dancers, style revue, and guest speakers provided by the Mexican-Americans of the area.

Ruben Contreras, presented a slide history of the Mexican-American. Mrs. Gilbert Anzaldia spoke on "Migrants, why they Migrate, Problems and Education". Dr. MacVicar speaking on "Foundations for What Kind of Future?" told of challenges ahead for the extension study groups and all extension programs.

Entertainment for the Wednesday evening banquet was by the Golden Notes, a senior citizen singing group from Beed.

Mrs. Graves and Mrs. Heliker were honored at the Wednesday luncheon for having been in Extension activities for more than 40 years. Over 700 women were in attendance.

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