

NEWS IN BRIEF

Medicare presentations offer help

Information about applying for Medicare and the latest updates to the program will be presented at free community meetings.

Presented by officials from Oregon's State Health Insurance Benefits Assistance program, Are You Ready for Medicare? features 90-minute sessions, which include a question and answer period.

Other topics covered in the sessions include important deadlines to purchase additional insurance or prescription coverage, what happens if people continue to work after becoming Medicare eligible, how to compare Medicare supplements and how to evaluate long-term care insurance.

Cynthia Hylton, a SHIBA field officer, said many Oregon seniors have too much or inappropriate health insurance. Others don't get all their medical claims paid because they're

overwhelmed by paperwork. SHIBA assists people in avoiding these pitfalls and enjoying all the benefits to which they're entitled.

Area presentations are:
 •Tuesday, Sept. 1 at 6 p.m. at the Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave.

•Wednesday, Sept. 2 at 10 a.m., Umatilla Public Library, 700 Sixth St.

•Wednesday, Sept. 2 at 2 p.m., Oregon Trail Library District, 490 N.W. Main Ave., Irigton

•Thursday, Sept. 3 at 2 p.m., Port of Morrow, 2 Marine Drive, Boardman

•Thursday, Sept. 3 at 6 p.m., Stanfield Public Library, 180 W. Coe Ave.

To ensure there are enough materials, RSVP by contacting 800-722-4134 or shiba.oregon@oregon.gov. Although pre-registration is requested, no one will be turned away.

For more information, visit www.oregon.gov/dcb/shiba.

WWII veteran still serving his country and community

By SEAN HART
 Staff Writer

The walls of Willard "Bill" Runion's room are lined with recognitions from various organizations, but the Hermiston World War II veteran will have to make room for one more.

The 88-year-old was recently named the U.S. Deputy Sheriff's Association 2015 Oregon Citizen of the Year for helping provide life-saving equipment and survival training for law enforcement officers. Runion said he doesn't have much money to give, but he tries to help as much as he can.

"After I lost my wife in '98, I went back and took care of my mother for seven years until she passed away," he said. "And then I came back and I said, 'Bill, you're going to go out and make a name for yourself.' So I did."

Runion has been a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars and Disabled American Veterans. He served as commander of a local American Legion post and on the honor guard in hundreds of veterans' funerals. Giving back to service members and law enforcement personnel is his top priority, he said, having served as a military police officer in the Army.

At the age of 16, Runion said he lied about his age to enlist and was sent to Japan during World War



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Hermiston World War II veteran Willard "Bill" Runion has been named a 2015 Oregon Citizen of the Year by the U.S. Deputy Sheriff's Association. Runion served in the U.S. Army and was involved in the Pacific theater and the occupation of Japan.

II. At Okinawa, he lost vision in his right eye from the muzzle blast from an unseen enemy soldier, who also stabbed him in the leg with a bayonet.

"I didn't even see the stupid (Japanese soldier) right on the side of me — it was that dark — but my buddy did, and he killed him," Runion said. "After he killed him, he pulled that bayonet out of my leg. At least it didn't go through the bone."

Runion said he was sent to Nagasaki after the atomic bomb had been dropped there. It looked "like hell," he said, with little left standing.

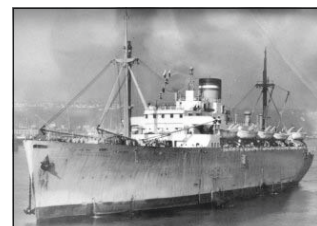
After the Japanese surrendered in 1945, he said he was stationed at Camp Drake in the Tokyo area with Gen. Douglas MacArthur. Runion said he had many interactions with the leader of the allied

forces in Japan. He said he even saved MacArthur's son from falling down a mountain when he wandered off alone.

"I had never seen a tear drop out of that man's eye," Runion said. "But when I pounded on the door and said, 'Sir, here's your son,' tears came down his eyes."

After Runion was discharged from the Army in 1949, he got a job driving trucks in his Ohio hometown. Four months later, he decided to "see some country," so he hitchhiked to Key West, Florida, and then across the nation to Seattle, with a truck driver.

"When I got out of the rig, I had one stinking dime in my pocket," he said. "I put my dime in a phone box, and you would have thought I was in (Las) Vegas. Money



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Willard Runion sailed on the troop ship the USNS David C. Shanks during World War II.

just kept pouring out. I took my cap (to collect it). Some fell on the ground, but I had \$17 in my cap."

With the money, Runion bought a ticket to Tacoma, Washington, where he took a job driving truck and met his wife, Yvonne. The couple moved to Umatilla County in 1975 and he secured a job with Threemile Canyon Farms.

Runion said he retired more than 20 years ago, but remained active in veteran and military service organizations. He has received the Veterans of Oregon Honorable Service Medal and a U.S. Army Freedom Team Salute commendation, as well as multiple certificates of appreciation from the groups in which he participated.

Runion continued giving back to law enforcement organizations as well. He has made monthly donations to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund for the last 15 years, along with the recent donation to the deputy sheriff's association.

Altrusa hosts author Jane Kirkpatrick

Eastern Oregon author Jane Kirkpatrick will make an appearance in Hermiston as her latest book is released.

Based on true events, "The Memory Weaver" takes a journey into the past, where threads of western landscapes, family and faith weave a tapestry of hope inside every pioneering woman's heart.

The book is based on the life of Eliza Spalding, a strong pioneering woman who, as a child, witnessed the attack on Whitman Mission west of present day Walla Walla, Washington, in November 1847.

The author's presentations have been called "lively, inventive, authentic and wise." Kirkpatrick, who resides in Moro and has penned more than 25 books, finds a way for participants to experience the lessons of her historical characters. Having received several awards



Jane Kirkpatrick

for her historical fiction, Kirkpatrick helps readers find healing and hope through the power of the written and spoken word.

Kirkpatrick will read from "The Memory Weaver" and sign copies during a presentation hosted by Altrusa International of Hermiston. The event is at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 1, at Hermiston Church of the Nazarene, 1520 W. Orchard Extension, Hermiston.

To reserve a copy of the book, call Armchair Books at 541-276-7323. For more about the author, visit www.jkbooks.com.

VETERAN

ANNIVERSARY

Jim and Lola Pettyjohn

The family of Jim and Lola Pettyjohn is inviting family and friends to help celebrate the couple's 65th wedding anniversary. The celebration will be held Sunday, Sept. 6 from 2-4 p.m. at the Family Closet building, 205

Tumbleweed Blvd., Irigton. The couple requests no gifts.

Jim Pettyjohn and Lola McCabe were married in 1950. Longtime Morrow County residents, the Pettyjohns now live in McNary (Umatilla), Ore. Jim

is a retired farmer and truck driver, and Lola is a homemaker.

The couple has four children: Earl Pettyjohn, Anchorage, Alaska; Linda Groce, Boardman; Jerry Pettyjohn, Heppner; and Nancy Lancaster, Oak Harbor, Wash. They also have five grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.



Inland Musicians set rehearsals

The Inland Northwest Musicians are getting set to warm up their voices and instruments.

Rehearsals for the 2015-16 chorale season began Monday at Harris Junior Academy, 3121 S.W. Hailley Ave., Pendleton. The weekly practices lead up to the first set of concerts, which are Oct. 17-18.

The orchestra's weekly rehearsal begin Thursday from 6:30-9:30 p.m., also at the junior academy. Their first concerts are Oct. 10-11.

Try-outs aren't required to participate with the organization's ensembles.

Formed in 1999, Inland Northwest Musicians is committed to providing free live performances throughout rural Eastern Oregon and southeast Washington. The organization's mission is to provide an atmosphere to support musicians in developing their talent.

For those interested in joining the chorale, contact Salli Ketchersid, 541-314-5833 or email ketchersid@eotnet.net; and for the orchestra, contact R. Lee Friese at 541-289-4696 or innw@machmedia.net. The organization's website is www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com.



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THESE TWO HOMES?

HINT: IT HAS TO DO WITH SAVING ENERGY AND MONEY.

Though two homes may look alike, energy-efficiency upgrades can make a big difference in terms of maximizing comfort and reducing energy use and cost.

Energy Trust of Oregon can help you find a trade ally contractor and provide cash incentives that help offset the cost of qualifying energy improvements. With upgrades to your water heater, appliances and lighting, you could save up to 20 percent on your home energy costs while not having to scale back on comfort.

Start getting more from your energy today. Visit www.energytrust.org/homes or call us at 1.866.368.7878.

Serving customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural and Cascade Natural Gas.



THE NATIONAL MODEL TRAIN SHOW
 Portland Expo Center | Aug. 28th-30th
NATIONALTRAINSHOW.ORG

Host an Exchange Student Today!
 (for 3, 5 or 10 months)
Make a lifelong friend from abroad.
 Enrich your family with another culture. Now you can host a high school exchange student (girl or boy) from France, Germany, Scandinavia, Spain, Australia, Japan, Brazil, Italy or other countries. Single parents, as well as couples with or without children, may host. Contact us ASAP for more information or to select your student.

Victoria from Australia, 17 yrs. Enjoys spending time with her family and younger siblings. Victoria plays volleyball and is excited to learn new sports while in America.

Giorgio from Italy, 16 yrs. Loves to play baseball and spend time with his dogs. Giorgio also plays the guitar, and his dream is to join a drama club at his American high school.

Amy at 1-800-733-2773 (Toll Free)
Bonnie at 541-514-4565
host.asse.com or email info@asse.com

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 Founded in 1976
 ASSE International Student Exchange Program is a Public Benefit, Non-Profit Organization.
 For privacy reasons, photos above are not photos of actual students.