

Mitchell Sentinel

Fearless, Fair and Free

Mitchell, Wheeler County, Oregon, Wednesday, December 17, 2025, Issue #38

Mitchell Shines Bright at Annual Christmas Tree Lighting & Fire Department Fundraiser

By Dajuana Dodd

December 5, 2025 – Mitchell, Oregon

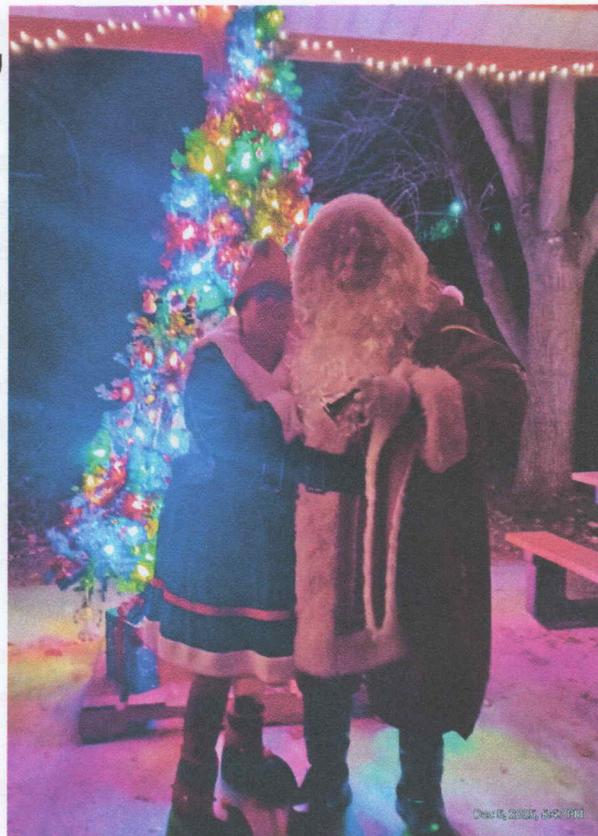
Mitchell's holiday spirit was on full display Friday evening as more than 65 residents and visitors gathered to celebrate the annual Christmas Tree Lighting in the City Park. The night was filled with small-town magic, lively tradition, and community fellowship—things Mitchell does best.

The festivities kicked off on Main Street around 4:30 p.m. with the ever-popular **Sleigh Races**, where participants proudly showcased their homemade sleds in a gravity-powered dash of creativity and excitement. The cheers and laughter set the tone for a joyful night ahead.

As dusk settled, the crowd made its way to the city park for the much-anticipated **Tree Lighting Ceremony**. This year's event included a spectacular surprise: **Santa Claus himself arrived in style!** The Mitchell Volunteer Fire Department delivered Santa and his helper, **Mrs. Elfie**, aboard the fire truck—lights flashing and sirens echoing through town. Children ran to greet them as Santa and Elfie stepped down from the truck and made their way to the gazebo, where they served hot chocolate, handed out candy, and listened to Christmas wishes from eager young visitors.

Adding to the evening's charm, students from **Mitchell School** and **Wheeler County Community School** treated attendees to a wonderful musical performance, singing Christmas carols that warmed the chilly December air. Families gathered around the beautifully lit town Christmas tree, soaking in the glow of colorful lights and the spirit of togetherness.

When the Tree Lighting concluded, the celebration continued at the **Mitchell Community Hall**, where the Mitchell Volunteer Fire Department hosted its first annual **Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser**. The hall was packed wall-to-wall with neighbors sharing stories, laughing, and enjoying a delicious meal of spaghetti, salad, and breadsticks. DJ-spun classic Christmas music echoed through the room—though those working in the kitchen might have missed a song or two!



Santa Claus and Mrs. Elfie

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Crossword Puzzle page 9

Senior Meal MENU page 12

Fossil Food Pantry Distribution FRIDAY,

December 19th, 9 am - 12 noon
We served 103 families last month!

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

Mitchell BINGO Update: NO Bingo in December!

(cont'd on page 4)

Mitchell Ambulance Chat

December 2025

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of the Mitchell ambulance chat. My goal in writing these articles has been to familiarize you with the ambulance operations and give you tips on how to help us should you need us. I also want to keep you informed about EMS operations throughout Wheeler County and what the future holds for us here.

I was invited to sit on a committee representing Mitchell ambulance to find solutions to the EMS crisis we face in our county. We have identified many obstacles and are proposing solutions. The main problem we've identified is the lack of volunteers to be trained as EMT's especially younger people with jobs and families. A big reason for the lack of volunteers is the time spent in school and away from their jobs without compensation. Spray ambulance and Fossil ambulance have started a stipend system to pay EMTs and drivers on a per-call basis, and the results speak for themselves. Spray has signed up 3 new EMT students since starting the stipend system, and Fossil just started their stipends. The 3 ambulance services in the county are in desperate need of EMT's and the financial compensation should help mitigate this issue.

The future of emergency medical services in Wheeler County is in dire shape!! The ambulance services have always been run by dedicated volunteers, and the pool of people to volunteer has shrunk considerably. The stipend system is a great way to encourage participation, especially with the younger population, and is a great incentive to get involved!!

The ambulance services in Wheeler County have all been independent agencies struggling to survive. The best option for all of us is to be run by a central control and command, which would most likely be the NEWCHD (North East Wheeler County Health District). Combining the services this way affords us all better care and gives us

the clout needed to obtain funding. We must join the NEWCHD in South County if we want EMS to continue. There's no doubt that if we don't do this, the ambulance will eventually fold due to funding issues and a lack of volunteers to run it. I know all of you have had this service for years and not paid for it, but those days are coming to an inevitable end. The future of emergency medical services depends on your support, so please support these initiatives and encourage others as well. We are always there when you need us. Now we ask that you be there for us!! ■

John A. Hayes, EMT - Mitchell Ambulance



Vintage AD

Establish Care With Us!



Desert Peaks

HEALTH CARE

Offering choices in healthcare to Wheeler County

Opening October 15, 2025

Dr. Killingbeck offers 15 years of experience in Internal Medicine adult primary care.

Established patients receive the following benefits:

- Preventive care
- Chronic disease management
- Urgent care appointments
- Coordination of physical and behavioral care
- Customization of care to individual needs

**415 First Street
Fossil, OR 97830**

Call now for an appointment

(541) 548-4088

Call 911 in case of medical emergency

Community Advertisement

Mitchell Shines Bright at Annual Christmas Tree Lighting & Fire Department Fundraiser

(cont'd from page 1)

Children were treated to fun door prizes, and the Fire Department set out two boots for donations. Thanks to the generosity of the community, just over **\$600** was raised. Most importantly, the fundraiser ensured that **local children received Christmas presents fairly and joyfully**, continuing a cherished town tradition of giving.

The evening was everything a small-town Christmas celebration should be—festive, welcoming, and filled with the spirit of neighbors coming together. As residents said their goodbyes and headed home, one sentiment was shared again and again:

Mitchell can't wait for next year.



Mitchell Christmas Tree Lighting - Friday, December 5, 2025

Big Sale
at Judy's Place!

Christmas Ornaments Galore!

New shipment of *Beautiful* Christmas Ornaments
& Decorations has just arrived!

Hurry on down to Judy's Place *before* they are gone!

Main Street 🎄 Mitchell, Oregon

Community Advertisement

Mitchell Whiskey

Prohibition, a law to make alcohol illegal in manufacture and sales. This law did nothing but turn a bunch of drunks into outlaws, which most were already there. A drunkard politician's wife put the pressure on to help with her problem. The mafia crowd seized upon the opportunity to improve their financial flow. Booze flowed out, and the cash flowed in. The depression happened about the same time, it was hard to get more depressed without the booze.

The Mitchell area didn't see Prohibition as an unsolvable problem; most of the settlers were from Kentucky and Tennessee, and craftsmen in that field. Corn, wheat, barley, and rye could be raised here. Good pure water was abundant also, but sugar had to be purchased. The sugar buy could be monitored by the revenueurs so caution was used in that area.

Mitchell whiskey became infamous; any time an event might sour, it was always blamed on that Mitchell whiskey. A Christmas party at Richmond left a toppled tree, broken presents, broken window, which was all blamed on that Mitchell whiskey. The Helms family installed labels on their bottles that read "Guaranteed Seven Fights Per Bottle"!

My granddad owned the Orifino Saloon along with Bob Misener, so they were forced to make their own. Joe Drew was the CEO of that manufacture group. Some was made on Granddad's ranch on West Branch. Joe disposed of the mash by processing it through hogs, which was the best way to get rid of the evidence.

When politicians figured out how to tax and raise the tax, prohibition was repealed. Whiskey was once again legal, but local moonshiners kept on producing illegal brew anyway. Most of the producers were also their own best customers.

One story I remember: two of these craftsmen were returning from their point of manufacture at the Old Speck place, a real busy day of making and over-tasting their product. The entry road started with a gated bridge over West Branch Creek. As one person got out to open said gate, the driver drove through and waited for the gate man's return, which didn't happen. The driver got out, yelled, and couldn't find the gatekeeper. It was very dark, so the driver

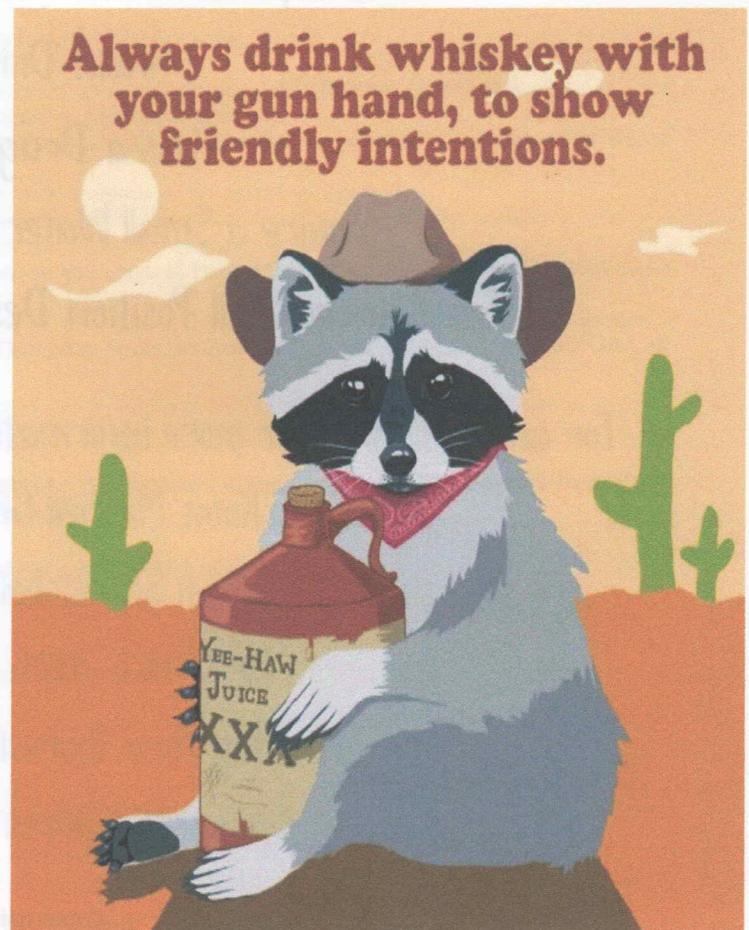
headed for town for a search party. Upon their return, the gatekeeper was found beneath the bridge where he had fallen, unconscious, broken ribs, wet and cold. He was saved by the Mitchell whiskey; he had enough in him to cushion his fall. I had a Kentuckian stop by the store one afternoon and show me a pint of shine. He was quite proud of this batch. He shook the bottle, and bubbles appeared. He said when bubbles the size of a frog's eye appeared, it was prime stuff!

In an old homestead cabin at Waterman Flat, we found a gallon jug of what we presumed to be shine. The smell determined we not drink it, so we used it as a firestarter, but you had to stand back!

Mitchell whiskey is still produced today in a sort of legal way. The Tennessee and Kentucky craftsmen have all passed on, and I am guessing they were all self-embalmed when they left. Mitchell whiskey still shoulders the blame, but folks made whiskey in Fossil and Spray also.

Dan Cannon

10/31/23





The City of Mitchell

is **HIRING!**

Now Hiring for:

WATER SYSTEM OPERATOR

The City of Mitchell is seeking a motivated individual to join our Public Works Department as Watermaster!

Experience preferred, but not required.

Qualifications include, but are not limited to:

- ~ Valid Driver's License
- ~ Pass a Drug Screening Test
- ~ Acquire a Small Water Systems Operator Permit

*See Attached Full Position Description for more information

For an Application, or more information, please contact:

Brianna Koon, Mitchell City Clerk

202 SE High St. Mitchell, OR

(541) 462-3121

Monday thru Thursday

9:00am to 5:00pm



Posted on: 10/15/2025

Community Advertisement



**CITY OF MITCHELL
POSITION DESCRIPTION
WATER SYSTEM OPERATOR**

Department: Public Works
Pay: \$18.00(+) per hour, depending on experience
Hours: 20-30 hours per month
Revised: October 14, 2025

Requirements for Employment:

- Valid Driver's License
- Pass drug screening test
- Acquire and/or maintain a Small Water Systems Operator permit as required by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA)

Responsibilities Include:

- Thorough knowledge of the water system and how it functions.
- Monitor water flow produced (in) and used (out), keeping accurate records for State of Oregon reporting.
- Keep water system in compliance with Oregon State Health Division regulations.
- Monitor chlorine residual content a minimum of four (4) times per week at different locations throughout the system. Provide Chlorine Residual Log to the City Clerk each month.
- Work with testing lab to assure all water testing as required by the OHA is done in a timely manner.
- Manage Water Emergencies as they arise. Understanding that Water Emergencies may arise outside of Work Hours.
- Determine if water restrictions are necessary and work with City Clerk to inform and enforce when necessary.
- Read Water Meters Monthly. Provide completed Meter Reading Sheet to the City Clerk no later than 5:00pm on the 26th day of each month.
- Work with the City Clerk to maintain an accurate System Repair & Maintenance Log.
- Assist water testing lab with composing and distributing a timely Annual Drinking Water Report (Consumer Confidence Report).
- Work with USFS to maintain Special Use Permits for Mitchell Springs.
- Go to Mitchell Springs annually for inspection and maintenance.
- Check and log water inflow and chlorinator bi-weekly at a minimum. Add chlorine as needed.
- Provide oversight into any construction or changes to the water system.
- Maintain open contact with OHA Drinking Water Program Administration and Oregon Association of Water Utilities (OAWU).
- Assist the Head of City Maintenance, cross over to Maintenance to assist as needed.
- Attend City Council meetings each month to receive comments from the Council and the public.
- Present written and/or verbal monthly water system report to the City Council.
- Must be able to maintain a professional demeanor to the General Public through the duration of employment with the City of Mitchell.
- Must be able to comply with, and follow, the City of Mitchell Drug and Alcohol Policy during Work Hours.
- **Work Hours are defined as Monday through Thursday from 9:00am to 5:00pm, including any/all On Call Water Emergency as they may arise.**

Additional Requirements as Needed:

Work with City Maintenance, City Clerk, Fire Department, Contract Labor, or other personnel to assure the following work is completed within required timeframes:

- Water meters, shut-off valves and air release valves are changed as needed.
- Overflow and shut-off valves are exercised and cleaned yearly.
- Fire hydrants are flushed twice a year.
- Reservoirs are cleaned as needed.
- Spring area is kept clean, and fences are maintained.

**Must have daily access to telephone service.
Must have daily access to email.**

Watermaster Job Description

Revised October 14, 2025

 *City of Mitchell Oregon*

Community Advertisement

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 is about Greenie O'Brien -

Ole' Greenie

Greenie O'Brien was Mitchell's top consumer of alcohol beverages, beer being his go-to drink of choice. He liked to start early in the morning and finish late afternoon. That would finish his shift. Greenie had a problem - to appease his early start, he had to get the Pastime Pub to open earlier. He told the barmaid of the pub that she was missing the early morning tourists who wanted to have breakfast. The doors to the pub started opening at 6:00 AM, and needless to say, Greenie was her first customer. A week went by, and the only customer was Greenie. The barmaid was forlornly looking out the window and announced, "Oh, hum, I wonder when they are going to come?!"

My father had a old easy chair out front, and every time he wanted to use it for a break, Greenie was in it. Dad moved the chair out back in the compressor room. He went there to take his break, found Greenie had found the chair and was taking his break!

Greenie always liked to stir a little crap in town just to keep things going. George Schnee hadn't spoken to Dad for a couple of weeks. Dad confronted George, and Schnee replied, "I heard what you said about me." To quote Greenie, Bob Cannon said he could never outstay you because all you lived on was catfish and rabbits! Dad told George that may be true, but he never said it.

Dad had two valve tools by his work station. One came up missing. Dad asked Greenie one morning in transit to his chair if he had seen it. Greenie said he procured it and gave it to Clarence Jones because he didn't have one, and you had two! Greenie liked to share!

Greenie worked in various mills in the area, and when they shut down, he transferred over to ranch work - mainly with the sheep. I am guessing that Greenie moved to Prineville to be with his son and retired. There were more taverns there to choose from. I am betting he found one that opened early! ■

Dan Cannon

10/31/25



We meet on Sundays at 11:00 am

And share lunch directly after the Service

Join us!

Community Advertisement



For the Brightest Christmas Ever!

NEW TO-LAMP PACKAGE. When you and family are there to glow throughout the Christmas, the most beautiful glow you can have. Each package contains 10 Christmas Tree Lamps, new to use in handy 10-lamp packages - assorted colors.

Be sure to get Christmas Tree Lights by
GENERAL ELECTRIC

New C-7's lamps for use in most standard Christmas tree light sockets. No burning in between. Gentle action when you plug in.

C-8 Junior lamps, bright and beautiful for use in some storage and display. Gentle features on each one of general quality.

C-9's multiple lamps for multiple use. These lamps are for many needs in your Christmas. Double color or weather proof.

Vintage AD

Merry Christmas!

Crossword no.38

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14						15					16			
17						18					19			
20						21					22			
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63						64				65				
66						67				68				
69						70				71				

Judy's Place
will be
CLOSED

© PDFcrosswords.com

ACROSS

- 1. Computer company
- 6. Anagram of "Bats"
- 10. Exchange or trade
- 14. Anagram of "Goner"
- 15. Inactive
- 16. Tablet
- 17. A treasure of unknown ownership
- 18. Cat sound
- 19. Upon
- 20. Repeated urgent demanding
- 22. Chilled
- 23. It is (poetic)
- 24. Monarchs
- 26. Glum
- 30. Relaxations
- 32. Exploiter
- 33. Sketched
- 35. Distressed
- 39. Panache
- 41. Utilize
- 42. "Mother _____" fairy tales
- 43. Counterfeit
- 44. In this place
- 46. Ploy
- 47. Not active
- 49. Belonging to the peerage
- 51. A full supply
- 54. Our star
- 55. Avatar of Vishnu
- 56. Disposes

DOWN

- 63. Leave out
- 64. Folktales
- 65. A plant that produces licorice-flavored seeds
- 66. A very small arachnid
- 67. Graven image
- 68. 1000 kilograms
- 69. Backtalk
- 70. A depression caused by an impact
- 71. Go inside

DOWN

- 1. Against
- 2. Pornography (abbrev.)
- 3. Not amateurs
- 4. The Israelite tribe of priests
- 5. Eliminates from the body
- 6. Circumstances of the present age
- 7. City in Yemen
- 8. An alliance of countries
- 9. Stormwater conduits
- 10. Party pooper
- 11. Cringe
- 12. Change
- 13. Trudges
- 21. Equal in score
- 25. Sun god (Sumerian mythology)
- 26. Ruin or bobble
- 27. City in Norway
- 28. The back end
- 29. Brings into being
- 30. Adjust again
- 31. Pitcher
- 34. A river in northwestern Germany
- 36. Psyche or spirit
- 37. Nature of being
- 38. Placed on a tee
- 40. Lease
- 45. Pocketbook
- 48. A fold of skin that protects an eye
- 50. Inborn
- 51. Formal school dances

- 52. Vampire
- 53. Gives forth
- 54. Small cold-water fish
- 57. A deposit of valuable ore
- 58. To press clothes
- 59. Soon (archaic)
- 60. Shade
- 61. Serf
- 62. Fortune teller

The Crossword Puzzle Solution can be found on page 11



The 16-pound Post Maul

Back in the years before farmers and ranchers became spoiled by hydraulics and special tools invented by their likes, they had it hard. One such torture device was the 16-pound maul attached to a 30-inch heavy-duty handle. To make the maul work, it has to be elevated above one's head and then dropped to said post. It helps if one is tall; it increases the torque, and that is what makes the post go down. Soil structure is another factor dictating time involved for the project. Experiences also dictates that each hole will be located over a rock or other hard surface.

The Blann brothers had an experience with a maul and wooden post, as I recall. Dewey, being the maul man and brother Ray the post man, as Dewey dropped the maul, his eyesight being limited, made contact with the post holder's finger - Ray, who had an attention disorder, who now was minus a finger. Where to place the blame, each had his own opinion, and they differed.

Calculating the cost of fencing of then and now, then was much harder but much cheaper due to the inflation of labor, equipment, and materials to make the job easier!

I also heard of another use for a post maul... "He was so cheap and tight you couldn't drive a flax seed in his hind end" with a 16-pound post maul."

Dan Cannon

October 2025

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The City of Mitchell is Hiring! (See page 6)
Water System Operator
 For an application, or more information,
 Contact Brianna Koon, Mitchell City Clerk
 202 SE High Street, Mitchell, Oregon
 (541)462-3121
 Monday - Thursday
 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Fossil Food Pantry Distribution
 FRIDAY, December 19th, 9 am - 12 noon
 We served 103 families last month!
 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
 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 - Bingo is usually held on the last
 Friday of the month - but for December, there will be
 NO BINGO - Bingo will resume in January

Place your community announcement here - for FREE!

Thank You for Your Support!
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 (541) 462-3532 or (541) 788-7042
news@mitchellsentinel.com

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 (541)788-7042 or Mail AD to: Mitchell Sentinel,
 PO BOX 312, Mitchell, OR 97750

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Just Arrived!
 Large Shipment of Beautiful
 Christmas Ornaments and
 Decorations
Judy's Place
 Main Street, Mitchell, OR
 Christmas Galore!
 Awesome Prices!
 (See page 12)

Judy's Place
 will be
CLOSED
JANUARY

REAL ESTATE - MITCHELL, OR

PROPERTY FOR SALE: 33084 Cougar Mountain,
 Mitchell, Oregon **48.64 acres, 1680 sq ft - 3 bed, 2**
bath farmhouse features a spacious open living
area with oil monitor heater and wood stove insert



\$550,000

Listed by: Coldwell
 Banker BAIN
 Contact Mary Doyle
 (541)382-4123

Solution

A	P	P	L	E	T	A	B	S	S	W	A	P
N	O	R	E	G	I	D	L	E	P	I	L	L
T	R	O	V	E	M	E	O	W	O	N	T	O
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M	I	T	E		I	D	O	L		T	O	N
S	A	S	S		D	E	N	T		E	N	T

MG Home Repair & Construction

Mike Gangstead - General Contractor
CCB # 147094, Bonded & Insured

(541) 480-9878 Cell

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e-mail: mikegangstead@gmail.com

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SENIOR MEAL
EVERY FRIDAY AT 12 NOON
MITCHELL COMMUNITY HALL
108 NELSON AVE., MITCHELL, OR 97750

Homemade, from scratch,
delicious food prepared by
Chef Sharon!

60 &
OVER
\$5.00

59 &
UNDER
\$6.00

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Community Advertisement



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

Service & Repair Work
on
ALL MAKES OF CARS
U. S. & Firestone Tires
Red Crown Gasoline and Zerolene
Motor Oil
Mitchell Garage
H. R. WINEBARGER, Proprietor
North Side Main Street

Vinatype AD

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