

State Representative
Matt Wingard
House District 26



State Representative
Kim Thatcher
House District 25

NEWS RELEASE: May 15, 2009

CONTACT: Dawn Phillips 503.750.1764

Founder of Newberg Honored in Oregon Legislature

(Salem) [Ewing Young](#), the man that many consider to be the founder of Newberg was recognized in the Oregon Legislature today. [Senate Bill 625](#) was unanimously approved by the Oregon House and is now headed to the Governor's desk for his signature. The bill reads in part:

“Be it enacted by the People of the State of Oregon: February 9th of each year shall be known as Ewing Young Day, to commemorate Ewing Young’s contribution to the formation of Oregon’s provisional government and aid to the settlers of the Willamette Valley.”

Young was one of Oregon’s most colorful and significant pioneers. He settled in what is now Yamhill County, on the west bank of the Willamette River opposite Champoeg, and built what is believed to be the first house on that side of the river. [State Representative Kim Thatcher](#) (R-Keizer, Newberg, St. Paul) testified on the House floor about how this measure can teach us about Ewing Young’s accomplishments. “It helps us appreciate that what we have today did not happen easily, but came through struggle, sacrifice, and an entrepreneurial spirit. We hope school children across Oregon will learn to love his colorful life.”

Young built the first sawmill, established the first trading post and even the first distillery in the area. He led a historic cattle drive from California to the Willamette Valley and he helped train a young trapper named Kit Carson. When he died on February 9, 1841, he was the wealthiest man in Oregon.

“One of the most remarkable aspects of Ewing Young’s life, was that his death helped bring Oregon government into being by establishing the rule of law,” noted [State Representative Matt Wingard](#) (R-Wilsonville). Young had no will or heir when he passed away so the settlers had to meet to divide up his estate, which led to the “wolf meetings” and eventually the formation of the Provisional Government in May of 1843.

Representative Wingard explained in his floor comments, “the death of Ewing Young marked the transition from an unsettled and uncivilized Oregon, to a place with more American settlers arriving each year in the great westward migration.”

[Ewing Young Elementary School](#) is part of the Newberg School District, named after this famous trailblazer, trader and trapper. The Friends of Champoeg are planning a signing ceremony for SB 625 under the [giant oak tree](#) planted at [Young’s gravesite in 1843](#).

“We thank Representatives Thatcher and Wingard for their leadership in teaching Oregonians about their history and heritage,” said Greg Leo, President of [Friends of Historic Champoeg](#). “The story of Ewing Young is the story of early Oregon. Passing this bill will help generations in the future better understand Oregon history.” [Senator Larry George](#) (R-Sherwood) also worked on the legislation.

####

State Representative Matt Wingard
900 Court Street, Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1426 www.leg.state.or.us/wingard
Rep.mattwingard@state.or.us

State Representative Kim Thatcher
900 Court Street, Salem, OR 97301
503-986-1425 www.leg.state.or.us/thatcher
Rep.kimthatcher@state.or.us