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HEPPNER 50¢
Gazette Times

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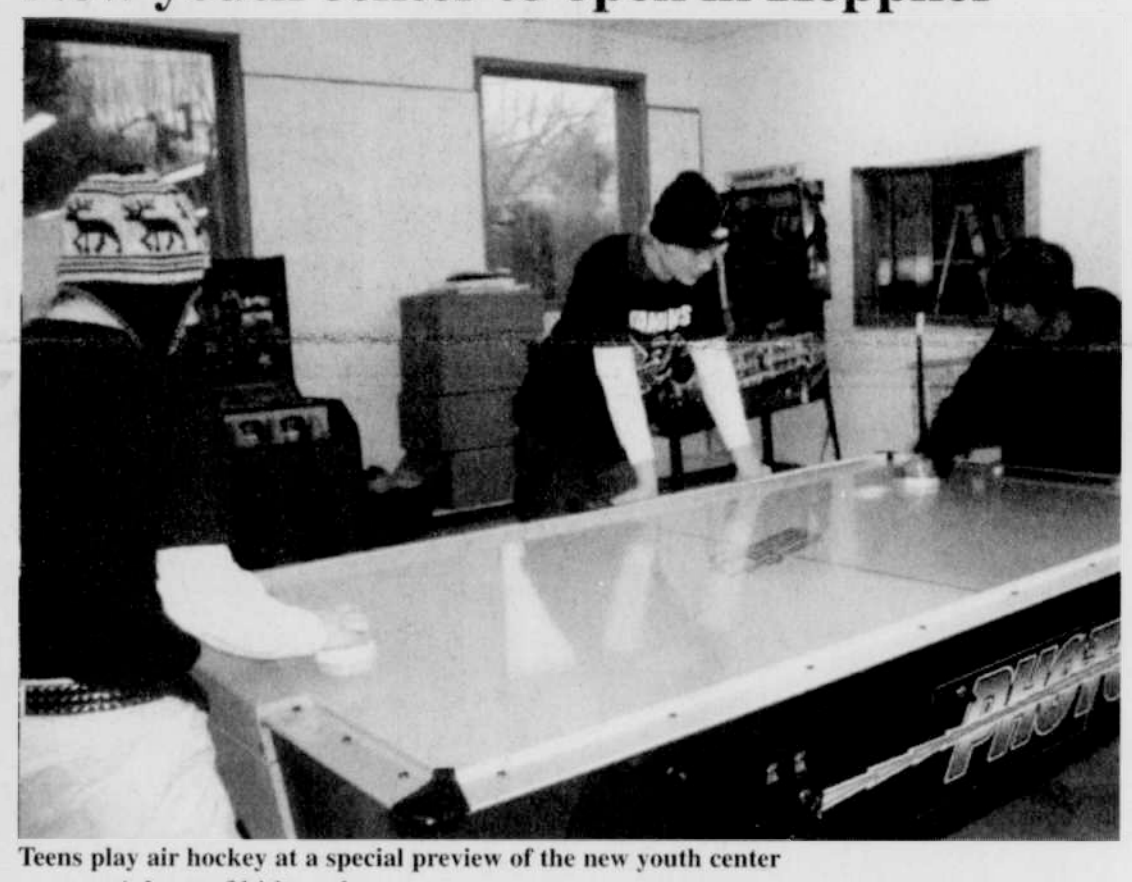
New youth center to open in Heppner



Teens play air hockey at a special preview of the new youth center

A love of kids and a desire to give them a safe place to hang out prompted Heppner native Bobbette Lovgren to open a new youth center in Heppner. Opening is scheduled for Wednesday, November 15, at the former Napa Auto Parts, 148 E. Center St.

"There has been a need for years," said Lovgren. "People have tried before, but now the timing must be right. This will be a place where kids are wanted and welcome."

The youth center will be open from 3-9 p.m. weekdays and noon to 11 p.m. Saturdays. Private parties are also available any day of the week.

The center will offer arcade games, such as hunting, Pirates of the Caribbean and driving games, a basketball hoop, air hockey and additional games for younger kids, such as the alligator game. The center will feature a special room, the "Stable of Youth", for the younger kids, featuring a bar with cowboy saddle seats. For the older kids, a stage will be available for jamming and dance nights will be scheduled.

Vending machines offering candy and drinks will be available and Lovgren says that a snack shack is coming soon.

The center, for school-age children up to 18 years old, will be supervised at all times by adults.

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Stroll Heppner on November 30

Stroll Heppner and the 10th annual Parade of Lights will be held Thursday, Nov. 30.

People may "stroll" Heppner all day and visit businesses, view Christmas trees and gingerbread houses, visit the Heppner City Hall open house and listen to carolers. Pictures with Santa will be taken at city hall from 4:30-6 p.m. The Christmas tree lighting will be held on Main Street at 5:30 p.m.

The Parade of Lights starts at 6 p.m. Individuals, families, businesses and out-of-town entries are invited to enter the parade. Entrants will line up at 5 p.m. at the Green Feed and Seed store. The parade will go through town twice. Prizes will be awarded for the following: best community float, $75; best commercial float, $75; best individual float, $75; and best school float, $75.

The Pioneer Memorial Home Health and Hospice/Heppner Chamber of Commerce tree auction and raffle will take place immediately following the parade. Tree raffle tickets are one for $1, six for $5, and 30 for $20.

Remembrance Day to be held at HHS

Heppner High School will hold their annual Veteran's Remembrance Day on Monday, Nov. 13, starting at 10:30 a.m. in the Heppner High School Gym.

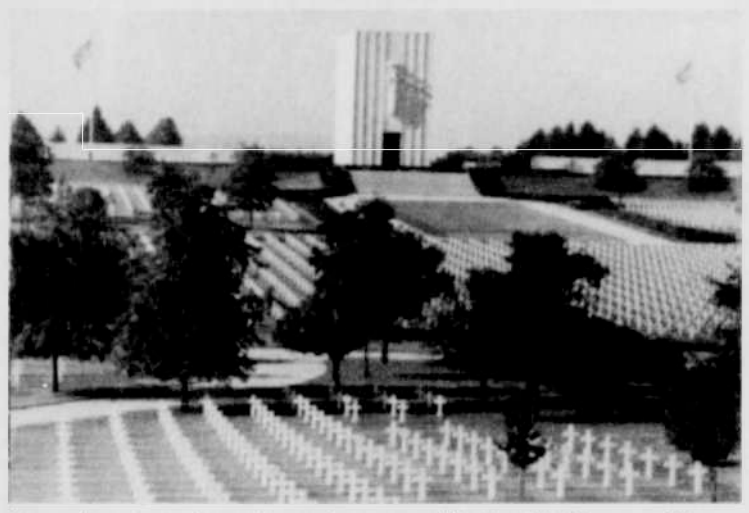
Heppner High School invites all veterans to attend the program to honor them for their service to our country. Heppner High School also invites the public to come to this program. A lunch for all veterans and their spouses will be provided after the program.

ALL NEWS AND ADVERTISEMENT DEADLINE:
MONDAYS AT 5:00 P.M.

Veteran's Day November 11

Finding the forgotten soldier

PFC Guy Beverly Sykes



Lorraine American Cemetery near St. Avold, France. There are 10,489 Americans buried there, including Guy Sykes.

Editor's note: Veteran's Day, our day of national remembrance, is November 11. Following is a story of remembrance. It is also a story about my uncle, Guy Beverly Sykes, a soldier killed in war.

Guy, my father's younger brother, was killed in WWII. Until recently this was virtually all I knew about him. Following is not only a story about my efforts to learn more about this forgotten soldier, but also a story of how he fought and died for his country and for our freedoms.

I write this not to glorify my uncle, as there are many who have also fought and died, but more so that his, and all veterans' sacrifices, will be remembered.

By David Sykes

I was born five years after the end of World War II. I am a baby boomer.

Growing up it seemed as if all the adults I knew had served in WWII. My mother and her sister served in the Women's Army Corps together, another uncle served in the army, another in the navy and my father also in the navy, fighting the Japanese in the South Pacific.

I remember visiting my cousin's home and there was army gear, helmets, canteens and gas masks all over the garage. We had fun dressing up. At my home in the back yard was a large rubber raft my sister and I would fill with water and use as a swimming pool. Later I learned it was my dad's Underwater Demolition Team raft he used on two island invasions. The remnants and memories of war were everywhere.

We had many family gatherings when I was young, and everyone was there, all the veterans-everyone except my uncle Guy Sykes. Growing up I had heard stories about Guy. I heard how he liked to camp at Yosemite park, and how his family all went to Mexico and got lost. But I never heard anything about his army service, or his death. For whatever reason, neither my father nor my grandparents ever talked about him. All I knew was that he was killed in a tank somewhere in Europe "during the war".

Over the years I became curious. I asked my father and mother more about him before they died, and was told nothing new. Several years ago I began checking books at the book store and library with names of war dead, hoping to maybe see him listed there. I found nothing.

A couple of years ago I began using the Internet, and then one day out of nowhere after lots of searches, lo and behold, I found something.

There it was, on a single Internet page, dedicated to an American cemetery in France, was his name in big block letters. I stared almost in disbelief. That page told me more than I had ever known about him. It told me he is buried at the Lorraine American Cemetery near St. Avold, France. I was fascinated. His body had never been brought home. The page told me he had been a private first class serving with the 14th Armored Division, 48th Tank Battalion. And it told me he died Jan 12, 1945, a date I had never heard before.

This was more information than I ever had, and at that point I began to fill in the blanks about a man I knew nothing about, but was connected to by name and blood. I was determined to now find out more, and I dug deeper.

I looked up information on the 14th Armored Division and learned they fought bravely against the Germans' counter offensive called operation Norwind in the winter of 1944-45. I also learned they were nicknamed the "Liberators" because of the 200,000 allied troops they later liberated from German prisoner of war camps. The division also liberated a Jewish death camp after entering Germany. I found out there was a book written on the history of the 14th Armored Division. It is out of print, but with the Internet I am still searching.

Then one day last month I came across an Internet site that virtually broke the dam. It was the home page for the association of the 14th Armored Division, and there was a name and an email address on the web site. The name was Jim Lankford, National Historian and editor for the "Liberator", the web site and official newsletter of the 14th Armored. I quickly wrote Jim an email asking for any information he could give me about my unknown uncle. I waited for a reply, but did not want to get my hopes up. Then I received the following email:

"David,

"As luck would have it, I caught Darrell Todd at home when I telephoned. Darrell was a tank commander in C Company, and remembers your uncle Guy. He is more than happy to talk with you, and can probably put you in touch with others in his unit that might remember Guy. Just so you will know, Darrell became a tank 'ace,' by destroying five German tanks during the war, two or three of them at Hatten-Rittershoffen.

Best Regards, Jim."

Thinking there was someone still alive who knew my uncle was exciting and fascinating to me. It somehow seemed almost too good to be true. Again, not wanting to get my hopes up, I waited to hear from Darrell.

Then one day not long after on a Saturday morning the call came. Darrell Todd from California was on the line. Yes he said he did indeed know my uncle. He told me Guy was a hard worker and a quiet and dependable man. He said he and Guy were in the same tank company. There were five Sherman tanks in C Company and Darrell was the commander of tank number 1 and Guy was the loader in tank number 3. This was amazing information.

He went on to say that my uncle was killed in the battle of Hatten-Rittershoffen, a large tank battle near two small towns in northern France. The battle raged from Jan 9- 21 and was one of the largest tank battles of WWII. It was overshadowed, and did not receive as much publicity as the Battle of the Bulge, which was going on at the same time.

I listened as this man I had never met told me more about my soldier uncle than I had ever heard before. Darrell said Guy's tank was hit January 11, 1945, in the turret by a shell from a German Tiger tank, and that out of the five crewmen, Guy and two others were killed (Guy died the next day on Jan. 12). Darrell told me that because of the high casualties, my uncle, a private first class, had been promoted from a loader to tank commander, and actually had a lieutenant as driver working under him when he was killed.

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