Travel increase expected for Labor Day

AAA projects the number of Americans traveling this Labor Day holiday weekend will increase one percent from 2014, with about 35.5 million travelers or 11 percent of the population taking a trip at least 50 miles away from home.

This is the highest volume for the holiday since 2008.

In the Pacific region Labor Day travel is expected to increase by 1.2 percent with 5.5 million people or 10.4 percent of the population taking trips.

Most travelers will go by car: 86 percent of travelers nationally and 80 percent in the Pacific region will drive to their destination.

Gas prices are the lowest for the holiday since 2009.

Air travel is also up.

Fires in the West may impact travel due to road closures and poor air quality; AAA advises travelers to monitor the situation.

Kids can have fun with big rigs

Over the years there have been many programs offered by Together For Children, (TFC) a parent/child program for families with young children. None have been as requested or remembered more fondly than the Big Rig Celebration held in conjunction with the Knife River construction company.

On September 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. TFC will offer its eighth annual Big Rig Celebration, held at the Knife River lot on Highway 20 in Tumalo. All children six and under are invited to come for a time of exploring and adventure. The first 100 children will be admitted free. The cost after that is $5 per child, with no cost for accompanying adults.

There will be large construction equipment arranged around the area for climbing in and around, along with several large mountains of sand for digging in, sliding down, pouring and exploring. Children are encouraged to bring their own sandbox shovels, pails, trucks and excavation tools so they can fully enjoy the experience. Parents may want to bring folding chairs for comfortable viewing.

The Deschutes County Sheriffs Department will be there as well as Cloverdale Fire Department with equipment, personnel and activities for the kids. T-shirts and hardhats will be available to commemorate the experience, along with vendors providing food and raffle opportunities to win a variety of prizes.

Money raised will go toward the operation of TFC of Bend, Redmond, and Sisters. To learn more visit www.together-for-children.org. Groups will be forming soon in the three communities. Interested parents and grandparents are encouraged to indicate an interest. For more information call Linda at 541-420-8110.

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Sisters grad displays engineering ingenuity

Engineering ingenuity figures prominently in this year's SLO HotHouse Summer Accelerator program. The intense 13-week program, offered through Cal Poly's Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE), is aimed at helping new ventures succeed — including a local student's startup.

Eric Adler (mechanical engineering) from Sisters, is a team member of Flume, one of 11 interdisciplinary companies accepted into the summer SLO HotHouse program. Flume is a non-invasive, real-time device that allows homeowners or renters to access their water-usage data in real time via a smartphone and Web app. Other team members include James Fazio (software engineering) from Carpinteria, California, and Jeffrey Hufford (electrical engineering) from Santa Rosa, California.

CIE provides seed money, hands-on mentorship and dedicated office space during the summer at its new downtown SLO HotHouse location. The startups also receive training through workshops and are given resources to develop skills and ideas. At the end of the program, they will have an opportunity to pitch their ideas to investors during Demo Day in September.

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