

Gazette times

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Alva Jones celebrates 100th birthday



Four generations of the Jones family, sitting 100 year old Alva Jones, clockwise standing-granddaughter Bobbette Hedman, Bob Jones, great-granddaughters Tiffany Hedman and Brianne Jones.

Heralded as one of the areas oldest patriarchs, Alva Jones, Heppner, celebrated his 100th birthday recently as family members and friends came to wish him many happy returns and to share his birthday cake.

Born March 31, 1891, Jones, very trim, alert and up-to-date, continues to be in good health. A recent rare hospital stay was only a minor setback for him when it comes to walking for exercise.

This very private centenarian has

lead a productive life as a farmer in the Rhea Creek area, where his father and grandfather before him also farmed. That tradition is now being carried on by a son and grandson.

Jones said that a frugal lifestyle kept everyone going during the depression at the end of the 20s. There wasn't much money and you paid your debts when you could. And things didn't get much better during the drought years of the 30s, he said.

New barge loaded on Columbia



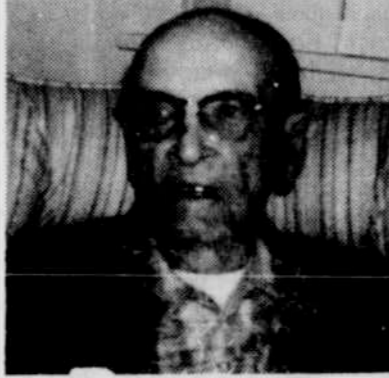
New shaver barge is loaded at Hogue-Warner

One of the first new barges built for the Columbia River in recent years is loaded with wheat at the Morrow Co. Grain Growers Hogue-Warner dock Tuesday.

Because of uncertainty over the extent of salmon preservation

methods to be taken on the Columbia in the coming years, building a new barge could be considered a financial risk.

The barge, which measures 273 feet long, 42 feet wide, and has a 14 foot draft could have difficulty



A lot of business deals then were made on the strength of a handshake and farmers didn't have much to sell. People were self-sufficient, raising most of their food and making do with whatever they had, he said.

Mechanization revolutionized farming during Jones' lifetime and made it much easier. But a farmer couldn't over-produce when it came to raising wheat in those days. And lack of moisture or competition from weeds made it even tougher, he said. In contrast, today there are chemicals that can control specific things, even before plowing, he noted.

In the late 20s, Jones began farming with an iron-cleated John Deere tractor. It was later replaced with a track-layer UBA tractor. The first tractors didn't have much traction in the front wheels, but they made farming easier and faster, he said.

Family farm life was interrupted when he was inducted into the Army during World War I. His division landed in France by boat in 1918. After fighting on front lines, he came down with the mumps as the war ended and spent a period of time in a French hospital.

At home in 1920, he married Hannah Wilson, an Irish lass. They were married 31 years before she passed away in 1951. Their sons, Robert of Heppner and Donald of Phoenix, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren are a part of the Jones current generations.

navigating the Snake River if water levels are reduced in the future to aid salmon populations.

Barge shipment is the cheapest way for Morrow County Farmers to get their wheat to Portland. This new barge, owned by Shaver Transportation, holds 3,600 tons of wheat, or 120,000 bushels, and will be transported down river with three other barges.

Truck shipment is more expensive with 120 trucks being needed to transport what one barge can haul.

Conservation Farm to be announced

The Spring Wheat League meeting will be held at Willows Grange on April 25 at 7 p.m. according to Morrow County Extension agent Fred Lundin.

Lundin says that the conservation Farm of the Year award will be named at that time.

WWII vet receives honors 46 years later

Fire didn't deter this World War II vet from receiving his combat medals, although it took him a bit longer to receive them.

The medals awarded Herman Blettell had been lost and the place where his military records were kept caught fire so the presentation was delayed until last week, when he finally received the medals from Veteran's Service officer Rita Hedman. She presented them to him at the Morrow County annex in Heppner.

And what a list of medals—Blettell received the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, the Good Conduct Medal, the Meritorious Unit Emblem, the Presidential Unit Emblem, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the Army Occupation Medal with a Germany Clasp, the Combat Infantryman Badge, and the Honorable Service Lapel Button.

During World War II, Blettell was a supply sergeant with the 42nd Rainbow Division, Third Battalion, L. Company 222nd. He had charge of issue of all clothing, food and ammunition. Every day it was necessary for Blettell to go to the front lines and he was wounded with shrapnel as he was delivering ammunition and food to the company at the Siegfried line. At the Siegfried Line, he said, the Germans had concrete bunkers three stories underground. After he was wounded he spent a week in the hospital.

He was born in North Dakota to Louis and Annie Blettell.

Born in 1910, Blettell came to Pendleton in 1931 and to Heppner in 1932. At one time he worked for Bill Doherty on his ranch. In 1942, when



he was 32, Blettell was drafted into the Army. At that time he was working for St. Anthony's Hospital in Pendleton. After his stint in the Army, he returned to Heppner in 1945, the year he started farming on his own ranch. In 1951 he married Mary Brandon. When they met, she waited tables at the Elkhorn Restaurant, owned by Eddie Chin. Mary passed away in 1988. Blettell, now 80 years old, has been a member of the American Legion for the past 46 years. He was a post commander in

1974 and has been a vice commander.

Blettell is a 52-year member of the Elks' club and for five years was a trustee.

One of Blettell's brothers, David, died in World War II during the landing at the Philippines. Three other brothers also served during the war, Bud, Al and Wally. Wally died of a heart attack after discharge, as a result of an accident in the service.

Blood drive scheduled

A Red Cross blood drive will be held Monday, April 22 from 1 to 5:30 p.m. at the Heppner Elks Club.

For more information call Dana Reid, 676-9187 days or 676-9973 evenings.

Pool to open June 16

The Heppner City Pool will open June 16 with reduced hours, according to information received at Heppner City Council meeting April 8. The last day of school is June 7.

Following a free swim on June 16, the pool will be closed on Mondays, with the exception of lessons held from noon to 3 p.m. Hours Tuesday through Friday are: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.—lessons; 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. open swim; 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.—lap swim; 7 to 8:30 p.m. open swim. Saturday and Sunday the pool will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. for an open swim.

Season ticket prices are the same as last year but individual session swims and lessons are up. Family tickets are \$60; individual season tickets—\$25; each session (any age)—\$1; and lessons are \$15 per student. Season tickets and swim lesson fees may be purchased beginning June 16.

Employees required to operate the pool are down from eight last year to six, because of the reduced hours.

The manager requiring a water safety instructor's card, would be employed at \$7.50 an hour; an assistant manager, also requiring a water safety instructor's card would receive \$6.50 an hour, except when he assumes the manager's duties at \$7.50 an hour. Three WSI lifeguards would receive \$6 an hour and a cashier would receive \$5 an hour.

A community work day is being planned to paint the pool. A crew will prepare the pool surrounding area for painting, but volunteers are needed for painting.

A special fund has been set up at the Bank of Eastern Oregon for donations to renovate the pool's filtering system. The Oddfellows have donated \$2,500 and the Soroptimists \$500 toward the renovation which is estimated to cost \$6,500.

In other business at Monday's meeting, the city council voted to increase city sewer rates to offset \$29,163 required for operation. According to City attorney Bill Kuhn, Measure 5 required that utilities pay for themselves. In previous years city funds were used to make up the difference between rates and costs.

Christman convicted on manslaughter charge

Carl D. Christman, Ione, was found guilty of second-degree manslaughter Monday in the hit-and-run death of an accident victim last year.

Christman, 32, was also found guilty of failure to perform the duties of a driver involved in an accident (hit and run), three counts of recklessly endangering and reckless driving.

Testimony during the four-day jury trial, held in Morrow County Circuit Court, revealed that Christman's blood alcohol level two and one half hours after he ran over and killed 26-year-old Steve Burland on Highway 207 south of Buttercreek junction May 11, 1990, was .23, nearly three times the legal limit.

Burland, who recently moved to Heppner from Montana, had been thrown or crawled from his vehicle after a one-car accident and was being attended to by passing motorists. Christman, who was driving toward Hermiston, approached the scene, swerved around a car blocking his path and ran over the victim at a high rate of speed, say witnesses.

Burland was alive and responding to aid at the time and an ambulance had been called.

The three counts of reckless endangering resulted from Christman nearly striking three people helping Burland. The three jumped out of the way at the last second.

Christman, who testified he drank 10 cans of beer before getting in his

car that evening, and two more while driving, stopped briefly after killing Burland to talk to a flagger at the scene. He left, however, and was later apprehended by the Oregon State Police in Echo where he was being thrown out of the Echo Tavern for causing a disturbance.

Christman admitted on the witness stand he was drunk, but said poor visibility prevented him from seeing the victim. Testimony showed, however, that he was wearing sunglasses at the time.

Witnesses said that although the accident occurred around 8:45 p.m. visibility was not a problem. The sun had gone down but it was not yet dark, the sky was clear and there was a full moon.

Morrow County District Attorney Jeff Wallace brought charges of first degree manslaughter against Christman, but the jury decided on the lesser charge of second degree. Judge Richard Courson presided over the trial, which began last Wednesday, April 3, and ended after a three-hour jury deliberation Monday, April 8.

Courson ordered a pre-sentence investigation with sentencing expected May 17.

Manslaughter is a Class B felony with a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. Hit and run is a Class C felony punishable by five years in prison. The reckless endangering charges are misdemeanors and have a maximum one year and \$2,500 fine for each.

Power outage caused by accident

A motorist hit a power pole Saturday evening April 6, causing an outage which lasted over eight hours in some areas served by Columbia Basin Electric.

CBEC Manager Fred Toombs said that a vehicle broke a pole on the main transmission line at Baseline Road and Highway 207

around 9:30 p.m. Saturday. Heppner, Ione and Lexington were restored power in about an hour, but some homes in the Sandhollow area were not restored to power until 5:30 a.m. the next morning.

Richard A. Peterson, 34, Ione, was cited in connection with the accident on charges of failure to perform duties of a driver (property damage) and careless driving.

55 Alive driver's course set

By Anne Morter

The "55 Alive" classroom refresher course for drivers 55 years and older will be held next Monday and Tuesday, April 15 and 16 at the Willows Grange Hall in Ione. Each

session will run from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the cost of the course is \$8. Interested parties should contact Helen Crawford at 422-7575 in the evenings for further details.

REMEMBER APRIL 15

Last day to contribute to your IRA for 1990
See Barb

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