



City of Prineville

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Media Release

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Crook County and Prineville Mourn The Passing of Its Leading Citizen, Les Schwab

A Joint Statement of Crook County and City of Prineville

May 18, 2007, Prineville, Oregon—The death of Les Schwab today leaves the citizens of Crook County and Prineville profoundly saddened. Les was not only founder of Crook County's largest employer and signature industry, Les Schwab Tire, but he was also an Oregon icon and a legend in business schools and business circles nationwide. His unique blend of business savvy, hard work and fairness with employees, customers and competitors alike helped him build a business empire from a single store. Along the way, he forever changed the face of Prineville and Crook County. The growth of his business, in large measure, was responsible for the rebirth of a revitalized local economy following the collapse of the timber industry in the late 1980s. It was his decision to keep his business in Prineville which helped to attract other successful entrepreneurs and business attention which has helped the area remake itself. But even a billion-dollar plus business couldn't alter Les' fundamental, down-home approachability. Les was friendly and familiar to employees at the warehouse, a regular at the local ice cream parlor and a reliable and consistent supporter of important community institutions such as the local hospital. He lived his life like he ran his business: modestly and frugally, always valuing above all family, work and community. Crook County and Prineville is a better place for having been privileged to host Les Schwab among their citizens these many years and we are poorer today for his loss.

In commemoration of the life of Les Schwab and his unique importance to Crook County and Prineville, flags at county and city public buildings will fly at half staff through Memorial Day.

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