

## Columbia Tri-County Babe Ruth team wins first-ever district title



Front l-r Rick Koffler, Chris Dickenson, Sam Sumner, Tyler Fredrickson, Justin Meads, Brian Clubb, Danny Verley, Tyson Pratt. Back: Russ Proctor, Marc Evans, Cody Sandlin, Jerid Wicklund, Jeremy Jorstad, Keith Curnutt, Ron Prindle, Kevin Payne, Jim Tellechea.

Columbia Tri-County, a combination of 14 and 15-year old Babe Ruth players from Heppner, Boardman, Irrigon and Umatilla, captured the district championship in Hood River Tuesday, July 16 with a come-from-behind, 5-4 win over The Dalles Nationals.

The victory, the team's fourth in a row in the tournament, gives them an entry into the North Oregon State Tournament in West Linn July 25 to July 30. Columbia Tri-County will open the tournament on Thursday, July 25 at 5 p.m. against the district

winner from the LaGrande, Baker, John Day area. A win will put them into the winner's bracket Saturday at 4 p.m.; a loss will see them play Friday at 2 p.m. The tournament is a double elimination affair.

The local Babe Ruthers opened the district tournament in Hood River July 20 against the Hood River Americans and beat the Americans badly, 14-4. Their next game pitted them against the Hermiston Nationals. Columbia Tri-County opened an early lead and won 9-6. The semifinal matchup was against a cocky The Dalles National team. The final score was 12-8 but the game wasn't that close. The Dalles crawled back through the loser's

bracket to face Columbia Tri-County in the finals. The Dalles led, 4-3 going into the sixth inning but the champs scored single runs in the sixth and seventh to clinch their first-ever district crown.

Members of the team are: Heppner-Kevin Payne, Sam Sumner, Rick Koffler, Jim Tellechea, Chris Dickenson and Jerid Wicklund; Umatilla-Tyler Fredrickson, Brian Clubb, Russell Proctor and Jeremy Jorstad; Boardman-Tyson Pratt and Justin Meads; and Irrigon-Marc Evans, Cody Sandlin and Danny Verley.

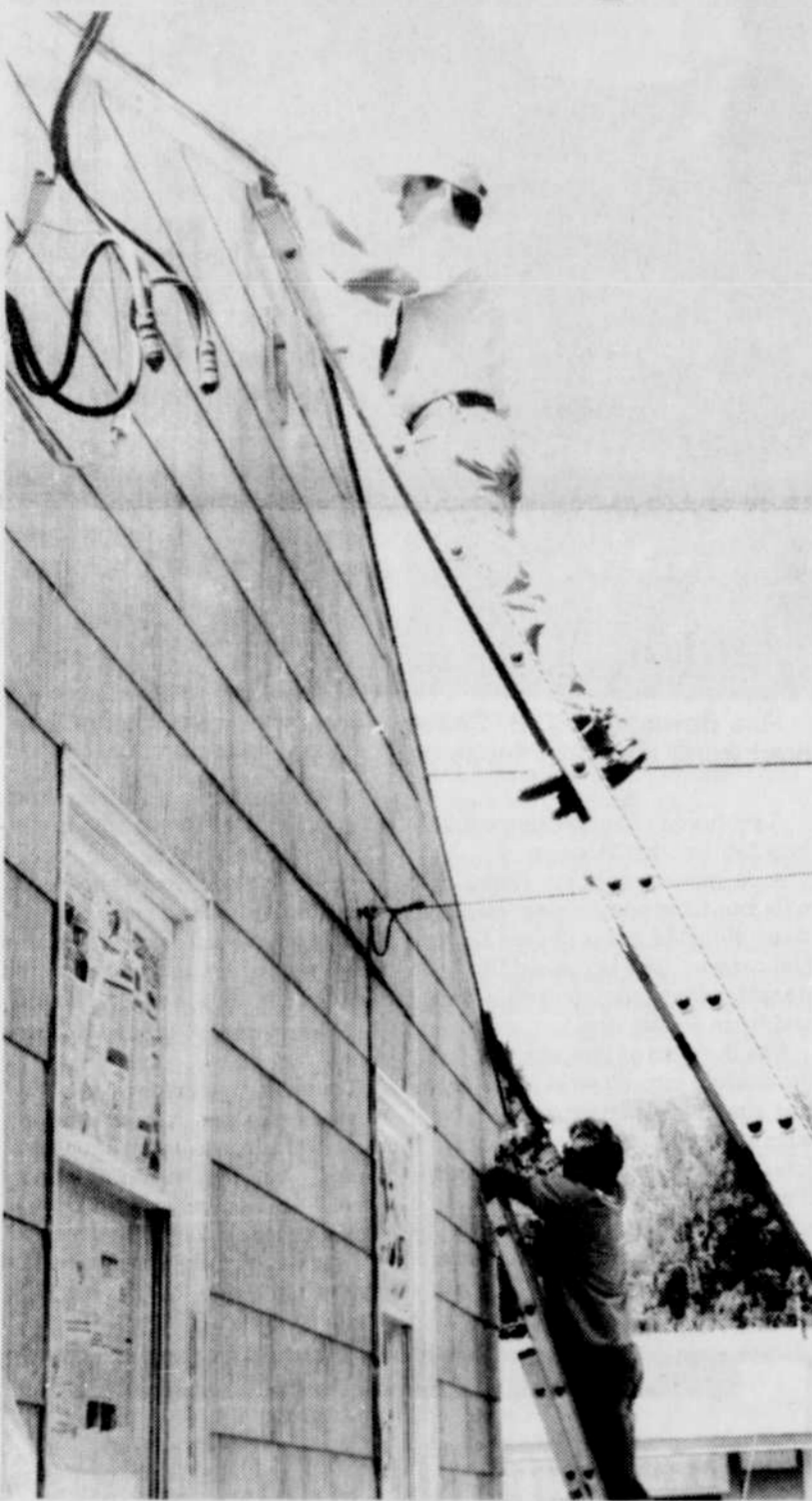
Coaches are Keith Curnutt, Umatilla; Ron Prindle, Irrigon and Rick Johnston, Heppner.

# Gazette Times

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## Volunteers surprise Connor family



Volunteers scrape the Connor home in preparation for painting

Yvonne Connor doesn't like to leave the side of her husband, Roger, who is seriously ill with cancer at Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner. But, on Saturday, July 21, she was finally persuaded to take a little drive into the mountains, which she loves, with her son, Jon and grandson Kyle, 6, of Hillsboro.

And while she was away, the elves did play. The "elves" were a group of well-wishers who concocted a scheme to paint the Connors' home. Around 20 people, headed up by Debra Ledford, X-ray technician at PMH, showed up at the house at 10 a.m. Saturday, armed with brushes, scrapers and ladders, just barely missing Yvonne as she was being wisked away. "I saw Trish Sweeney circling the block twice," said Yvonne later, "but I thought she was just looking for her little boy."

After scraping, taping windows and doors, trying to unplug two paint sprayers and finally finding a nozzle for a third, the elves painted the Connors' small single story home a sparkling white.

Yvonne arrived home around 3 p.m. before the painting crew had completely finished. "I saw all the people at the house and I asked Jon what in the world had happened," said Yvonne. "When he told me

what was going on I cried." They had to circle the block twice too, so Yvonne could compose herself. The project was especially meaningful, because Roger had told hospital employees that he was concerned because he wouldn't be able to paint the house.

Many of the helpers were PMH employees, but many others donated time, equipment and supplies. "It was a community effort," said Led-



Yvonne and Roger Connor with daughter Maryetta

ford. "Everything was donated." "When they told me they were going to do this," added Terry McMichael, an X-ray technician for Blue Mountain Diagnostics who occasionally covers PMH, "I said sure."

The crew, which eventually numbered around 50 people off and on throughout the day, finally finished painting around 7 p.m. Ledford videotaped the progress so that Roger would be able to see the day's activities from his hospital bed.

The next day was a busy one for Yvonne, too, as she and her daughters, Maryetta, Heppner, and Carrie, Hillsboro, both of whom were on the painting crew, and her son and grandson attended the McDaniels' family reunion at Anson Wright Park. Yvonne's mother was a McDaniel.

Roger and Yvonne were both born in Heppner—he in 1926 to Frank and Gladys Connor in the house now owned by Jay and Lori Straley, just a block from where the Connors live now; and she in 1930 to Carey and Alice (McDaniel) Hastings at Dr. McMurdo's hospital, where Jeff and Kathy Maben now live. Yvonne's mother was a part owner of Milady's dress shop located where the Shoe Box is now. She has a sister, Clarice Henry, who now lives in San Antonio, Texas. Roger had two brothers, Skip, who lives in Stanfield, and Wendell, who has passed away.

Roger and Yvonne were raised in the Heppner area and were married on June 6, 1948, at the home of Roger's folks. Daughter Maryetta was born in Heppner and son Jon, in Pendleton, because the new hospital was not yet open.

While in Heppner Yvonne worked for Dr. Jack Woodhall as a dental assistant and Roger worked first for Bill Collins cleaners and then for Tommy Howell's meat market, before the family moved to Hood River where he worked at a meat counter. Their daughter Carrie was born in Hood River. The Connors then moved to Forest Grove, where Roger worked at Safeway and then in the meat departments of different grocery stores in the Portland area. Yvonne worked for 16 years as a dental assistant for Dr. George Williams.

In 1979, they sold their home in Forest Grove and moved to Lytle,

Texas, where they had a grocery store. They came back to Oregon, however, and Roger worked for a meat packing house in Hillsboro before retiring in 1988. In 1989 they bought their house in Heppner, so that they could be closer to Roger's mother following the death of his father. Shortly after that, however, Roger became ill. Maryetta moved back to Heppner from San Antonio, Texas, in August of 1990 to help out her folks. She is employed as a certified nurses' aide at PMH. She has three children, Pauline, 20, Mary 19 and Corey 14. Jon has two sons, Kyle and Kevin, 9.

Before he became ill, Roger drove the Heppner Senior Citizen bus. The couple has been active in the community support group, which provides emotional support for those with illnesses or other needs.

Yvonne says that in addition to the help they received from the community support group, Molly Rhea, Home Health Nurse, provided in-home medical support and services and the American Cancer Society provided Roger with a wheelchair. Bonna Rae Miller, local coordinator for the Cancer Society, says that she is involved with the "Reach to Recovery" program which offers counseling and other help for mastectomy patients. The society also has a loan closet which loans out wheelchairs, hospital beds and other items needed for the sickroom. Statewide, the society sponsors Camp Can Do, a camp for children with cancer, and Lamplighter, a support group for parents of children with cancer. Miller says that she would be happy to answer questions and head people in the right direction. She says that there is also a small cash reimbursement for people who must travel for cancer treatment. For more information contact Miller at 676-5519.

The Community Support Group meets the first Monday of the month. The group's next meeting is Aug. 5 at All Saints Episcopal Church at 8 p.m. Call Merilee McDowell, group organizer, 676-5238, for more information.

The Home Health office is located at Pioneer Memorial Hospital, 676-9133.

## Fair tab deadline Wed., July 31

The deadline for stories and advertisement to be included in the Gazette-Times fair tab publication is Wednesday, July 31.

The fair tab will be printed August 7.

## City hires engineer for pool problem

The Heppner City pool continues to have problems with cloudy water, which again necessitated its closure the weekend of July 19 to 22. New filters were installed at the pool July 12, but, while they are helping, they have not eliminated the problem which has caused numerous pool shutdowns this swimming season and last.

City administrator Gary Marks said that the city will now hire an engineer to discover what's wrong. According to Marks, the engineer will look at the pool equipment, piping and water and will issue a report, including what it will take to fix the problem and how much it will cost.

The engineers, MFIA Incorporated, will arrive in Heppner next week.

The new filters have slowed the cloudiness somewhat—before they were installed the pool took only around three days to cloud up. The pool had been in operation a week with the new filters before cloudiness forced a shutdown. Marks said that an analysis of the water has not helped in discovering the cause.

"We at the city appreciate the public's patience in this matter," said Marks, who commented that the situation was "difficult for everyone."

## Couple honored in special graduation ceremony



L-R: Melanie, Candy Ken and Missy Gates

A couple of 1991 graduates had their graduation ceremony recently, complete with caps and gowns, diplomas, cake, gifts, cards and well-wishers—at the R & W Drive In in Heppner.

Ken and Candy Gates were honored in a surprise ceremony Sunday evening, July 21, to commemorate their completion of their GEDs (a high school equivalency program).

Neither finished high school—Candy, 39, would have graduated 22 years ago, in 1969 and Ken, 45, would have graduated in 1964, 27 years ago.

The couple decided to complete their GEDs at the urging of their daughters, Melanie, 18, and Missy,

22, and Helen Riehl, R & W owner. "The kids insisted," said Candy, "and Helen, she was the instigator."

The high school equivalency program took the Gates five weeks. "We took a test a week," said Candy.

Do they think completing the program will change their life? "It already has," said Candy. "It made us feel good. We both feel like we accomplished something. I never realized what it does for your self confidence."

Candy, the daughter of Ray and Gaye Papineau, was raised in Lexington. She is employed as a mail carrier. Ken, who is retired because of health reasons, was born and raised in Prairie City.

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