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The Osmin Ranch's last horse-drawn harvest



The last horse-drawn harvest with Alton Osmin who was in his early 20s - circa early 1930s. -Photo from Al Osmin.

In the early 1930s, the Osmin ranch embarked on their last horse-powered harvest. The crew consisted of Alton, Lewis, and Charley Osmin, along with their trusted friend Roy Holcomb. A team of 28 horses was utilized in this endeavor, each crucial to the success of the harvest.

Alton Osmin was known for his firm but effective method of motivating the horses. He kept a box of small rocks beside him and would hurl one at any horse that was slacking off, ensuring they

all pulled their share of the load. The horses were controlled through a set of leather lines that extended to the lead horses, allowing the teamster to guide them effortlessly.

The day would start with an early wake-up call at 3 am, followed by the feeding and watering of the horses. After a hearty breakfast, the crew would proceed to harness the horses and by 7 am, they would be ready to hook them up to the combine.

The Osmin farm also made use of a sack sewing

machine. The crew would fill a chute that held 6-7 sacks, and once full, they would trip a lever to dump the sacks. Another wagon, pulled by horses, would then come and collect the harvested sacks.

Each member of the crew had a specific role in the operation. Lewis was responsible for operating the combine, Charley was the skilled sack sewer, and Roy served as the dedicated header tender. Working together with their team of horses, they would tirelessly labor throughout the

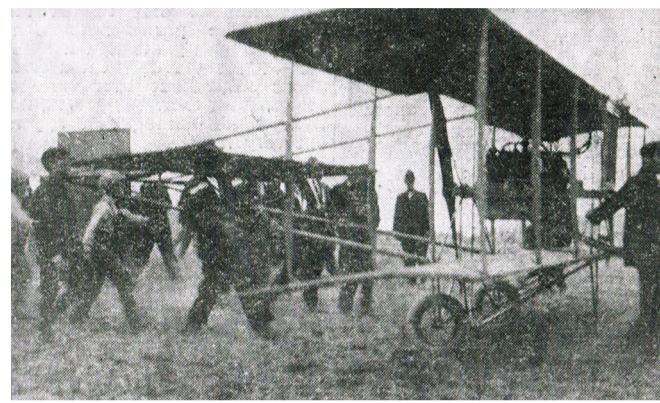


Early farming equipment used by Alton Osmin. - Photo from Al Osmin.

day to ensure a successful harvest.

This last horse-powered harvest marked the end of an era for the Osmin family. With advancements in technology, tractors and machines would gradually replace the horses, leading to more efficient and faster harvests. However, the memories of those early mornings, the sound of horses' hooves, and the camaraderie among the crew would forever be etched in the Osmin's history as a testament to their dedication and hard work.

Admiration for Generations: Morrow County Fair Entries Span Generations



This is a side view of the "aeroplane" that had a prominent place on the program of the first Morrow County Fair in 1913. The bi-plane looks as if it came direct from the Wright Bros..., but this is only an assumption. - Contributed image

County fairs are one of the oldest community events in most states. The first fair in Morrow County was in 1913 when the new "aeroplane" was the main attraction. People would gather to show off their harvest products (wheat, wool, cattle, baked goods, clothes, and many more items.) People looked forward to this time of year to socialize and celebrate their hard work and talents. This has been going on for generations. That is why this year's theme for our county fair, "Admiration for Generations" is so fitting. These talents have changed over time, but hard work and admiration for quality products are still as strong as ever. We still appreciate good food, beautiful art, and high yields. We want to encourage everyone to

enter something in the fair. Morrow County has multiple generations of talent, and we take this week in August to celebrate them. Below we have a list of special awards for our county fair this year. Take the time to find something you are proud of and bring it to the fair. Static items are excepted from 1-8 pm on Monday, Aug 12th. If you have fresh vegetables or flowers they can come in at 8-10 am to make sure they are fresh just before judging. Get involved in your county and take the time to show off your talents and skills. All generations would like to admire the beautiful work and products we have created and grown.

Special Awards 2024 Morrow County Fair Open Class

-Continued to PAGE SEVEN

The Morrow County Rodeo schedule

A Bull Rider at the MC Rodeo

It's RODEO time!!!! Once again, it's that time of year when traditions run deep and cowboys and cowgirls converge on the tiny town of Heppner, Oregon for the 102nd annual Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo and Morrow County Rodeo to show off their hard work and skills as they compete for that coveted #1 spot. The Northwest Pro Rodeo Association (NPRO) rodeo is a time-honored tradition that will kick off Thursday, August 15, and run through Saturday, August 17th, followed by the local favorite MOCO Rodeo Sunday, August 18th. This year is packed full of fun activities for all to enjoy.

Thursday will start off the weekend festivities with the highly anticipated Slack time which is free to the public and will begin at 6:00 pm in the rodeo arena. This is where cowboys and cowgirls will try for their fastest time in their events before the rodeo performances starting Friday and Saturday.

On Friday, which is our Red, White, and Blue night, Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo is proud to honor and spotlight both our Veterans and First Responders; acknowledging and appreciating all of the sacrifices they make to keep us safe from harm. Friday night rodeo is also free to all 4H and FFA kids participating in the fair. Admission tickets are once again sponsored by Elmer's Irrigation in Hermiston, Oregon. The rodeo will host a myriad of events starting at 7:00 pm. After the Breakaway Roping, the fan favorite Mutton Bustin' will begin, where our spunky little cowboys and cowgirls will pit their strength and prowess against some wild and wooly Ashbeck critters while trying to hang on. Also, halfway through the rodeo will be the favorite Buckaroo Toss. This is where kids in the stands get to throw their paper airplanes with their names written on it into the back of a slow-moving pickup in the arena. If their paper plane is chosen that child will win a prize. Not

to leave the adults out of the fun, the insanely huge and popular Cowhide Race will once again occur with teams competing for the fastest time while trying to stay on an out-of-control, smelly, cowhide that is drugged the length of the arena. Once again fans will be kept enthralled by the fantastic teamwork and precision of the Molalla Drill team who will also oversee carrying the sponsor flags. After the rodeo, Dan Burns of 3D Productions will be providing his fantastic music at the Spur 'Em barn to keep the night alive.

On Saturday the rodeo will once again start at 7:00 pm showcasing the talents of cowboys and cowgirls in the various events. Once again, the fan favorites of the Mutton Bustin', Buckaroo Toss, and Cowhide Race will be prominently featured with each team racing for that #1 slot. The Molalla Drill Team will once again awe and inspire the crowd with their precision and horsemanship skills as they perform for the crowd. Following the

rodeo, Dan Burns of 3D Productions will once again provide music in the Spur 'Em barn for all to enjoy.

The wrap-up to the rodeo weekend comes on Sunday at 1:00 pm with the MOCO rodeo. This is where the local cowboys and cowgirls come together to show off their skills and compete for a chance to win event buckles and the coveted Morrow County Amateur Calf Roping Saddle which can only be won once in a lifetime.

So come on down to Heppner and become immersed in Western traditions that focus on family and community. Where hard work, perseverance, and dedication are put to the test. It's where neighbors look after neighbors, and everyone lends a helping hand. It's where people on the street say hello to strangers and the good old days are still good. So come on out to Heppner, Oregon the weekend of August 15-18th and enjoy a piece of our Wild West.

Health District may drop lawsuit against Boardman Fire

By Andrea Di Salvo

At its regular meeting last week, the Morrow County Health District board of directors gave some indications that it may drop its lawsuit against Boardman Fire Rescue District.

The board held a lengthy session July 29 at the Port of Morrow, mostly in executive sessions closed to the public. The stated purpose of the back-to-back executive sessions was to discuss ongoing or anticipated litigation and trade secrets, both exempt from disclosure under Oregon Statute 192.

After returning into open session, however, the health district board unani-

mously voted to authorize CEO Emily Roberts to work with MCHD legal counsel to pursue a resolution with Boardman Fire regarding the lawsuit, which may include dropping the lawsuit and choosing not to pursue collections on the judgment already handed down by the court.

In May of 2023, the health district filed a lawsuit for injunctive relief against Morrow County, Boardman Fire and BFRD Chief Michael Hughes. MCHD later dropped the suit against the county, but litigation has been ongoing between the health district and Boardman Fire.

On a related topic, the board also responded neg-

atively to a July 23 email from Hughes, asking the health district to take on ambulance services for South Morrow.

Boardman Fire had been awarded an interim contract for ambulance services throughout the county when the health district stopped providing ambulance services in March of this year.

The request from Hughes seems to imply a desire that the health district subcontract the remainder of the interim agreement in the Southern Ambulance Service Area (ASA), which includes the entire south end of Morrow County.

The request raised concerns with the MCHD

board, which at first indicated that it needed more information. The health

-Continued to PAGE SEVEN

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