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NEWS



Courthouse work

Work moves to the top of historic building in Oregon / 3

NEWS



'Heavy haul'

Byron power plant equipment arrives via a special team / 3

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Earleen Hinton

Volunteers Craig Beauchem (left) and Anne Stevens of Oregon (right) brave bitterly cold weather to lay wreaths on veterans' graves Dec. 13 at the Daysville Cemetery during the Wreaths Across America program. Story on page 5.

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DEATHS

No obituaries reported.

FAR LEFT: Laurie Carlin-Perry places a wreath on a veteran's grave Dec. 13 during the Wreaths Across America program at the Daysville Cemetery, southeast of Oregon. **LEFT:** Veteran Dan Reimer carries wreaths to be placed on veteran graves at the Daysville Cemetery.

Photos by Earleen Hinton



Volunteers battle snow, frigid temps to honor veterans at Daysville Cemetery during Wreaths Across America

215 veteran graves received wreaths

By EARLEEN HINTON
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Below-zero windchills and piles of snow did not stop volunteers from braving the winter weather to remember and honor veterans who are buried at Daysville Cemetery southeast of Oregon on Saturday, Dec. 13.

"The temperatures this weekend will be very cold and there's still plenty of snow at the cemeteries, but those who serve in our U.S. armed forces don't stay home when it's cold and neither will we," said Laurie Carlin-Perry, regent of the Rochelle Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which coordinated the Wreaths Across America event with help from Oregon VFW Post 8739.

As wind whipped through the rural cemetery dropping temperatures below zero, Perry spoke briefly about the Wreaths Across America program, noting that Saturday's event was part of a national effort to honor local veterans by placing wreaths at their graves.

Girl Scouts from Troop 2189 led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence and prayer.

Ceremonial wreaths were placed in front of the cemetery's Civil War Veteran's Memorial to honor of all of the military services, including the U.S. Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and POW/MIA.



Earleen Hinton

Veteran Don Stevens of Oregon lays a wreath at a veteran's grave at the Daysville Cemetery during the Wreaths Across America program Dec. 13.

Laying those wreaths for each branch were Don Stevens, Brian Guida, Roberta Kelser, Jim Lauer, Anne Stevens, Chip Lewison, Stan Asp, Mike Long, and Gary Burgess.

About 20 volunteers – some clad in snow pants and boots, covered in multiple layers – spread out across the cemetery to place the donated wreaths at each grave, signified by American flags.

According to Saturday's program,

215 veterans are buried at the Daysville Cemetery, located five miles southeast of Oregon on Daysville Road.

"We will check our list and walk through the cemetery again to make sure no one was missed," said Perry, clutching a map of the cemetery and the list of veterans buried there.

Wreaths Across America Day, held annually in December, also includes a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington

National Cemetery, in addition to other locations in all 50 states. All the wreaths are provided through donations.

Other local Wreaths Across America events were held on Saturday at Palmyra Cemetery, Dixon; Creston Methodist Church/Woodlawn, Creston; and St. Patrick's and Lawnridge Cemetery in Rochelle.

About Wreaths Across America

According to the Wreaths Across America website, the wreath-laying that began more than 30 years ago still is held annually on the second or third Saturday of December.

WAA's annual pilgrimage from Harrington, Maine, to Arlington National Cemetery has become known as "the world's largest veterans' parade." Every year the convoy of trucks, local law enforcement, staff and supporters stop at schools, monuments, veterans' homes and communities along the way to talk about the Wreaths Across America mission and remind people how important it is to remember, honor and teach.

In 2024, more than 3 million sponsored veterans' wreaths were placed on headstones of service members at 4,909 participating locations. More than 4 million volunteers helped place wreaths, a third of whom were children. This was accomplished with the support of more than 7,400 sponsorship groups, corporate contributions, and in-kind donations from the transportation industry across the country, according to the website.

For information or to donate, visit wreathsacrossamerica.org.