

Obituaries

Clayton A. Shaw

Clayton A. Shaw, 84, of Corvallis, died May 21, 2004.

A private family service was held May 25 at First United Methodist Church in Corvallis.

Shaw was born July 28, 1919, in Yakima, WA, to Albert S. and Anna Rae McCulley Shaw. He graduated from Walla Walla High School in 1937 and from Oregon State College, class of 1941.

While at Oregon State, he was a member of the Sigma Nu Fraternity and was active in intercollegiate sports of basketball and baseball.

He was called to active Army duty in December 1941, and spent 39 months of World War II in Northern Australia, New Guinea, The Netherlands East Indies and the Philippine Islands of Mindoro and Mindanao.

He returned to the United States in July 1945, and on Aug. 5, 1945, married Harriet Elizabeth Hager in Heppner.

In 1946, he accepted a commission in the regular Army and from then until the summer of 1969 spent tours of duty, accompanied by his family when possible, in various continental Army posts, Korea and Germany. He concluded his military service as the Professor of Military Science at Oregon State University in August 1969; whereupon he accepted the position of assistant registrar and served until July 1981.

He is survived by his wife, Harriet; son, Steven M Shaw; brother, Robert D. Shaw; and four grandchildren. He was preceded in death by son, Robert W. Shaw, infant son, Kevin James and brother, Wesley R. Shaw.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Robert W. Shaw Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o OSU Foundation.

Michael "Scott" Strouse

Michael "Scott" Strouse, 47, of Heppner, died Monday, May 17, 2004, at his home of cancer.

A memorial service was held May 24 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Lexington. A gathering for family and friends will follow at the Heppner Elks Lodge.

Strouse was born Dec. 31, 1956, at Woodburn, to Harry R. and Burma Gass Strouse. He attended Baker City Grade School for two years then finished his education in Harrisburg where he graduated from high school.

He enlisted in the Army and served for four years, then, following an honorable discharge, he went to work for the Oregon State Highway Department in 1980.

On Dec. 2, 1980, he married Celita L. West at Eugene.

He had worked at several locations throughout

the state before settling in Heppner in 1992.

He enjoyed hunting deer and elk and took an active role in coaching a Little League softball team.

He had been a member of the Elks Lodge and Willow Creek Country Club at Heppner.

Survivors include his wife, Celita Strouse; son, Elliot and daughters, Alea and Kathryn, all of Heppner; parents, Harry R. and Burma Strouse of Pahrump, NV; brothers, Harry J. Strouse and Robert Strouse, both of Santiam Junction; and sister, Denise Likens of Roseburg.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, Oregon Division, 0330 S.W. Curry, Portland, OR 97201.

Sweeney Mortuary of Heppner is in charge of arrangements.

Virgil Ray Pettigrew

Virgil Ray Pettigrew, 60, a longtime Boardman businessman, died Sunday, May 16, 2004, at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston from complications of diabetes.

A graveside service was held May 20, at Riverview Cemetery in Boardman with a gathering for family and friends held at the family home.

He was born Dec. 11, 1943, at Glenwood Springs, CO, to Virgil C. and Helen Robertson Pettigrew.

Survivors include his wife of 42 years, Karen; daughter, Brenda Dobbins, and husband Mark, and their children Tatum and Cameron; son, Anthony Pettigrew, and wife, Rachelle, and their children, Colton and McKenzie; and by his brother, Walt and sister, Peggy. He was preceded in death by his parents and a younger sister.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Boardman Ambulance Service or Morrow County Hospice.

Burns Mortuary of Hermiston is in charge of arrangements.

Students at HES are wild about learning

Heppner Elementary School's annual Awards Night is set for Tuesday, June 8 at 6:30 p.m. The event will be held in the HES gym and a jungle theme proves that the students are surely wild about learning.

Awards will be presented to students in grades K-6. The final presentations of the evening will be the highly anticipated Presidential Academic Awards to students in sixth grade.

Following the evening's celebration of HES students and their accomplishment, guests are invited to enjoy refreshments in the cafeteria. The public is encouraged to attend.

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Heppner Gazette
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In the footsteps of his father

By Mark Morical of The Bulletin
April 27, 2004

[Editor's Note: Wally Backman, Jr. is the grandson of Sam and Ida Backman of Lone. The story about Wally Jr., was published April 27, 2004 in The Bulletin, located in Bend.]

What's in a name? Sometimes everything. Sometimes nothing.

It's strange, though, how we're often defined by our names. How we see a person's name and make immediate judgments of who that person is and what he or she is like.

Here's a name: Wally Backman.

To many, it may have no meaning. To a baseball fan or major-league scout, it's the scrappy second baseman who won a World Series with the New York Mets in 1986 and also played for Minnesota, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Seattle in a 16-year major league career.

So when a scout is looking at a high school prospect with that very same name, he is bound to do a double take.

Wally Backman Jr. has made numerous scouts do double takes. His name gets the scout through the door, his numbers and talent make the scout stay.

The younger Backman is having a stellar senior season as a shortstop and closing pitcher for Crook County High School, batting .490 with 13 runs batted in, six stolen bases and five saves on the mound with a 1.47 earned run average. He's led the Cowboys to a 10-3 record and a tie for second place in the Intermountain Conference.

"It's funny," the younger Backman says. "I don't know if I get a lot more attention because of my dad. But a lot of people (scouts) get on the subject about him and we hit it off from there. It has had a big impact on my life. I feel fortunate."

The elder Backman is currently managing in the minors, heading up the Lancaster JetHawks- the Arizona Diamondbacks' entry in the Class A California League.

In 1977, Wally Backman Sr. was in the same place his son is now, being drooled over by scouts and awaiting baseball's amateur draft in early June. He was the Mets' No. 1 pick, the 13th selection overall. He says his son could be a high draft pick as well.

"I feel he's going to go pretty high from the things I've heard through the grapevine in a lot of different organizations," the elder Backman says.

The clubs showing

the most interest in him, according to his father, are the Dodgers, Diamondbacks, Cubs, Royals and Rangers.

Scouts love the younger Backman's strong, 6-foot-3-inch, 205-pound frame, and they're eyeing his potential as a five-tool shortstop- one who hits for average and with power, and who has foot speed, solid arm strength and defensive prowess.

"He has the ability," Backman, the father, says. "Not because I'm his dad, but if I was looking at him as a scout. He has the tools and his dad has nothing to do with that, other than giving him good genes."

The younger Backman has lived as "Wally Backman's son" his entire 18 years. He says baseball is the only career path he's ever considered. He admits the pressure of being his old man's son has gotten the best of him before, but now at one of the most critical junctures of his young career- he is trying to forget about who his father is and just help lead the Cowboys to the IMC title and the state playoffs.

"I used to be like, 'I have to prove to everybody I'm as good as my dad was,'" Backman says. "I know my dad was good. But this year... I have to put that stuff aside and I gotta play my own game."

"There's days when he's thinking too much, and we try to put it back in perspective," says Crook County coach Dean Stiles. "His dad has schooled him well in everything else."

Stiles says he feels fortunate to have a player of young Backman's talents- and strength- on his team. He mentions how his star often squeezes tennis balls to build his forearms, and apparently it works.

"I've never seen a kid or man with forearms like his," Stiles says. "It's like tapping on a two-by-four."

But Stiles is also quick to discuss young Backman's extreme dedication to the game and strong character as a personable high school student and committed leader on the squad.

"He's a real gregarious, outgoing kid," Stiles says. "He has a lot of talent, and realizes that, but he's not content. He always wants early work, late work, extra batting practice. That becomes infectious to the other kids. I had to kick them off the field the other night. I was tired of hitting fungoes."

The younger Backman probably gets his drive from his father, who is remembered as a hustling, gritty, hard-working second

baseman. Wally Sr.'s managing duties require him to be gone from home in Prineville from March through September, but during the winter he spends countless hours with his son, teaching him the intricacies of the game that allowed him to maintain a long career in the big leagues.

"In the off-season, we have long chats," Wally Jr. says. "We'll break everything down piece by piece and spend hours on it."

But one thing his father taught him can't be measured by statistics or by a scout's stopwatch or radar gun.

"He always told me, 'It's all in the heart,'" the younger Backman recalls. "He always played the game with his heart, and that's what he taught me."

College is another option for the younger Backman, and several major universities are interested in him, including Arizona, Arizona State, Oregon State, Washington and UCLA, according to his father and Stiles.

If he doesn't get drafted as high as he'd like, then college will become more enticing.

"I would advise him to go to college if he's drafted low, but the ultimate decision is his," Wally Sr. says.

His son is just happy that his father is there to help him with the decision.

"I'm trying to do the right thing," Wally Jr. says. "I'm glad I have my dad for that. He knows what the right thing is going to be. He's keeping my options pretty open for me."

Father and son are extremely supportive of each other at this time in their lives, talking on the phone two to three times a day. The son is trying to make it to the big leagues, and so is the father, as a manager. While they encourage each other now, if they ever end up in opposing dugouts, it could be trouble.

"We always joke," says Wally Sr. "I'll tell him, 'I'll manage against you, and the first time you come up I'm gonna have my pitcher drill you.' We have that

But before he can get such a major-league welcome from his dad, the younger Backman knows he has much work ahead of him. He says if he does get drafted and plays in the minors, he'll have to work that much harder knowing there's somebody behind him trying to take his place. Along the way, he'll lean on his father, whose major-league career was built on hard work, dedication and just plain love of the game.

"I want to play baseball forever," says Wally Jr. "It'd be so nice to do something you love your whole life and then retire. Playing baseball's something I want to do for the rest of my life."

Of course it is. Just look at his name.

Over the Tee Cup

The ladies of Willow Creek Country Club gathered in windy, rainy conditions on Tuesday, May 18 for Over the Tee Cup play.

Pat Edmundson took low gross of the field. Lorrene Montgomery, Loa Henderson and Betty Carlson tied for low net of the field. Least putts of the field went to Betty Christman.

In flight A, Jan Paustain took low gross, Corol Mitchell took low net, and Virginia Grant took least putts.

In flight B, Luvilla Sonstegard took low gross.

In flight C, Kandy Boyd took low gross; Pat Doherty took low net and Dorris Graves took least putts.

Christman also had a birdie and a KP on hole 13.

Heppner Babe Ruth Baseball Golf Tournament

The Heppner Babe Ruth Baseball Golf Tournament will be held on Sunday, May 30 at Willow Creek Country Club. It is a four-man/woman scramble. The cost is \$25 per person.

The caddie auction will be held at 8 a.m. and golfing starts at 9 a.m. Lunch will be provided.

Welcome To The 57th Annual Spray Rodeo
Saturday & Sunday, May 29th - 30th

Saturday, May 29th:
Buckeroo Breakfast from 6 a.m.-12 noon
Eastern Oregon Half-Marathon begins at 8 a.m.
Rodeo Parade starts at 11 a.m.
RODEO BEGINS AT 1 p.m.

Sunday, May 30th:
Buckeroo Breakfast from 6 a.m.-12 noon
Cowboy Church Service at 9 a.m. (rodeo grandstands)
RODEO BEGINS AT 1 p.m.

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River Bend Retreat (Spray) | Real Estate Outback (Spray)
River Bend Motel (Spray) | Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo (Heppner)
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Ione School District Board Vacancy
Persons living in Ione, Oregon interested in serving on the Ione School Board of Directors, please contact Tami Peterson, 2001 S.W. Nye, Pendleton, OR 97801 or call 1-800-522-8396 ext. 3102, for an application. This position will run through June 30, 2005. Applications must be received at above address by 4:30 p.m. on June 16, 2004.

Ione United Church of Christ
42nd ANNUAL AUCTION & BARBECUE

Faith, Fun & Fellowship!
Saturday, June 5th
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AUCTION 10:30 AM
Pit Barbeque Beef Dinner 12:30 PM
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