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Ilene Kilkenny Laughlin reigns over St. Patrick's weekend festivities

Grand Marshall for the 1992 Heppner St. Patrick's Day weekend is Ilene Kilkenny Laughlin.

Ilene Katherine Kilkenny Laughlin was born February 5, 1918, in Condon, to John Sheridan Kilkenny and Lottie Russell Kilkenny. Born at the home of maternal grandmother, Kate Russell, Ilene was brought home to the ranch of her parents in a blizzard when she was only 10 days old.

Ilene's father, John Sheridan, was born in County Leitrim, Ireland on May 14, 1870 and arrived in Oregon in 1880. In 1898 John married Rose Ann Curran Farley in the first wedding held in the newly built St. Patrick's Church on Heppner's South Hill which is now the American Legion Hall. Their ranch headquarters was in Sand Hollow.

In 1915, Rose Ann was killed in a tragic accident in Pendleton. This left John sole custody and caretaker of their children; Rose, Ellen, John, Francis, Sara, William, Peter and Mary Ann. The oldest was 16 and the youngest five.

In the spring of 1914, John purchased the 20,000 acre George Currin Ranch on Hinton Creek. On February 19, 1917, he married Lottie Russell of Condon in Portland and they became parents to Ilene Katherine, Robert Russell, Mary Colleen and Robert Joseph. Still living are Judge John F. Kilkenny, 90, retired senior judge of the court of appeals, Portland; Rose Ellen Chadbourne, 92, San Francisco, CA.; Ilene Laughlin, 74, Heppner; and Robert Joseph Kilkenny, 62, Heppner.

Lottie Russell was born September 13, 1898, the daughter of Bill Russell and Kate Summers. Bill came from Northern



Ilene Laughlin

Ireland; Kate was born in St. Louis, MO. Kate's parents were Michael Summers and Mary Ellen McCormick. Mike Summers was born in 1830 in County Kilkenny, Ireland and Mary Ellen was born in 1828 in County Tipperary, Ireland. She came to the USA arriving in New Orleans late in 1856.

Ilene was raised on the Hinton Creek ranch which had grown into a very large sheep ranch with approximately 17 bands of sheep after spring lambing. At age 12 she would drive her father to all the different sheep camps.

She attended school at Pleasant Point, a one room school on Buttercreek; Heppner Grade School; St. Joseph's Academy in Pendleton; and Heppner High School. She graduated from Heppner High School in 1935. She attended the University of Portland and the University of Oregon for 3½ years. She returned home due to the illness of her



mother.

On October 28, 1939, Ilene married Robert Ogden Laughlin of The Dalles. He was a surveyor for the U.S. government. He was born in Prineville to Ellis and Daisy Hale Laughlin. Ellis homesteaded and raised sheep in the Pauline area. The Laughlin's originally came from County Leitrim, Ireland. Daisy was born in Albany of Welsh, Irish and Pennsylvania Dutch Heritage. She attended Albany Normal School, where she received her teaching credentials as did her two sisters. The three girls went to Crook County to teach and all married Crook County men.

After their marriage Bob and Ilene remained in Heppner and Bob went to work for the Heppner Lumber Company in December 1939. In August 1940 Bob had a severe heart attack and was unable to work. On October 18, 1940, their son Robert Jeffery John (Butch) was born. Bob died March 20, 1941. Ilene went to work for the office of Price Administration (Rationing Board) in September of 1941. She served as chief clerk of Morrow County for 3½ years. In the ensuing years she worked as chief clerk for the U.S. Postal Office, Morrow County Grain Growers and for 23 years she worked at Pioneer Memorial Hospital, the last eight as the administrator. She retired in 1978 and then worked at the Heppner Elks Club as a bookkeeper until ill health caused her to retire permanently six years ago.

On September 10, 1946, Ilene married Lester T. Wyman of Prineville. He had served in Africa and Italy during World War II and after his discharge he came to Heppner to work for his uncle J.C. (Cal) Sumner. On May 1, 1948, they had a

Voters to decide fate of county, medical levies, ballots to be mailed

Morrow County voters should get their vote by mail ballots by Monday, March 9. At stake will be two county levy issues, the general one-year operating levy and the county medical one-year operating levy. All ballots must be in the hands of the County Clerk for tabulation by 8 p.m. March 24.

This year's general one-year special operating levy will be \$45,739 dollars less than voted on last year. Morrow County Judge Louis Carlson said that the decrease in tax asking of the voters is a direct result of the depressed farm economy which drives Morrow County services and county government.

The one year operating levy for the Morrow County Medical Fund is anticipated to be \$506,344. This amount is up 6.6 percent from last year's figure of \$462,605.

Jackie Bergstrom, chair of the

Morrow County Medical Board attributed this increase to requirements imposed by the state on the facility at Heppner and also to increased labor costs at all levels. Bergstrom also said that medical care in Morrow County is a major contributor to the economic growth of the entire county. According to a study by the University of Idaho in association with Mountain States Health Corporation of Salem, it was determined that Morrow County's health care system ranked eleventh in terms of value added growth to the county and ninth in terms of jobs in Morrow County's economic system.

Even though the medical levy is up by 6.6 percent from last year, Carlson emphasized that the overall combination of levies will be less than last year by \$12,000.

"We ask all departments and service providers of Morrow County government to hold the

line on their budgets," Carlson said. "We know that the economy of Morrow County is not seeing the stimulant that other areas of the state are receiving plus the recession that agriculture has been experiencing during the past several years. Because of these factors, it is imperative that there be no overall increase in the combination of levies presented to the voters.

In addition, it is anticipated that there will be further tax savings because of Measure 5 requirements. Carlson said that no code area tax rate can exceed \$10 dollars per thousand valuation for county government, cities and taxing districts.

The upshot of the limitation is that for those code areas that do exceed the cap rate of \$10 per thousand, the excess amount is factored and the total tax rate is compressed to fit the \$10 limitation.

Heppner city council may seek fire protection capital bond levy

The Heppner City Council will decide Monday, March 9, whether to put a \$400,000 10-year capital bond levy before the voters at the June 30 special election.

The bond issue will include remodeling and adding on to the Heppner fire hall and purchasing

a city fire engine and an interdepartmental car that will be used by various city agencies. The plan was approved by the city fire committee after examining several options. The 10-year plan includes sale of a fire department car and the city's second patrol car, because the new interdepartmental vehicle may also be used by the police as a backup vehicle. The current fire engine, a 1961 model, which city administrator Gary Marks says is a "museum relic" will be used as a backup fire engine. The fire truck no longer meets state safety standards.

"The fire department has always operated on a poverty budget ever since I've been on the council and years before that," said Heppner Mayor Kay Robinson. "The firemen do more for our city with far less than anyone else, and they never complain."

Marks says that the first priority of the plan is safety. "The real concern," he said, "is if the city were unable to deliver fire protection of our lives and property. When dealing with equipment of that age (1961 fire engine), we have to expect breakdowns and malfunctions."

Cost to the taxpayer for the \$400,000 levy would be \$2.42 per thousand or \$96.81 a year for 10 years on a \$40,000 home. A taxpayer with a \$40,000 home pays \$340.80 a year for total city taxes. The additional bond levy would raise the total to \$437.60. Marks stresses that the amount, including the bond issue, is still less than city property taxes would have been prior to Ballot Measure 5 at \$493.60 a year.

Marks says that his proposed plan is a conservative one. "I've approached this in a very conservative way," he said. "I'm making every attempt I can to bring about a more efficient city government."

He added that, up until now, the city has not had a real plan, but dealt with issues from year to year. "I'm trying to get something done, and planning is the way to do that. It's prudent to begin to plan how to deliver services." He said that with the advent of Ballot Measure 5, the funds which would have been used to update equipment have been eliminated. "The city has seen a 40 percent reduction in tax base revenue, which makes capital outlay impossible," Marks said.

New steak house opens in Lexington



Joan and Rick Smith

Rick and Joan Smith have opened RJ's Steak House and Lounge in Lexington. RJ's is located in the former V & G Restaurant and Lounge.

The steak house, which opened on Valentine's Day, features filet mignon, prime rib and seafood. They will also have daily lunch specials and homemade soups, made fresh daily.

Hours are Tuesdays through Sundays, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

RJ's offers family dining and welcomes small groups. "Stop by and look us over," says Rick.

Rick has operated Cal's Cafe in Heppner for the past four years, which he is still leasing. Linda Yaw is head chef at RJ's. She and her husband, Steve, had a restaurant in Portland. Before that they ran the Wasco Inn.

A grand opening for the restaurant is planned for a later date.

Ione to face Wallowa at state

The Ione Cardinals don't plan to do anything new when they face Wallowa in the first round of the state basketball playoffs Thursday March 5 in Baker City.

"We're not going to change anything," said Coach Del LaRue Tuesday. "We're just going to go out there and do what we've been doing all year. Only hopefully better."

The Cards play Wallowa beginning at 3p.m. Thursday at Baker High School. If Ione wins

that game they will play again at 8:45 p.m. Friday. If they lose they will play at 10:30 a.m. Friday. The state championship game will be held at 8:45 p.m. Saturday. There are eight teams in the state tournament.

LaRue says Wallowa has a couple of starters at five-foot seven, one five eleven and two six footers. "They're not a fast breaking team," he said, "and they run mostly a zone defense."

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