

**ASK THE GATER**

# Who does Fallen Heroes Memorial Highway honor?

BY LISA BALDWIN

*This issue's "Ask the Gater" question was submitted by Paul Fattig.*

Folks familiar with the stretch of Highway 238 that runs between Ruch and Jacksonville have certainly noticed the two signs designating it as a Fallen Hero Memorial Highway, honoring brothers James Herbert Rowden and John Wayne Rowden. Both were killed in action in Vietnam.

Marine Corps Private James Herbert Rowden was killed on March 5, 1966, in combat near Quang Ngai, Vietnam. He was 21 years old and four months away from finishing his tour of duty. James was the first Jackson County resident to die in the Vietnam War.

John Wayne Rowden, James' younger brother, enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1967 as a way to honor his fallen brother. He told his parents he and James always had each other's back. Marine Corps Private John Wayne Rowden was killed February 10, 1968, on a mission in Thua Thien Province, Vietnam. John's death made the Rowdens the first double Gold Star Family in Oregon.

About two weeks after John was killed in action, younger brother Douglas Rowden received his draft notice. Parents Harvey and Grace Rowden, having already

lost two of their four sons to the war that continued to rage on in Southeast Asia, could not bear the thought of potentially losing a third.

"I feel we have donated enough to the Vietnam cause," Grace Rowden said at the time.

The Rowdens appealed to the Draft Board, and with help from Governor Tom McCall and Senator Wayne Morse, Douglas Rowden's draft notice was rescinded.

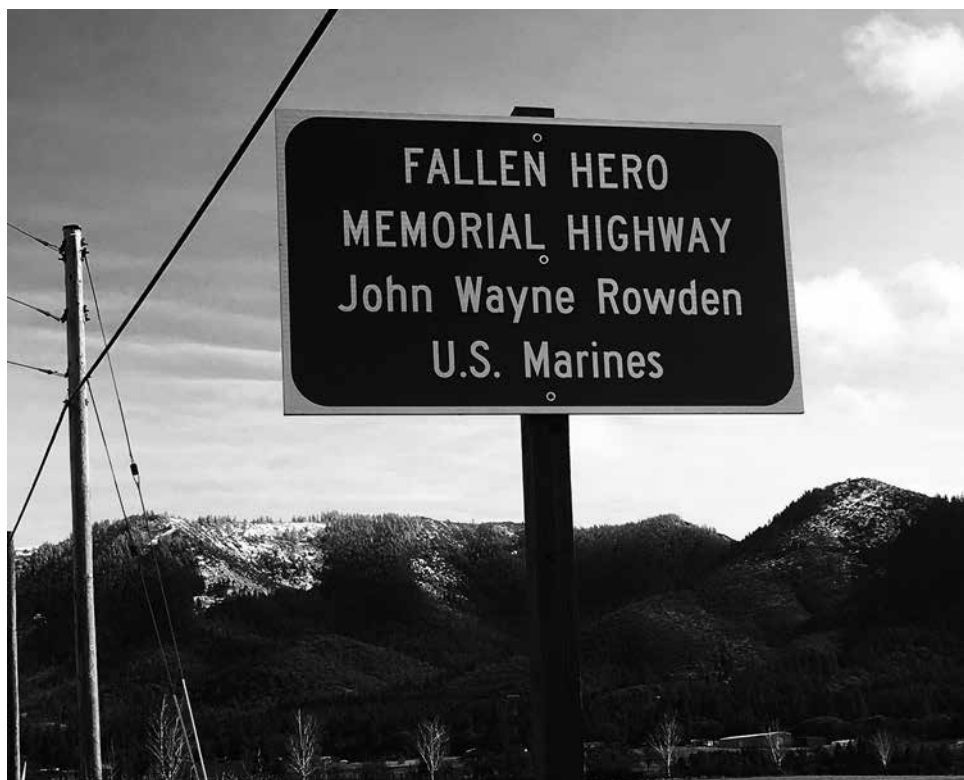
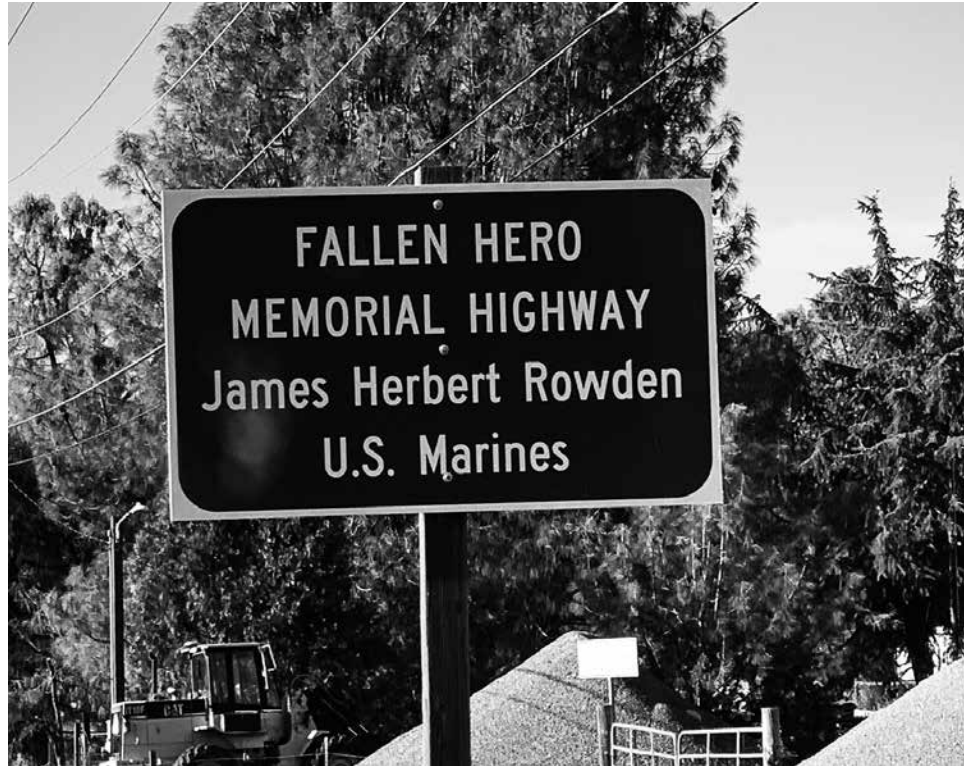
To commemorate James and John and the sacrifice made by the Rowden family, the Fallen Hero signs and Memorial Highway designations were approved by resolution in the Oregon State Legislature in 2017.

Since the Rowden family lived near McKee Bridge when their boys were very young, and later moved to Ruch, the two signs were placed on 238 near milepost 26, close to their childhood home. There is one sign on each side of the highway, one facing east and one facing west, so the brothers still have each other's back.

Lisa Baldwin

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*Have a question about the Applegate Valley? Ask the Gater! Send your query to gater@applegater.org.*



Memorial signs mark a stretch of highway dedicated to two brothers from Ruch. Photos: Diana Coogle.

## ••• BIZBITS •••

**The Feral Farm Plant Stand** opened early in 2020 and offers certified organic vegetable and flower starts, largely from seeds grown on the farm and from local seed companies. Run on the honor system, it is open 24/7 from the beginning of February through the end of October. Customers pay by cash or check in the honor box. This year, owner Cacia Huff expanded the stand to include a seed rack featuring 75 varieties of organic vegetable and flower seeds grown by Feral Farm. All packets are \$3.



Early spring offerings will include artichokes, snap and snow peas, greens and salad fixings, and early flowers like poppies and calendula. Cacia is excited to be offering an expanded selection of tomatoes and peppers later in the season, and she has also installed a rainwater catchment system for watering the plants.

The farm consists of four leases along Thompson Creek Road owned by Cacia. It has been in operation since 2017. "I have a small handful of friends and neighbors that help me on a part-time basis," she says, "especially during the seed harvest season in fall, when I sometimes invite the community to come help with big projects like pumpkin and melon seeding."

The primary focus of the farm is growing certified organic, open pollinated seed for a dozen national and local seed companies—including Siskiyou and Restoration—and participating in a small heritage grains trial for Hardy Seeds. "This year we are growing over 90 seed crop varieties! We also grow ten varieties of organic heirloom seed garlic, which will be available through the farm stand in the fall and also online," Cacia said.

Feral Farm Plant Stand: 4441 Thompson Creek Road

Contact: feralfarm4@gmail.com

feralfarmseeds.com • seedwise.com/farmers/115/feral-farm

Instagram: page @feralfarm4

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### **Mountain View Landscaping & New Hope Nursery**

is a local, family-operated business owned by Jedediah Jester and Christin Bryk, who purchased the Pennies Worth Acres nursery six years ago and recently changed the name. They enjoy finding the highest quality of plant material to share with southern Oregon and are open to contractors and the general public. The nursery has over four acres of Japanese maples, conifers, shade trees, and flowering trees, with a large selection

of shrubs, perennials, ground covers, and ornamental grasses. Jedediah and Christin also possess a Landscape Contractor's license. "Jedediah and I grew up in the area, are Hidden Valley High School graduates, and love being part of this community," Christin said. "We call the area where our nursery is located 'the heart of new hope' and feel so blessed to be living here. We look forward to helping transform your yard into an outdoor living space!"

New Hope Nursery: 7016 New Hope Road, Grants Pass

Winter Hours (Nov. 30 through Feb. 20): Monday - Friday, 8 am - 5 pm

Spring, Summer and Fall Hours: Monday - Saturday, 8 am - 5 pm

Contact: 541-474-0224 (office) • 541-761-1912 (cell)

info@heartofnewhope.com • heartofnewhope.com

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### **Pony Espresso**

in Jacksonville is celebrating its 25th anniversary! It was founded in 1995 and was the first drive-through coffeehouse in southern Oregon. Known for its rustic "barn-like" design, with wide plank, reclaimed-wood floors and walls, antique furniture, and expansive deck seating, "The Pony" became a hub for the citizens of Jacksonville and the Rogue Valley alike. Current owners Christopher and Kadie Boivin brought their love of quality food, superb coffee, and fine wine from their home in the Napa Valley to the Rogue Valley in the '90s. They bought the Pony and opened in March of 1998. Drawing on their background in the Napa culinary and coffee roasting scene, they feel fortunate to operate one of the oldest continuously run cafes in the region, and one of the most innovative in the metamorphosis of the concept of a coffeehouse. Kadie says, "When we purchased Pony, I was 23 and Chris was 25 and we were very determined to succeed. We knew we had no other choice. We didn't have any friends or family in the area, so we just worked seven days a week for several months. Our customers definitely became our family." Chris and Kadie continually modify the menu by bringing some of the influences from their background in fine dining, incorporating it into their coffeehouse cuisine. The menu features breakfast and lunch entrées with Pony's popular gourmet sandwiches, baked goods, soups, and salads. "As always, all of our food is made in-house from scratch by our talented kitchen staff," says Chris. The Pony offers a wide array of espresso and coffee drinks, featuring Allann Bros coffee beans. Chris adds, "We are very proud to feature Allann Bros coffee. Allan Stuart, the owner and roastmaster, is really a national treasure and icon of roasting, and he started right here in southern Oregon in 1972. I wish more people were familiar with his background because it really is one of the more compelling Rogue Valley success stories."



Pony Espresso: 545 North 5th Street, Jacksonville

Hours: Monday - Friday, 6:30 am - 5 pm; Saturday - Sunday, 7 am - 5 pm

Contact: 541-899-3757 • ponyespresso.jville@gmail.com

ponyespressocafe.com

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**BizBits** highlights businesses new to the area, holding special events, or offering new products. If you are a business owner, let us know when you move into the area or to a different location, hold a special event, expand your business, or mark a milestone. Email gater@applegater.org.