

Awards recognition night Added purses climb to \$1,250 per event

Do you ever feel like there is too much focus on what is wrong with youth today. Here is your chance to come and see what youth are doing well. The fair Awards Program, Saturday, August 20, at 4:30 p.m. is a must for 4-H Youth, parents, leaders and anyone that enjoys young people.

The 4-H and FFA awards are given during the awards ceremony, as well as the Open Class Creative Hands Award. "It is always fun to see who wins the traditional "Grand

Champion" and "Outstanding..." award," said a spokesperson.

"Every youth that plans to participate in fair, registers and competes is a winner from my viewpoint," shares 4-H Youth

Development agent Carol Michael-Bennett. "I encourage family, neighbors and friends of 4-H members to attend the awards program and congratulate youth for their participation in the 1994 Morrow County Fair."

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(L-R) Rich Boyer, saddlemaker, and Marilyn and Roe Gardner display saddle to be given to the all-around cowboy donated by Gardner's Men's Wear, Heppner.

Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo added purses have climbed to \$1,250 per event this year, with the bull riding event added purse totaling \$2,500. The Heppner Elks Lodge and Heppner Les Schwab are co-sponsoring this event that should draw some outstanding PRCA athletes.

Other events and sponsors of Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo events are as follows: Bareback Riding, Tidewater Barge Lines; Saddle Bronc Riding, Coca Cola Bott-

ling Company; Calf Roping, Graybeal Dist. Coors; Steer Wrestling, Morrow County Grain Growers; Barrel Racing, Carner Auto Supply; Team

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Premium book dedicated to Merlyn Robinson



Merlyn Robinson

This year's 1994 Morrow County Fair Premium Book was dedicated to Merlyn Robinson, a native daughter. She grew up on ranches of her parents, Merle and Altha Kirk. Following her Heppner High School graduation during World War II she attended Oregon State University, then known as the "Cow College."

Merlyn and her husband, Donald, are the parents of three children, Kirk, Kyle and Kryann Parham. They have three grandchildren. The Robinsons continue to live on the Sandhollow century farm that was homesteaded by her mother's parents, the M.J. Devins.

"Fair and rodeo have always held a special place in my heart," Merlyn says. It's the opportunity to showcase what Morrow County produces. "Though fairs once were mainly livestock and home economics entries, today's outstanding exhibits by local artisans continue to amaze me," she says.

As a youngster, she says she never missed the opportunity to be in the fair and rodeo parade, often riding a horse to town. Role models were former court members, including an older sister, Evelyn Broun. Fairs and rodeos were not held during World War II years. But in 1947, Merlyn was chosen as queen.

Things were much different then, she recalls. Court horses were trucked to a few outside rodeos and parades as horse

trailers weren't prevalent then. Rodeo directors, including Harlon McCurdy and Lee Beckner, usually rodeo with the courts.

"I'm not the first ex-court mom to have a daughter and granddaughter become court members," she says. But she is the first 'ex' to have a son win the Morrow County amateur calf roping saddle

when he was 16.

For many years the family showed a string of purebred cattle at fairs as the Robinson children also competed in 4-H and FFA livestock events. Merlyn was a 4-H horse club leader for 20 years, which she says was an opportunity to learn along with young people and to appreciate the rewards of these youth programs. The Robinsons are also honorary Heppner FFA Chapter members.

As a charter member of the Wranglers Riding Club, she said they developed a drill team that traveled to other places. She also organized the first cowboy breakfast put on by the club that was held on

the courthouse lawn during rodeo. During the years that the family participated, she was active in club events and playdays while serving as an officer and board member.

For many years she showed horses at the fair's open horse show that began in 1947 managed by the Wrangler Club. She also helped coordinate the open and 4-H horse shows. And she has officiated at many horse shows as a 4-H horse judge.

She has been a fair committee member and secretary and she served 10 years on the fair board. She says it was a rewarding experience as one of many volunteers who contribute their time to progressively improving fairs and rodeos.

Morrow County is a great place to live, an added incentive to write about its people and events as a journalist, she claims--an activity that she has pursued for the past 10 years. "And it's exciting to note how fairs and rodeos have been upgraded over the years, all a part of our history and heritage," she says.



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