

WCVEDG to host annual luncheon

Willow Creek Valley Economic Development Group (WCVEDG) will host its annual luncheon on Friday, Feb. 17, from 12-1 p.m. at the St. Patrick's Senior Center dining room.

The group will hold its annual meeting, followed by guest speaker State Representative Greg Smith, who will be giving a legislative update. Alvin Liu with Gateway Cafe will cater the lunch and will be serving barbecue ribs, grilled citrus basil chicken, homemade coleslaw, barbecue beans, sweet cornbread, cookie and a beverage.

This lunch is free and both WCVEDG members and community members are invited to attend. Those attending are asked to please RSVP to Sheryll Bates at heppnerchamber@centurytel.net or 541-676-5536 no later than Tuesday, Feb. 14, to guarantee enough food and seating.

Columbia Basin says to expect larger electric bills

Thomas Wolff, manager of Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative, indicates customers should expect their January electric bills to be higher than normal.

January's billing cycle was 10 days longer than December's, due to the holidays. The area also experienced longer-than-normal, extreme cold weather. The co-op says customers' increased energy usage—to keep homes warmer, to prevent pipes from freezing, etc.—should save members money in the long run.

The co-op also encourages anyone who needs assistance to contact CAPECO or the Neighborhood Center, and to also consider signing up for Budget Pay in April to help alleviate unforeseen increases in their month-to-month bills.

"Columbia Basin Electric's Member Owned Cooperative does everything in its power to help keep our members' rates as affordable as possible and assist our members with conservation and efficiency measures," said a statement by the cooperative.

Local woman looks back on a century of life

By Andrea Di Salvo

Local woman Creth Harris will reach a mark few of us hope ever to achieve later this month—a century of life lived, and lived to the fullest.

Evelyn "Creth" Harris was born Feb. 18, 1917 in Hardman, OR. She was born at the doctor's home in Hardman, though exactly where that house stood is something no one now seems to recall.

Her parents were John Edwin Craber and Maude (Rice) Craber. She was one of four siblings, the only girl among brothers Harold, Gordon and Dallas Craber.

The family moved throughout the region while

lived in Pendleton for a while, as well as The Dalles for several years. They moved to Arlington in the early 1930s, where she attended her sophomore and junior years of high school before the Craber family moved back to Hardman. Creth finished school there, graduating from Hardman High School with the class of 1935.

Many of Creth Harris's memories have gotten a bit fuzzy, fading with the passage of nearly a century. However, there are always memories that stand out. She recalls that they had cars, but concedes that, "We used a horse and buggy for

By April Sykes

Morrow County Health District CEO Bob Houser told the MCHD Board at its regular meeting Monday night in Ione that the CREZ II (Columbia River Enterprise Zone) has awarded the district \$150,000 toward construction of an addition to the Irrigon Clinic, which is managed by the health district.

The Irrigon Clinic patient load has increased greatly and the clinic is outgrowing its current facility, despite a fairly recent remodel.

Houser said that the district submitted a \$206,250 request to CREZ for the Irrigon Clinic construction. He said he has also contacted a grant writer with Yellowhawk in the hopes of obtaining additional monies for the clinic construction, which is to begin this spring.

Yellowhawk, a Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation facility, located on the Indian reservation near Pendleton, offers medical, dental, mental health, alcohol/drug treatment, pharmacy, lab,

radiology, DUII diversion and outreach programs in public health, CHR services, WIC, nutrition, health education, senior meals and caregiving services.

Houser also told the board that the new MRI service is underway and five scans were conducted on the initial day, with four scans on Jan. 21 and three scheduled for Feb. 4. An MRI, which stands for magnetic resonance imaging, uses a magnetic field and pulses of radio wave energy to make pictures of organs and structures inside the body.

Irrigon community leaders Barb and Wayne Huwe and other Irrigon community members attended the meeting to voice their concern over the resignation of Kelly Shelton, Irrigon paramedic. Shelton accepted a position with the Hermiston Fire/Rescue. His resignation leaves the Irrigon area without a paramedic. Houser said the district will be recruiting for a paramedic or EMT-1 for Irrigon.

Houser also said that he had met with a recruiting firm with a 90 percent success rate in recruiting physicians to rural areas that this past year recruited a physician's assistant to the Asher Clinic in Fossil, which is "really rural," he added. He indicated that he may ask the board to sign an agreement with a recruiting firm in February.

In other business, the board:

- learned that three board positions, District 1, currently held by Joe Perry, District 2, held by John Murray; and District 3, held by Leann Rea, are up for election on June 30. The first day to file is Feb. 4 and the last day is March 16.

- renewed Dr. Russ Nichols' contract with the district.

- received an update on the progress of the remodel of the endoscopies procedure room at Pioneer Memorial Hospital. Endoscopies (which include colonoscopies) at PMH had been halted by state officials until changes could be made to the room where they were conducted. Despite progress, Houser said he still did not expect the procedures to resume until July.

- closed out the 2015-16 strategic plan.

- reviewed and approved the "redline" version of Governance Policies, chapters 1-4, as amended.

- approved the consent agenda, including department head, EMR, Infection Control, Quality Improvement, Safety and ASA QA minutes.

- received the following December profit and loss statement: \$762,030 gross patient revenue, less \$10,510 provision for bad debts and \$83,211 in contractual and other adjustments, plus \$168,350 in tax revenue and \$18,118 in other operating revenue for \$854,777 in total operating revenue; \$882,384 in total operating expenses and a \$11,927 non-operating gain for a \$15,680 loss for the month and a \$30,727

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Creth and mother Maude Craber when Creth was in the eighth grade. -Contributed photo

Creth was growing up. From Hardman they moved to Lexington, where she attended first grade in the

a long while." "We didn't go much of anyplace in those days," she says. "It was always a

red-letter day when we got to go someplace."



Creth Craber Harris will turn 100 later this month. -Photo by Andrea Di Salvo

"There weren't many places to go," she adds. "You grew up in your home with your family and you never went any place."

"Mom said they sat on the porch and rocked," adds her son, Bob Harris, but says she also talks of dances at the community center in Hardman.

"Yes, lots of dances at Hardman," she agrees.

In July of 1939 she married Darrel Harris. Creth says she doesn't really remember when she met her husband; he was always a part of her life.

"I guess we just grew up as kids together. We knew each other our whole lifetime," she says. "I don't remember him ever being

anything but what he was."

"He was sure a nice man," she adds. "One of the best."

It was a partnership that spanned decades; Creth and Darrel Harris had been married 60 years when he passed away 18 years ago.

The couple set down their own roots in Morrow County, moving into their home on Upper Rhea Creek 60 years ago. Son Bob Harris, 67, believes his mother may be one of the Gazette's longest-running subscribers—the Harrises have taken the Gazette-Times continuously as long as they've lived on their Upper Rhea Creek land.

Creth and her husband also settled down to raising a family, though that turned out to be a painful road. Creth had several stillborn babies—perhaps as many as 10, though even she no longer remembers.

"They never talked about it much," says Bob Harris.

Out of all their children, only sons Bob and John survived.

"Sometimes they didn't like us," Bob says of his parents, "but we knew they always loved us."

Both sons now live on the ranch to be near enough

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Heppner coach receives state, regional awards

Greg Grant, Heppner Mustang golf coach, recently received two awards from the National Federation of State High School Coaches Association. He was chosen as the 2016 Coach of the Year in the state of Oregon for girls' golf. Not only did he win the award at the state level, but he was also honored as the 2016 Northwest Sectional Coach of the Year. The Northwest section includes the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming.

In 2016 the Heppner girls' golf team, which consisted of three freshmen, a sophomore, and two juniors had a very successful season.

They won five of the six invitational tournaments in which they played around the region. They were the 4A-1A Special District 3 Champions and finished fourth at the OSAA 4A-1A State Championship.

At district and state tournaments, the Mustang girls' team has to compete against teams from

schools that have up to and sometimes more than 800 students. Last year's success followed two years that saw the Mustang girls' team take home second-place trophies at the state championships.

The NFHS Coaches Association is the official national coaches' association of the National Federa-

tion of State High School Associations. The Executive Director of the association, Robert B. Gardner, wrote in a letter to coach Grant, "your contributions on behalf of high school

athletics are deserving of our appreciation, recognition and thanks. Congratulations on being selected to represent all the deserving coaches from your state and section."



Greg Grant and the 2016 Mustang Girls Golf team with their fourth-place trophy at the 4A-1A OSAA State Championship Tournament. -Contributed photo

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