

# Mitchell Sentinel

Fearless, Fair and Free

Mitchell, Wheeler County, Oregon, Wednesday, September 17, 2025, Issue #35

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## Oregon Special Session Tackles ODOT Funding Crisis

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By Dajuana Dodd

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On Friday, August 29, 2025, Governor Tina Kotek convened a special session of the Oregon Legislature to address a significant funding shortfall at the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Without new revenue, ODOT had warned of layoffs and the closure of maintenance facilities across the state (Oregon Apps, OPB, Oregon Cities).

Obituary for  
Donna Mae  
Ferguson Bradley  
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The session began with quorum troubles. The Oregon House requires 40 members present to conduct business, but only four Republicans attended, and two Democrats were absent. This left the chamber unable to proceed. According to OPB and KATU, the delay even prompted a frustrated spectator to toss "foam clown noses" from the gallery. The House quickly approved procedural rules and adjourned until Sunday, August 31.

Fossil Food  
Pantry  
Distribution  
Tuesday,  
September 23rd  
9 am-12 noon  
**SEE OUR BIG  
ANNOUNCEMENT**  
on page 11

Despite the shaky start, the scheduled public hearing proceeded, and lawmakers spent the weekend reviewing the proposals. On Monday, September 1, the House narrowly passed House Bill 3991 by a 36-12 vote, just clearing the supermajority threshold for tax measures. The decisive moment came when Representative Cyrus Javadi (R-Tillamook) broke party ranks to support the plan. As reported by OPB and Oregon Business, his bipartisan vote moved the bill to the Senate.

House Bill 3991 is designed to raise about \$700 million every two years to stabilize the State Highway Fund and maintain Oregon's roads and bridges (OLIS, Oregon Cities). The bill would:

Senior Meal  
MENU  
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- Add 6 cents per gallon to the state gas tax
- Increase vehicle registration fees by \$42
- Impose new fees on electric and high-efficiency vehicles through a per-mile charge or annual flat fee.
- Require a performance audit of ODOT's spending.

Mitchell BINGO  
Friday,  
September 26th  
@Mitchell  
Community Hall

Supporters say the plan will prevent layoffs, keep highway maintenance stations open, and preserve city and county funding streams (Oregon Cities).

The bill's fate now rests with the Senate, but a final vote has been delayed until Wednesday, September 17. Senator Chris Gorsek (D-Gresham), one of the bill's architects, is recovering from a medical procedure, and every Democratic vote is expected to be critical under the supermajority rule (KATU).

Governor Kotek has asked ODOT to hold off on layoffs until October 15, expressing confidence that the measure will pass once the Senate reconvenes. ■

Sources: Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB); KATU News; Oregon Business; Oregon Cities; KPTV; Oregon Counties Association; Oregon Legislative Information System (OLIS)

# Mitchell Ambulance Chat

September 2025

Hello everyone, and welcome to this month's edition of the chat. I have some very exciting news for you this month that I've been dying to talk about with all of you. We were awarded a one-million-dollar grant in Wheeler County to implement a mobile integrated healthcare system. The grant will provide \$250,000.00 annually for 4 years to Oregon Rural Health and to the Oregon Mobile Integrated Health Care Coalition to develop resources, provide training, and assist Asher Community Health Center and the three EMS agencies in launching a pilot program. The goal in expanding mobile healthcare services is to enhance patient access to care, reduce healthcare costs, and increase the effectiveness of local EMS teams in responding to emergencies through training and equipment upgrades. Community paramedics will perform in-house visits with patients to monitor them and educate them on how to better care for themselves, resulting in a better quality of life for the patients and an overall reduction in emergency transports. This project is just beginning, and I will keep you all updated on the progress we make as we move forward with this program!!

Another exciting event has also happened with the county's EMS operations. A committee was formed to find solutions for the EMS crisis we have in Wheeler County. Most of you know that Fossil has not had an ambulance crew for over a year now. Spray Ambulance has been handling those calls as well as their own calls, and we have also gone to Spray to cover their calls and to Fossil several times. We enlisted the help of a group called Oregon Solutions to summarize the situation and make recommendations for a course of action to take. Oregon Solutions petitioned the Oregon governor for an official designation for our project, and it was approved!! The governor's designation gives our group some much-needed political clout and the recognition we need to secure funding for future projects. I'm very proud to be a member of both of these committees, representing Mitchell Ambulance as we strive to find solutions to the issues we face here. The future is a lot brighter for healthcare and EMS here

in Wheeler County with these projects moving forward. I will keep you all up to date with both of these programs as we move toward implementation and let you know how you can benefit from these programs. Have a safe month, everyone!! ■

*John A. Hayes, EMT - Mitchell Ambulance*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 14, 2025

## WHEELER COUNTY RECEIVES ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO LAUNCH INNOVATIVE RURAL HEALTH PROGRAM

**FOSSIL, OR.** – Wheeler County has received a major investment in rural healthcare. HRSA's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy has awarded the county \$1 million to create the Rural Oregon Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Program Consortium. This is a first-of-its-kind effort to strengthen healthcare access and emergency services in the region.

In January, Representative Gregory Smith (R-Heppner) vocalized his support by stating, "I wholeheartedly support ORH's grant application. I believe their work will significantly improve patient care, enhance the financial and operational sustainability of healthcare providers and EMS agencies, and lead to better health outcomes for rural Oregonians."

The four-year grant will provide \$250,000 annually to Oregon Rural Health and the Oregon Mobile Integrated Health Care Coalition to develop resources, provide training, and assist Asher Community Health Center and Wheeler County's three volunteer EMS agencies in launching a pilot program.

By expanding mobile healthcare services, this initiative will enhance patient access to care, reduce healthcare costs in rural communities, and increase the effectiveness of local EMS teams in responding to emergencies.

This funding is a significant step forward for rural healthcare in Oregon. It ensures our communities have the resources and support they need to thrive.

Smith is the Republican budget leader who represents the entirety of Morrow, Gilliam, Sherman, and Wheeler counties, as well as portions of Clackamas, Jefferson, Marion, Wasco, and Umatilla Counties. ###

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Representative Greg Smith  
(541)993-5236  
rep.gregsmith@oregonlegislature.gov

**3rd ANNUAL  
 CHILI  
 COOK-OFF  
 FUNDRAISER**

*Who will be the next Grand Champion?*  
**HALLOWEEN NEIGHBORHOOD NIGHT  
 FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2025**

**Little Pine Lodge**

**100 East Main Street  
 MITCHELL, OREGON**

**FREE to Enter! Win Amazing Prizes!**

**GRAND CHAMPION (1ST PLACE), 2ND PLACE, and 3RD PLACE**

**PRE-REGISTRATION is REQUIRED on or before  
 THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30TH -**

**Chili Rules:** Any Meat OK, CHILI with Beans OK, at least one red or green chile pepper,  
 Chili must be labeled with the name of YOUR Chili, level of heat (mild, medium, hot), and  
 which Chile Pepper (red or green) **CHILI MUST BE BROUGHT IN A CROCK POT, HEATED  
 AND READY TO SERVE AT 5:45 PM ON THE DAY OF THE CONTEST**

**CHILI COOK-OFF BEGINS AT 6:00 PM - WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT 7:30 PM**

To enter, stop by the Little Pine Lodge or **CALL (541)462-3532**  
 or email [DajuanaDodd@gmail.com](mailto:DajuanaDodd@gmail.com) (Registration on day of contest is NOT permitted)

## The Shepherds Are Pissed

People of Eastern Oregon don't ask much from Salem; it seems that anything gained from Salem is more of a curse than a reward. State legislature passes laws and regulations for Western Oregon and enforces them in Eastern, where they have big effect and little bearing. There should be no wonder why Eastern Oregonians look to Idaho when they are abandoned by their own state!

ODOT is now abandoning 12 highway maintenance stations due to lack of funding, and 7 of them are in Eastern Oregon. ODOT is also cutting staff, with 483 pink slips being handed out. In the small rural areas in E.O., ODOT is one of the leading employers.

Through my many years, I have seen the gas tax raised for road maintenance, but most of the money stays at the top and never reaches the potholes. Once ODOT got the tax and all they hired were engineers, which would have worked had they budgeted for shovels for each of them!

ODOT has funding for special projects like renewing Main Street in chosen cities. I am asking if these funds can be used to plow the roads to get there?

U.S. Hwy 26 from Prairie City to Prineville is a medical corridor, on to Bend, where folks obtain and receive their treatments, and I remind you, their ailments have a timeline. Fossil and Condon have the same stand on route to The Dalles. Air ambulance is also muted when the roads are at their worst!

The curse of the Oregon Legislature has taken away the logging industry with the help of the environmental group. The politicians are now working on the ranching and farming industry. They tell you that you can count on the tourist industry, but that doesn't work if they take away the road to get there.

Hwy 26 remains open when 84 and 20 are closed due to ice, snow, and wind, with ghost crews on. It seems likely that traffic east and westbound will be terminated.

We are not surprised anymore by what comes out of Salem. If it is stupid and makes no sense, it will show up!

This latest ploy by ODOT is an extorted effort to get more money from the legislature. It seems the most severe cuts will be in Eastern Oregon, smaller voter blocks to protect the politicians. Years ago, a Western Oregon politician, Clay Meyers, was heard to say about Eastern Oregon voters, "The sheep are on the west side. But the shepherds are on the east side!" ■

Dan Cannon  
07/21/25

P.S. Tell the legislators in Salem, "The shepherds are pissed!" We extend an invitation to come see us in January.

The Honorable Gregory Smith  
Oregon House of Representatives  
District 57

### REPRESENTATIVE SMITH STATEMENT ON SPECIAL SESSION

SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

**SALEM, OR.** – Representative Gregory Smith issued the following statement concerning the passage of [HB 3991 A](#), legislation estimated to impose a \$5.8 billion burden on taxpayers and opposed by 94% of Oregonians who submitted public testimony.

"Oregon House Republican Leader Christine Drahan and I stand in strong opposition to the excessive tax increases passed today. They were not needed. Oregonians should be able to rely on regular road maintenance and preservation without unwarranted hits to their finances", stated **Representative Smith (R-Heppner)**.

"Representative Smith was with me side-by-side through the entire special session. His willingness to take a step back while regularly offering wisdom from his years of experience makes him an invaluable partner in our work to defend the pocketbooks of families across our state against higher costs", said **House Republican Leader Drahan (R-Canby)**.

Leader Drahan continued, "This fight isn't over, and I am grateful to know he will continue to be there, consistently working together to stand up for Eastern Oregon's values."

Representative Gregory Smith is the Republican budget leader who represents the entirety of Morrow, Gilliam, Sherman, and Wheeler counties, as well as portions of Clackamas, Jefferson, Marion, and Umatilla and Wasco counties. #####

#### CONTACT INFORMATION:

Representative Gregory Smith  
(541) 993-5236  
rep.gregsmith@oregonlegislature.gov

## Oregon Democrat who bucked her party on transportation vote won't seek reelection

By Lauren Dake (OPB) Sept. 9, 2025 5:36 p.m.

Hartman was the sole Democrat who voted against the governor's transportation package.

Oregon state Rep. Annessa Hartman, who said voting against her party's massive transportation hike was the "most intimidating" vote she's ever taken, will not seek reelection next year.

Hartman was never convinced. "There is missing money the Oregon Department of Transportation can't account for," she told OPB. "How can I go back to my district and say they have money they can't account for and we need to raise your cost of living?"

(See complete article at [OPB.org](#))

# Nation in Shock: Charlie Kirk Assassinated in Utah

By Dajuana Dodd

The nation is reeling after the shocking assassination of Charlie Kirk, co-founder of Turning Point USA and a prominent advocate for open debate on college campuses and beyond.



Stock Photo

Kirk, 31, was shot and killed on Wednesday, September 10th, while speaking at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. Police confirmed that a sniper fired from a rooftop near the venue, striking Kirk in the neck. Despite the efforts of first responders, he was pronounced dead shortly afterward. A bolt-action rifle was recovered near the scene, but at this time, the suspect remains at large.

Charlie Kirk founded Turning Point USA in 2012, when he was just 18 years old. Over the next decade, he built the group into one of the most influential youth conservative organizations in the country, with chapters on college campuses across the nation. His radio show, books, and frequent speaking tours made him a well-known figure among younger conservatives.

But Kirk's activism was inseparable from his Christian faith. A devout believer, he often spoke openly about the role of faith in shaping his worldview. He saw Christianity as central not only to his personal life but also to America's cultural foundation. In his speeches and writings, Kirk frequently emphasized the need for moral courage rooted in biblical principles, urging young people to put faith into action.

Supporters praised his ability to energize young people, sparking conversations about free enterprise, limited government, and constitutional rights — all within the broader context of faith and family values. Admirers often described him as tireless, fearless, and unflinching in his

belief that both ideas and faith should be defended boldly and debated openly.

Utah Governor Spencer Cox condemned the killing, calling it a “political assassination,” and leaders from across the political spectrum expressed grief and outrage. Former President Donald Trump described Kirk as a “fearless champion of free speech” and announced on September 11th that he would be awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously. For more than a decade, Kirk's work through Turning Point USA helped shape conservative activism among young people. Admirers recall his relentless energy, his belief in vigorous and open debate, and his ability to connect with audiences across the country.

The shocking attack underscores rising concerns about political violence in America. As the investigation continues, many are left asking how a voice so prominent and so young could be silenced in such a terrible way. ■

Sources: Associated Press (Sept. 10, 2025); Reuters (Sept. 10–11, 2025); The Guardian (Sept. 10, 2025); The Washington Post (Sept. 10–11, 2025).



Turning Point USA guides citizens through the development of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation, so they can meaningfully engage in their communities to restore traditional American values like patriotism, respect for life, liberty, family, and fiscal responsibility.

Since its founding, Turning Point USA has embarked on a mission to build the most organized, active, and powerful conservative grassroots activist network on high school and college campuses across the country. With a presence on over 3,500 campuses, Turning Point USA is the largest and fastest-growing youth organization in America.

Turning Point USA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 2012 by Charlie Kirk. The organization's mission is to identify, educate, train, and organize students to promote the principles of fiscal responsibility, free markets, and limited government.

Learn more at [TPUSA.com](https://www.tpusa.com)

# Crossword no.35

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**ACROSS**

- 1. Gather
- 6. Appended
- 11. Petrol
- 14. A British peer of the lowest rank
- 15. A breed of Welsh dog
- 16. A score in baseball
- 17. A group of many islands
- 19. Genus of macaws
- 20. Dirty
- 21. A durable aromatic wood
- 23. A place of worship
- 27. Sell again
- 28. Despair
- 32. State indirectly
- 33. Without company
- 34. Animal doctor
- 37. Tidy
- 38. Protector
- 39. Plunge
- 40. American Sign Language
- 41. Magical spirit
- 42. Naked people
- 43. An intricate trap
- 45. A moon of Mars
- 48. Raised printing
- 49. Young sheep
- 50. American aloe
- 53. A king of Judah
- 54. Tvs
- 60. Utmost degree

- 61. Pertaining to modern day Persia
- 62. Permeate
- 63. Earl Grey or orange pekoe, for example
- 64. Felt concern
- 65. Backbone

**DOWN**

- 1. Fabric made of camel hair
- 2. Spoil
- 3. Circle fragment
- 4. Fifth note in a musical scale
- 5. Sneeringly
- 6. Cards with just one symbol
- 7. A stupid person
- 8. A low heavy horsecart
- 9. Comes from a chicken
- 10. Bishopric
- 11. School year
- 12. Pertaining to hearing
- 13. Growl
- 18. Cry weakly
- 22. S
- 23. Most populous country
- 24. Houses
- 25. Anagram of "Papal"
- 26. Hide
- 27. Tear
- 29. Finnish steam bath
- 30. Killed
- 31. Anagram of "Goner"
- 34. The visible part of television
- 35. Levels or smooths
- 36. Examinations
- 38. Obtains
- 39. Lacking intellectual acuity
- 41. Possessing esoteric spiritual knowledge
- 42. Goddess of retribution

- (Greek mythology)
- 43. Wane
- 44. The Israelite tribe of priests
- 45. Set seedlings into the ground
- 46. Hurry
- 47. City in Nebraska
- 50. Wing-shaped
- 51. Part of a chromosome
- 52. Keen or zealous
- 55. Historical period
- 56. Elf
- 57. Japanese sash
- 58. Religious "sister"
- 59. Perceive visually

The Crossword Puzzle Solution can be found on page 11

## Chazlyn Shines in Missoula!

By Janell Francisco and Amy York

Mitchell High School junior Chazlyn Hale stepped into the spotlight this summer, representing her school and community on a bigger stage. She was selected to attend Missoula Children's Theatre's Performing Arts Camp (PAC). This program brings together talented young performers from across the world to learn, create, and shine.

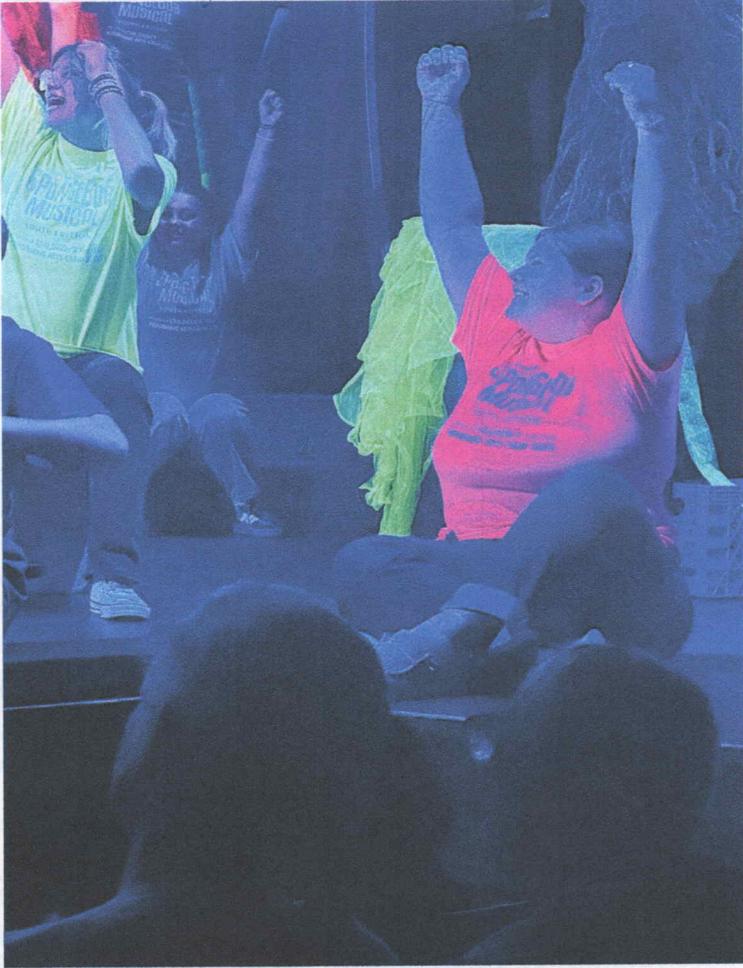


Photo submitted by Janell Francisco

During camp, Chazlyn spent a lot of time rehearsing, but also participated in workshops on vocal and acting. Additionally, she made a lot of new friends and stayed in cabins at Flathead Lake. Out of 97 total participants, Chazlyn was one of only five from Oregon. This year's production was *SpongeBob: The Musical*. After almost two weeks, the program culminated in three live performances. On Friday, August 8th, Mr. and Mrs. Francisco enjoyed the show, and for the final performance, her mom, dad, and grandma made the trip to cheer her on. Chazlyn was part of the ensemble.

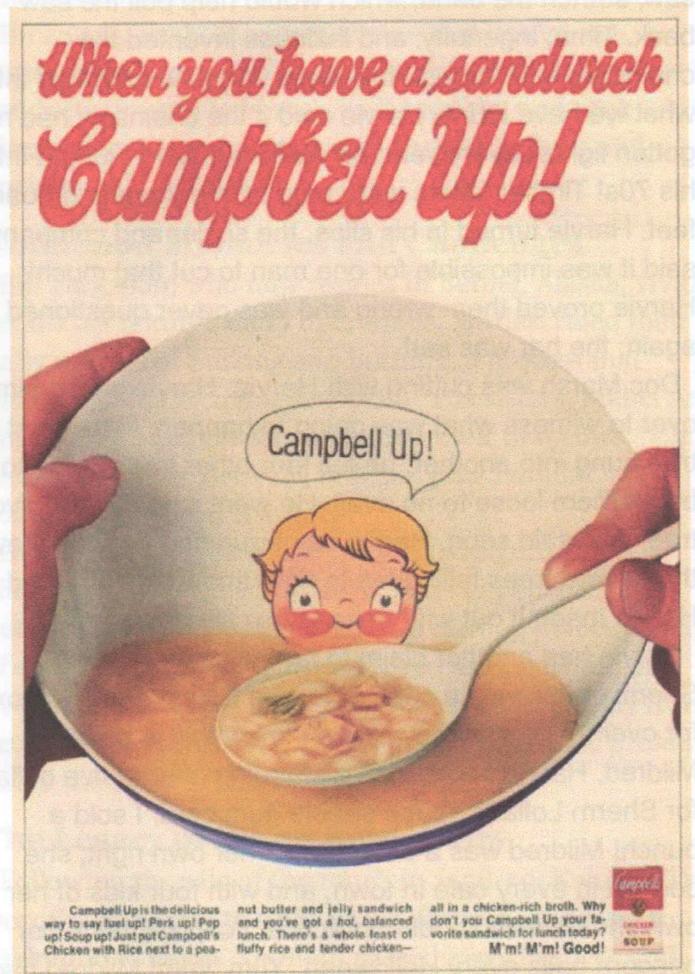
"It was a lot of fun seeing Chazlyn shine and pursue

her passion. I'm always so amazed at what they can put together in such a short amount of time. She is talented," said Mrs. Francisco. "I also thought it was great to see Chazlyn perform. I had a great time and laughed a lot," added Mr. Francisco.

"It is always a joy to watch Chazlyn perform. Even though she did not have a starring role this year, she still made a presence on the stage several times she was right up front. I might be a little biased, but I thought she did amazing, and the entire show was a lot of fun to watch," said her mom, Amy York

The Missoula Children's Theatre is a traveling theatre company that brings professional actor-directors to communities around the world to audition, cast, rehearse, and perform a full show in just one week during the school year. Mitchell School has partnered with MCT for over a decade. Save the date, this year's production will be *Hercules* on Friday, March 6th, 2026.

We are incredibly proud of Chazlyn!! A special thank you to the Mitchell Booster Club, whose generous support helped make this opportunity possible. ■



Vintage Ad 1969

## Unforgettable Folks: The Legends Next Door

In this series, I've introduced you to several interesting folks I've been fortunate enough to know. These individuals, full of wisdom and personality, left an impression on me that hasn't faded with time. They weren't scholars in the traditional sense, but their intelligence was undeniable, shaped by experience, resilience, and an innate understanding of people and the world around them. This story is about Harvie. It will conclude the Unforgettable Folks series for now.

### HARVIE

Harvie Lollar stood 6'4" in his youth and was a huge man with massive hands and muscles to match. He hailed from Arkansas, where he worked in the timber industry. He was probably the closest man to the legend of Paul Bunyan that ever been. When he arrived in Oregon, he partnered with a "rubber man," a large rubber band placed on one end of a crosscut saw stretched to a peg driven into the ground. The operator would pull the saw, stretch the band, which would help pull the saw back. Time, ingenuity, and laziness invented the chainsaw, and through the years, the saw morphed into what we have today. Harvie said if the chainsaw had not gotten lighter every year, he could not have worked into his 70s! Timber fallers were paid by the thousand board feet. Harvie turned in his slips, the scaler and company said it was impossible for one man to cut that much! Harvie proved them wrong and was never questioned again; the bar was set!

Doc Marsh was cutting with Harvie. Harvie called him over to witness what was going to happen. Harvie got a tree hung into another; he fell four other trees trying to break them loose to no avail. He went in to cut the pivot tree. Doc said soon, Harvie came running packing, saw there were trees falling left to right and to and fro, and Harvie made it out with trees falling all around him.

Harvie had another claim to fame; his first cousin, Sherm Lollar, was a catcher for the Chicago White Sox for over 15 years. The reason I know this is because Mildred, Harvie's wife, had a standing offer of five dollars for Sherm Lollar's Topps bubble gum card. I sold a bunch! Mildred was a character in her own right; she cooked in every café in town, and with four kids of her own she received a lot of practice. I can still taste her popcorn balls every Halloween. Yum, yum! Mildred had a Volks Beetle, Brown as I recall, she loved to drive it, and

sometimes she might make up to 3 trips to and from Prineville. I don't know for sure if she knew Paul, her son, was sneaking the Beetle out some nights, we would load in it and run the roads and skid trails on the Cole Ranch. I myself can testify it was one tough little car!

Paul was nicknamed "Nooner," that was until he found out why. That was a term meaning he was conceived during lunch break. Paul was tough enough that once he found out, nobody called him that again! He was a good athlete, but being the youngest only son with three older sisters, he was really spoiled. Betty, Bertha, and Beverly did a good job on him.

Harvie delighted in telling the story of what he did before timber falling. He would say with a straight face, he "poled hogs". "Back in Arkansas, there was lots of acorn bushes and trees, and late fall, there was acorns atop of all of them. You use a long pole inserted up a hog's rear end. Then you lift the hog up on the pole so they could reach the acorns." You may not be any smarter, but you know what poling hogs is! Folks that heard the story would goad Harvie to tell the story to strangers, just to see the results!

Harvie was in his 70s when he went to work for Tom Silvey Logging. Tom was famous for yelling at his crew. He tried his yelling out on Harvie early one morning, Harvie packed up his gear and started walking down the road since he rode to work with Tom. Tom caught up to Harvie, said he was sorry, and Harvie said, "That's the first thing you got right today - you are a sorry SOB". He would not let Tom haul him home; he hitched a ride on a log truck. It was time to retire. Harvie's hands were wore out, one shoulder was 4 inches lower from a widow maker bouncing off of it, eyes were bad, couldn't hear anything other than Tom's cussing at him. He hung it up, moved to Prineville, got a DUI from too much Black Velvet whiskey but he learned from that and never drank again. Harvie (Hog Jaw) Lollar was a true Paul Bunyan, not a legend!

P.S. I kind of lost track of all the Lollar's for a time. I was helping with a funeral at Prineville several years back, close to the grave site I looked down at the headstones and lo and behold, there was Harvie, Mildred, Betty, Bertha, Beverly, and Paul. Amen!

Dan Cannon  
8/25/25

## DONNA MAE FERGUSON BRADLEY OBITUARY



Donna Bradley passed away on July 21, 2025, at the age of 86, surrounded by her family. She was born on Sept. 4, 1938, in Park Rapids, Minnesota, to Kenneth and Dorothea Ferguson.

She grew up on a farm in the Mitchell, Oregon, area, eventually graduating from Eastern Oregon College as a licensed practical nurse (LPN). Later in life, she went back to Chemeketa College and degrees as a registered nurse (RN). She was well known for her many years of nursing service at Mid-Columbia Medical Center.

Her passion after retiring were her flowers, playing cards and family. She is survived by her husband of 51 years George; three sons, Calvin Keys, Kenneth Keys, and Kevin Keys; three stepsons, Micheal Bradley, Steven Bradley, and Phillip Bradley; sisters Mabel Brookshire and Anna Hawkins; brother Billy Ferguson; 11 grandchildren and multiple great-grandchildren; and nephews and nieces. She is preceded in death by her parents, a son, Keith Keys, and a stepdaughter, Pam LaVelle. ■

### The Legacy of Ferguson's White Butte Dairy: A Family Enterprise in Rural Oregon

In the rugged, pastoral landscape of Wheeler County, Oregon, nestled on the "old" Gable Creek Road between Mud Creek and Gable Creek, stood Ferguson's White Butte Dairy. Though its operation spanned only a handful of years in the early 1950s, the dairy remains a vivid chapter in the lives of the Ferguson family and the broader Mitchell community. Its story reflects the industrious spirit of a family dedicated to hard work and community service.

### The Fergusons: A Family Rooted in Perseverance

Kenneth Lorain Ferguson, born on August 17, 1907, in Kandiyohi, Minnesota, was the son of Arthur John Ferguson and Mabel Marilda Swensen. His wife, Dorothy Kathryn Colgrove, born in 1915 in Dickinson, Dakota Territory, shared Kenneth's resilient character. The couple married on June 5, 1936, and had four children:

Mabel Ann, Donna Mae, William Arthur, and Anna Marie. Each member of the family contributed to the success of their dairy enterprise.

Kenneth and Dorothy settled in Mitchell, Wheeler County, Oregon, by 1950, where they established the White Butte Dairy Ranch. The ranch began operation around 1952 and continued until approximately 1955 or 1956. The family's commitment to the dairy business reflected their desire to provide high-quality dairy products to their community while instilling a strong work ethic in their children.

### The Operations of White Butte Dairy

The White Butte Dairy maintained a herd of 30-35 dairy cattle, comprising breeds such as Brown Swiss, Guernsey, and Jersey. Each day began and ended with the labor-intensive process of milking by hand, a task shared by Kenneth, Dorothy, and their young son, Bill. The milk was processed at the pump house and bottled in glass quart bottles. On average, the Fergusons produced 150-200 bottles daily, along with cream processed through a separator.

The milk and cream served as vital staples for the Mitchell community and the logging sawmills—Hudspeth Mill and Spoons Mill among them—that dotted the surrounding area. The Fergusons delivered their products directly to homes, mill housing, and cook shacks, fostering close ties with their neighbors and customers.

### Childhood Memories and Challenges

Bill Ferguson, who now resides in Bethel, Alaska, vividly recalls his family's dairy operations. He described their daily routine of milking and bottling, a process that instilled both discipline and pride. His sisters, Mabel Ann and Donna Mae, fondly remember their first cows, "Chip" and "Daisy," respectively, reflecting the familial connection to their livestock.

Despite its successes, the dairy faced significant challenges. The transition from glass to paper milk bottles in the mid-1950s marked a turning point. The cost of switching to paper bottles proved too costly for the Fergusons, and consumer preferences shifted away from reusable glass bottles. Ultimately, this economic pressure led to the dairy's closure around 1955.

### The Legacy of White Butte Dairy

Following the sale of the ranch in 1958-59, Kenneth and Dorothy relocated to Gold Beach, Oregon, and later to Redmond, Oregon. Kenneth passed away in 1970, and Dorothy in 2003, but their legacy endures through their

(cont'd on page 10)

## Echoes of the Oregon Trail

July 25, 2025, I stood on Flagstaff Hill outside of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Baker City. 175 years ago, a pioneer most likely stood here gazing out at the expanse of Baker Valley. He did not see and could not fathom what I saw on this day, crops planted in early spring are now reaching fruition and the just rewards. I see: Wheat, Rye, Oats, Corn, Alfalfa, Meadow Grass, all rewards of the plentiful water of the Powder River.

What the pioneer saw that day was 800 miles of hardships, more death of the damned Oregon Trail. He had already given most of everything he had started from Missouri with; some gave all, whole families were decimated by death and destruction. He didn't see the beauty of the valley or the opportunity that I saw. His thoughts were getting to Oregon City before winter, their clothes were in tatters, food was almost gone, mules, horses, and oxen worn out. It was hard to be optimistic as he surmised more death and dastardly deeds lay ahead; he had no time to admire the beauty, he only saw the harshness.

This pioneer was aged and hardened way beyond his years; blame placed directly on the Oregon Trail. This hell trail once held the great promise of a new awakening, a new start for folks already beaten down by war, carpetbaggers, and just bad luck. Every soul that traveled that trail sacrificed something; some gave all as the trail took her promise away.

The pioneer knew with every challenge conquered brought a new one ahead. He was concentrating on getting his wagon down Ladd Canyon, and he would not have time to see the beauty of the Grand Ronde Valley. When and if he made the valley, he knew it was a hard pull up to another mountain pass on to Emigrant Springs, then down the Umatilla River to the Columbia River.

Some of these same pioneers would be revisiting this land a few years later. They would not be coming for the agriculture, they were coming for what lurked in the mountains and the streams that flowed from those mountains. Most of those same folks didn't have any better luck with the gold as they did with the trail. This country would have been settled a lot later if not for the shiny metal that crazied them. The gold finally played out, and some of these miners morphed back to uncrazed farmers, then settled in the beautiful valleys. ■

Dan Cannon  
8/1/25

Ferguson's White Butte Dairy - (cont'd from page 9)

Dorothy in 2003, but their legacy endures through their children and the memories of their dairy enterprise.

Today, Mabel Ann resides in Union, Oregon; Donna Mae in The Dalles, Oregon; Bill in Bethel, Alaska; and Anna Marie in Prineville, Oregon. Each carries the lessons and values imparted during their years at White Butte Dairy.

## Reflections on a Bygone Era

White Butte Dairy symbolizes a time when family-run farms and dairies were the backbone of rural communities. The Fergusons' commitment to their craft and their neighbors exemplifies the spirit of small-town America in the mid-20th century. Their story, as recounted by Bill and preserved through family memories, offers a poignant glimpse into a world where milk delivery was a personal endeavor and community connections were paramount. ■



**MITCHELL BAPTIST CHURCH**

**209 SE High St. Mitchell, OR 97750**  
**(541) 462-3914**

**Services at 10:00 & 11:00 am Sundays**  
**- Fellowship dinner following**  
**Men's Breakfast and Bible Study is 6.00 am on Thursdays**

**Serving Mitchell with Bible truths for those who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to accept.**

**Listen for the BELL**

Community Advertisement

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Community Announcements

#### Fossil Food Pantry Distribution

Tuesday, September 23rd, 9 am - 12 noon

We served 70 families last month!  
We received \$6,000.00 Grant for the food pantry to provide additional food in the coming months. This means Thanksgiving & Christmas Dinners will be provided for everyone this year!

If anyone needs food,  
please call or text Dawn Garcia (310)486-2397

**Senior Meal in Mitchell**, LAST FRIDAY of each month @ Noon @ Mitchell Community Hall  
108 Nelson Avenue, Mitchell, Oregon

See the Menu on page 12

60 and over - \$5.00 59 and under -\$6.00  
ALL are invited! Please join us!

**Mitchell City Council** - Meets every third Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. at the Community Hall.  
The Public is encouraged to attend!

**Mitchell BINGO** - Friday, September 26th  
6 pm @ Mitchell Community Hall, 108 Nelson Ave.  
- always the Last Friday of the Month -

**Place your community announcement here - for FREE!**

Thank You for Your Support!

The Mitchell Sentinel is a not-for-profit publication, and your donations are greatly appreciated. Checks can be made payable to Mitchell Sentinel. Mail to: Mitchell Sentinel, PO Box 312, Mitchell, OR 97750

The Mitchell Sentinel is published on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. For more information, please contact: Dajuana Dodd, Editor & Publisher  
(541) 462-3532 or (541) 788-7042

[news@mitchellsentinel.com](mailto:news@mitchellsentinel.com)

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Call Dajuana at (541)462-3532 or text AD to Dajuana at (541)788-7042 or Mail AD to: Mitchell Sentinel, PO BOX 312, Mitchell, OR 97750

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

### FOR SALE:

**Wine Rack**  
With 3 shelves - one solid - 9 slots for wine  
\$60.00  
28" wide x 66" tall  
Come see at Judy's Place  
Call (541)-462-3000

### FOR SALE:

**Oak Table with 2 large leaves and 6 chairs.**  
Seats 10-12 easily. Paid \$1,200 brand new, only asking \$500.  
Contact Betty Melvin @ (541)475-7586 or Judy Boehlke @ (541)462-3000



### FOR SALE:

**2013 Polaris Sportsman 400 ATV.** 68 hours, winch, 4WD, ranch use, new battery. \$3,500.00  
Call Doug or Robin Lynn Anderson at (541)462-3164

## REAL ESTATE - MITCHELL, OR

**PROPERTY FOR SALE:** 126 Nelson Ave, Mitchell, OR - 2 beds, 1 bath, 714 sqft, charming front porch  
4,791.6 Sq Ft Lot



**\$105,000**

Listed by: Crook County Properties LLC (541)447-3020

## Solution

A	M	A	S	S		A	D	D	E	D		G	A	S		
B	A	R	O	N		C	O	R	G	I		R	U	N		
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 Details on page 3



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**MITCHELL**  
**SENIOR MEAL**

held at the Mitchell Community Hall  
 on Nelson Avenue

THE LAST FRIDAY  
 OF EVERY MONTH



60 and over: **\$5.00**  
 59 and under: **\$6.00**

**Dinner Bell**  
**rings at Noon**



**PLEASE JOIN US**

**Menu for**  
**Friday,**  
**September**  
**26th**

Mac and cheese with  
 roast beef, coleslaw,  
 fruit, and dessert

**HOUSEKEEPER**  
**NEEDED**

**PAINTED HILLS**  
**VACATION**



**COTTAGES & RETREAT**

For more information,  
 contact Barbara Jacobi

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Model T1822 - 17" screen - woodgrain finish  
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Model T2222 - 21" screen - woodgrain finish  
 21" models start at \$199.95

Model T2237 - 21" screen - oak, legs included  
 21" woodgrain models start at \$269.95