

AMERICAN SNIPER MOVIE

-Continued from PAGE ONE information in the story.

"I really don't know the panoply of where it needs to go for Warner Brothers," McEwen says. "I do know one of the things they want to do is make it as close as possible to the actual events and things as they were described in the book."

Though DeFelice had to bow out of involvement in the movie, McEwen says the book's main man, Kyle, will obviously also be closely involved in the making of the film.

McEwen says they had many interested parties when it came to film rights, with negotiations taking place with studios of all sizes.

"We had earlier had some offers with another major studio to do an episodic TV series. Chris and I turned that down. There was a lot of interest from a lot of different parties but Bradley Cooper showed he really wanted to do this and really wanted to produce this from Warner Brothers," he says.

In fact, it turned out Cooper was the determining factor...not for his famous face, but for his commitment to Kyle's story.

"He was serious about wanting to do this role and about his vision of depicting what really took place. That was what Chris and I were most impressed by," says McEwen.

McEwen adds that Cooper, who was the driving force behind Warner

Brothers' acquisition, is an "educated individual" and not your typical Hollywood pretty face.

"He has a degree from an Ivy League college. He analyzes his projects and takes them on based on an in-depth analysis of what he wants to do with them," McEwen explains. "I've been very impressed with his professionalism and how he approaches his projects."

McEwen says that, while there is obvious glamour involved with Hollywood, he was struck by the business savvy of the players involved.

"I was struck by how conscious they are of the market, their recognition that they don't take on projects unless they're going to sell. I was impressed by their professionalism. There's the glitz, but there's a business that's very professionally analyzed," he says.

While many may feel that Hollywood is slightly out of touch with reality, McEwen says he feels the people involved with the American Sniper movie—Cooper, Russell and Hall, among others—understand the message of the book and want to communicate that on the screen.

"I feel as if the people who are involved have the same vision we did when we started the project. For that reason, I'm confident they're going to come up

with a good product, a good movie," says McEwen. "The script writer is really excellent; Jason Hall is an A-list writer in Hollywood."

McEwen says he never would have expected to come this far when he started working with Kyle to get the SEAL's story published.

"No one could envision that," he says. "I always thought the story was extremely compelling but I never thought it would take off like it did. It was in the top 15 books, rated 11th of all nonfiction books sold in the U.S. last year. That's pretty good company."

McEwen estimates that, barring major glitches—if the project gets greenlit, production starts in the next few months, everything goes smoothly and the planets align—fans can expect to see the American Sniper story on the big screen early in 2014.

For himself, he's happy to see a Hollywood ending for an American hero.

"I'm just happy that it worked out well and that Chris and his wife and children are doing well. So far I'm very happy with what it has done for Chris, and for recognition of other warriors...the positive, pro-U.S. type of film. That's what I wanted," McEwen says.

"I'm happy that everybody's OK. I like a happy ending."

Heppner chamber holds annual luncheon



Pictured are the 2013 chamber board members (L-R): John Gould (second VP), Matt Combe, Michael Blauer, Kay Fowler, Kim Cutsforth, Ann Murray, Nancy Snider (first VP) Tawny Miles (treasurer) and Jeff Bailey (president). -Contributed photo

The Heppner Chamber of Commerce held its annual luncheon on Thursday, Jan. 3. During the luncheon, chamber members said goodbye to chamber president Les Paustian and hello to Jeff Bailey, president for

2013. Father Condon was recognized for his involvement in the community, and Lisanne Currin was recognized for her years of serving as the treasurer for

the chamber board. Updates to the by-laws were ratified and Tricia Rollins installed the new board. The Stable of Youth catered.

Town & Country awards this Thursday

The Heppner Chamber of Commerce's Annual Town and Country Community Awards will take place this Thursday evening, Jan. 10, starting with no-host social hour at 6 p.m. at the Morrow County Fairgrounds.

This year's theme is "Our Community Volunteers, Our Country Gold." Attendees will be treated to a slide show, "Your Community on the Big Screen," prepared by Dale Bates of CenturyLink and Sandy

Matthews of Windwave Communications.

A no-host bar will be provided by Bucknum's Tavern. Dinner will be catered by Alvin Liu and Cornerstone Gallery, and will feature barbecue brisket, barbecue baby back ribs, barbecue beans with bacon, Al's favorite cornbread muffins, oven-roasted garlic and herb potatoes, and vanilla ice cream with chocolate-mint topping.

Along with some accompanying festivities,

the awards ceremony will honor those chosen as Business of the Year, Woman of the Year, Man of the Year, Citizen-Educator of the Year and a Youth Recognition award.

The chamber asks that those planning on attending purchase tickets as soon as possible if they haven't already done so. Tickets are \$20 each and can be purchased at Bank of Eastern Oregon, Heppner Chamber of Commerce, Community Bank and Murray's Drug.

Elks awards valuable student scholarships

The Heppner Elks Lodge #358 recently announced the winners of the Elks Most Valuable Student Scholarship contest. The scholarships are awarded each year to qualified seniors based on scholarship, leadership, community service, extracurricular activities, financial need and an essay.

Locally, the Heppner lodge awarded three male and three female scholarships totaling \$2,500.

The recipients are: Men: First, Bryce Fowler, \$700; second, Earl

Propheter, \$350; and third, Garrett Robinson, \$200.

Women: First, Maggie Collins, \$700; second, Julianne Carlson, \$350; and third, Stacey Halvorsen, \$200.

"Many outstanding young men and women competed for awards this year. Unfortunately, we cannot award scholarships to all of them," said scholarship chairman Tim Dickenson. "The committee would like to thank all the applicants for their impressive brochures and want to encourage you to apply for the upcoming

Elks Legacy Scholarships and Buchanan Memorial Scholarships." Dickenson added that both Fowler's and Collins' applications went on to the district contest to compete against the top finishers at nine other Elks lodges in the district.

Fowler placed second in the district contest, earning an extra \$1,600.

For more information about Elks scholarships, contact Dickenson at 541-676-8990 or dickensonchiro@centurytel.net.

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Bryce Fowler



Garrett Robinson



Julianne Carlson



Maggie Collins



Stacey Halvorsen

Smith retains chair in Democrat-controlled legislature

Rep. Greg Smith (R-Heppner) is one of three Republicans in the Oregon House retaining a chairman position. He is also the senior house member on the Joint Ways & Means Committee.

"I am very pleased with my appointments and particularly welcome the opportunity to serve as co-chair of the Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on General Government. These committees significantly impact legislation affecting House District 57.

"Having served on these committees during previous legislative sessions, I have a thorough understanding of the policy areas and know what it takes to be a productive committee member," said Smith.

Representative Greg Smith's appointments are

as follows: Joint Ways & Means Committee, Senior House Member; Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on General Government, Co-Chair; Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction; and Consumer Protection & Government Efficiency Committee.

When asked about the increased workload these committee appointments

represent, Smith said, "It is an honor to retain these positions, and I am fortunate to have a very experienced and efficient staff. We work as a team and effectively balance all of the responsibilities.

"The opportunity to serve on these committees is a privilege. We expect to work hard to serve the people of House District 57."

Farmers agent opens Main Street Heppner office

A ribbon cutting will be held Friday, Jan. 11, at 10 a.m. for Scott Coe, Farmers Insurance agent, at 133 N. Main Street in Heppner.

Coe will be renting space from Willow Creek Realty.

DA's Report

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson has released the following report:

-Antonio Pete Espino, 23, was convicted of felon possess firearm, a Class C felony, and sentenced to three years supervised probation, subject to 180 sanction units and 90 jail units. Probation conditions include five custody units to be converted to 80 hours community service and 30 custody units converted to 30 days jail time with credit for time served. Total fines, fees and assessments were \$60.

-Angelique L. Kettlewell, 19, was convicted of theft in the first degree, a Class C felony, and sentenced to two years supervised probation; conditions of probation include a written apology to the victim and custody units converted to 120 hours community service. Total fines, fees and assessments were \$200.

-Juan Escalante Hernandez, 25, was convicted of harassment constituting domestic violence, a Class B misdemeanor. Sentence of 90 days jail time was suspended and the defendant given 20 days jail time and

24 months bench probation. Total fines, fees and assessments were \$440.

-Suzanne Bergo, 28, was convicted of Assault in the Fourth Degree-Constituting Domestic Violence, a Class A misdemeanor; sentence of 180 days jail time was partly suspended and the defendant given five days jail time and 24 months bench probation. Bergo was further convicted of Criminal Trespass in the First Degree, a Class A misdemeanor. Sentence of 180 days jail time was partly suspended and the defendant given five days jail time and 24 months bench probation. Total fines, fees and assessments were \$1,606.

-Cheri Ann Sink, 41, was convicted of Failure to Appear in the First Degree, a Class C felony, and sentenced to 24 months supervised probation, subject to 120 sanction units with 60 jail units. Total fines, fees and assessments were \$678.

-Wallace Gary Smith, 42, was convicted of Criminal Driving While Suspended or Revoked, a Class A misdemeanor; sentence

of 180 days jail time was suspended and the defendant given 36 months bench probation. Smith was further convicted of Fleeing or Attempting to Elude a Police Officer, a Class A misdemeanor; sentence of 180 days jail time was suspended and the defendant given 36 months bench probation. Fines, fees and assessments totaled \$600.

-Michael Paul Williams, 32, was convicted of three counts of Sexual Abuse in the First Degree, a Class B felony, and sentenced to 75 months prison time on each count, two counts to run consecutive and the third count to run concurrent, with credit for time served and no consideration for early release. Defendant was also given 10 years post-prison supervision on each count, minus time actually served. Williams was further convicted of one count of Coercion and sentenced to 36 months prison time with credit for time served, to run concurrent with other counts, and three years post-prison supervision. Fines, fees and assessments totaled \$3,326.

Chamber Chatter

Thursday, Jan. 10: Heppner Chamber's Annual Town and Country Community Awards will be held at the Morrow County Fairgrounds and will begin at 6 p.m. with a no-host social hour. Cornerstone Gallery will be catering the meal and will be serving the "Ultimate Barbecue Feast," consisting of barbecued brisket, barbecued baby back ribs, barbecued beans with bacon, Al's favorite corn bread muffins, oven-roasted garlic and herb potatoes, vanilla ice cream with mint chocolate sauce and country strawberry lemonade. The tickets will

be \$20 per person and will be available for purchase. The theme for this year is "Our Community Volunteers; Our Country Gold," and the sponsors are Ambre Energy's Morrow Pacific Project and Portland Gen-

eral Electric. Peterson's Jewelers will be donating jewelry, with the winner to be drawn sometime during the evening.

Chamber lunch costs: Effective Jan. 3, the weekly lunch expense will be \$10.

Mexican dinner fundraiser planned

The Mustang softball team will be having a dinner to raise money for the program during the home basketball games versus Pilot Rock on Friday, Jan. 18. Dinner will include a tostada (a traditional Mexi-

can fried tortilla with toppings), homemade salsa, rice, beans, dessert and a drink. The cost is \$5 per person. Proceeds will help the Mustang softball team purchase equipment and gear for the 2013 season.