



PHOTO BY RICK SCHWERTFEGGER

The Anvil Blasters play at Black Butte Ranch the next two Wednesdays.

Blasting the anvil at Black Butte Ranch

The Anvil Blasters will serve up a slice of Americana music in two free shows at Black Butte Ranch on Wednesday, July 10 and Wednesday, July 17 at 6 p.m.

BBR hosts live music on the lawn near the Lakeside Activities Center on the Ranch. The shows are free and open to the public. Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets and picnic on the expansive grassy area.

The Anvil Blasters are Lynn Woodward (vocals, mandolin, fiddle), Mike Biggers (vocals, guitar, mandolin), Jim Cornelius (vocals, guitar, harmonica), and Jeff Wester (vocals, banjo). Pete Rathbun works the soundboard.

The songs of the Anvil Blasters are peopled with border renegades and desert dreamers, poets and pirates and ghosts of the old, weird America. It's a rollicking recipe of gunpowder, twang and tequila that has earned The Anvil Blasters a loyal following across Central Oregon.

The name of the band comes from Wester's background as a renowned blacksmith. The tradition of "blasting the anvil" has deep roots in rural America, where at festive gatherings people — who may or may not have been getting into the whiskey

— would blow an anvil sky high with a stout charge of black powder. The anvil makes a ringing sound as it flies sometimes hundreds of feet into the air in a cloud of white smoke. There are videos of anvil blasting on YouTube.

"No anvils are harmed in Anvil Blasters' shows," Cornelius said. "We're looking forward to kicking off our summer at Black Butte Ranch. These are fun gigs in a beautiful atmosphere. Outdoors in the summertime is our favorite way to play."

RUNNING: Books educate and inspire

Continued from page 22

running include three books by John L. Parker. His first book "Once a Runner," published way back in 1978, is considered a classic in the running community. The story follows young Quentin Cassidy's journey to the upper echelons of racing the mile on the track. Parker waited many years to write a sequel, "Again to Carthage," which finds an older Cassidy rekindling his competitive fire, this time at the marathon distance. Parker's third book, published in 2015, is a prequel called "Racing the Rain," letting the reader meet the teenaged Cassidy. I recommend reading this "trilogy" in the order they were published.

A pair of books with foundations in Oregon include Tom Jordan's Pre, which was written following the tragic death of Steve Prefontaine, the University of Oregon runner who became an American running icon in the 1970s thanks to his ferocious approach to racing, which made him basically unbeatable in America. He helped cement Oregon's Hayward Field in Eugene

as the centerpiece of what is now considered "Track City USA."

On a side note, Hayward Field's renovation is expected to be complete by May 2020 and will be the site of the 2021 WORLD Track and Field Championships, which have never been held on American soil.

Hayward Field and Steve Prefontaine cannot be mentioned without including Bill Bowerman, the long-time University of Oregon coach and co-founder of Nike. Reading "Bowerman and the Men of Oregon" by Kenny Moore is a tremendous close-up look at the man and the history he created here in Oregon.

My final book to suggest for now is one I have heard a lot about, but have not yet read. It's called "Running Home: A Memoir," by Katie Arnold. Arnold explores

the healing power of running, particularly in dealing with grief after her father's death. Arnold takes to running trails and eventually becomes an ultra-distance runner.

I have read my share of running-related books and have noticed most are written about male runners. I am still waiting for some writer to come up with either a novel or a well-written biography with a woman runner as the main character. Maybe that will be on next summer's suggested reading list.

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