

It begins...



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

The 170-acre Cougar Butte Fire near Bend is contained.

CLEANUP: VFW offered a history of the cemetery

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and succeed in life," he said. "I wake up and want to go to school."

The Camp Polk Cemetery cleanup continued until 11 a.m. when the students and volunteers broke for lunch, which was donated by McDonald's of Sisters.

After lunch the local V.F.W. Post 8138 and American Legion Post 86 gave a history of the cemetery to the students, along with a discussion of the history of Memorial Day. An American flag was raised and

students once again headed out to different parts of the local cemetery to place flags on all of the graves.

Local veteran and American Legion Post Commander Lance Trowbridge shared a bit of his family history and connection to the cemetery. Trowbridge's father and uncle, both veterans, are interred at Camp Polk.

Some of the veterans lingered after all of the students and volunteers left. Pride showed on their faces after the cleanup and ceremony had concluded.

"These kids worked really hard," said V.F.W. Post Commander Bill Anttila. "They deserve all the accolades they can get."

ANIMALS: Sport is tougher on the cowboys than on stock

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gates, and water supplies. Any rodeo not in compliance will be faced with fines, suspension, or even disqualification of that rodeo from the PRCA.

A standard requirement for PRCA rodeos is a vehicle of transport for the rare animal injuries that occur during a rodeo. Sisters Rodeo has acquired a new livestock ambulance, with a generous support of Trailer World of Tumalo and Cargo Mate Trailers, along with a winch donated by Warn Winches. This trailer was custom-built for this job, with an oversized floor for an animal that can't stand.

"With the help of Debbie and Greg Blaser at Trailer World and of Cargo Mate, we are now in possession of a state-of-the-art animal ambulance," said Sisters Rodeo President Glenn Miller. "We are very grateful for their commitment to our rodeo and to the livestock that might need to be transported."

"We are excited to serve our community with this offering to Sisters Rodeo," said Greg Blaser.

Professional rodeo is well aware of some resistance to this American sport. The

PRCA is dedicated to educating people about the measures that are in place to protect the livestock and ensure their health and safety.

The PRCA requires that all rodeos' veterinarians and PRCA judges fill out a survey form at every rodeo, documenting the conditions and care of the livestock. From recent annual findings from 148 rodeos and 70 slack competitions, with 60,244 event "exposures," there were 28 animal injuries that required treatment. Statistically, that is less than five hundredths of one percent.

A former Sisters Rodeo veterinarian stated that during his three decades of service, he treated only three severe injuries at Sisters Rodeo.

"The most common minor injuries that required some treatment were to queens' horses," said Eric Sharpnack, DVM, who is now retired.

Tim Phillips, DVM, agrees. "It is very unusual to have an animal injured in rodeo competitions," says Phillips, who has been the Sisters Rodeo veterinarian for five years. "These animals are very well cared for."

Calves and steers are not overlooked in the rules of protection. They are evaluated two weeks before a rodeo to be sure they are healthy and fit, with no disabilities. Calves must weigh between 220-280 pounds, and steers between 450-650

pounds. Veterinarians agree that it would be very difficult to harm a steer, who are even fit with horn guards during the steer-wrestling event. Calf injuries are very rare.

Among the PRCA rules, only low-voltage cattle prods can be used to help herd animals, there are time limits to how long animals can be trailered in transit before they are rested, and required evaluation of the animals' condition at the time they perform is absolute. If there is any sign of lameness, illness or trauma, the rodeo veterinarian will remove that animal from competition.

In the final picture, who wouldn't want a career that requires eight seconds or less of work once or twice a week, travel, good meals and an off-season on green pastures? Rodeo is a thriving business. Stock contractors who provide livestock for rodeo are determined to protect their investments.

Sisters Rodeo will begin June 7 with Xtreme Bulls followed by four rodeo performances June 9-11. For tickets and information, call the ticket hotline at 541-549-0121 or 1-800-827-7522, or visit the ticket office at 220 W. Cascade Ave. in Sisters. The ticket office will close on Friday, June 9. Tickets may be purchased at the rodeo grounds after that. For information visit www.sistersrodeo.com.

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