

## CLAYCOMB

*Continued from Page 1B*

dead standing timber which will all get pushed down into the rivers and result in huge mudslides for years to follow, does that not hurt more bull trout than rebuilding a road?

Some of these log jams are packed so tight that there's no way that a 30-inch bull trout can pass through them to go upstream and spawn. And one year there was a big mudslide that muddied up the river for miles downstream. The river looked like pig slop. Focus on the real problems, boys.

So, the hole where the big 30-inch bulls like to gather in is gone for this year and maybe for years to come. It's a mess.

I doodled around until dark and then hiked back to camp and built a fire and relaxed. The next morning I dipped a pot of crystal clear water out of the river and heated it up. Ahh, there's nothing like breakfast in the high country. I ate a couple of packs of flavored oatmeal, slammed down a few cups of coffee and hit the trail.

I headed downstream hitting the

holes. Whoa, something was wrong. I was not catching very many fish and nothing very big. I started off using some big black head woolly boogers. The last few years I've been using some flies called Fish Skulls that I order from flydealfly.com.

Later in the day I switched to dry flies. I caught enough to keep it interesting but not like norm. I found a few huckleberries which I stored in a water bottle to put in my oatmeal the next day. I fished until dark and then drug back into camp and built a fire and heated up a Mountain House Beef Stroganoff dinner. That's my favorite from MH.

The next morning I put huckleberries in my oatmeal, wolfed that down and then took off fishing again. Today I netted a few nice native cutthroats, one was pushing 15 inches and a 15-inch whitefish.

Later that afternoon I found a good patch of huckleberries and spent over an hour picking them. I got enough to take some home for Katy & Kolby. Well, the trip soon came to an end and I hit the hot dusty trail back to the trailhead. Ugh, I must be out of shape. The hike out about killed me.



Tom Claycomb photo

For Claycomb, nothing beats fresh picked huckleberries and oatmeal for breakfast in the backcountry.

## GUIDES

*Continued from Page 1B*

and managers to novice rafting clients, are taken aback by the idea of women guiding commercial rafts.

"Often you will get a crew (of customers) that, when they see that you're their guide, they make comments that they don't have faith in you," Feltmate said. "And that's strictly from the fact that you're a woman — regardless of how many years of experience you might have over the male guides. Unfortunately, sometimes people are biased."

A recurring point female guides make is that what some women lack in sheer paddling strength, they make up for with a heightened understanding of the river.

"I think females read the water differently than males read the water," Feltmate said. "Oftentimes we're not as strong as the men to turn and crank a boat. We have to make the water work for us."

Kjellesvik agrees. She currently guides for Bend-based RiverStone Adventures and Wet Planet Rafting and Kayaking in Washington. She also guides privately, an additional hustle that keeps her on the river a couple times a week, she said. Feltmate considers Kjellesvik a pillar in the local river guiding community.

"(As river guides) we're all transient because we're chasing the whitewater," Feltmate said of the migratory nature of summer guiding gigs. "It's so great that Jen is trying to create this strong female connection, this camaraderie. It's really a blessing."

### The river's calling

After earning a university degree in biology, Feltmate felt restless. A female friend suggested they train to become commercial river guides.

"I said, That's stupid. Let's go," Feltmate said with a laugh.

Feltmate contacted a local Colorado guide company and explained her interest — and

predicament.

"Learning how to guide the boat is no problem — that's my job to teach you," the guide told her, adding that he looks for three things in raft guides. The first is spatial awareness: knowing where nearby boats and people are. The second is good conversation skills with clients, Feltmate said. The third quality is an ability to guide the boat. The rafting company trained Feltmate alongside six other women on the Arkansas River.

"We'd tell each other all the time ... You have this!" Feltmate recalled with a laugh. All seven passed their training and got hired by the company. Feltmate guided for four summers in Colorado and on the Rogue River in Oregon. When clients express shock or concern that their guide will be female, Feltmate uses sarcasm.

"I'll make a corny joke and say, 'Yeah, and today is my first day!'" she said, adding that other women, when their authority is questioned, quickly rattle off their accomplishments. Feltmate and Kjellesvik talked about the

importance of using a commanding voice on the water, especially through rapids. Finding one's natural, deeper voice and using it is a must.

"The important thing is to stay professional. Don't let the guys get under your skin," Feltmate said. "Make sure they have a good time. Hopefully by time it's over, you'll have changed their minds — that there are no gender boundaries (on the river)."

Feltmate recently accepted a full-time job at Camp Fire Central Oregon, a Bend nonprofit that offers outdoor learning programs for children and teens. This is the first summer in four years that she hasn't guided full time.

"I didn't know how much I would miss it," Feltmate said.

### Even Jedi knights flip

Guides are responsible for steering crews through serious danger that swirls in the rushing blue depths. Lifesaving techniques need to be practiced until the movements are seared into muscle memory. During Kjellesvik's recent rafting trip, the raft

capsized several times, and the crew repeatedly fell into the river — on purpose.

Kjellesvik wanted them to be comfortable falling in the river and quickly righting the 14-foot raft. A guide is also responsible for pulling people in who can't do it themselves. Righting the raft requires using a flip line, or a long cord, and carabiner, which guides wear around the waist. Floating in the water, several women took turns scrambling onto the upsidetown raft and clipping the cord to a loop on the raft's far edge. By standing on the opposite edge, a guide can flip the raft back over by pulling on the cord with her body weight and using the river's current to her advantage.

"Flipping a raft can be a bigger deal for women than men," Kjellesvik said. "When guys flip, they shrug it off, they think it's funny."

Women feel more pressure to measure up, she said.

"Sometimes you mess up, but what is more important is how you recover," Kjellesvik said. "Even the Jedi (guides) who have done this for 25 years are going to flip."

When pulling someone in, it's important to pull them by their personal flotation device and not an arm. Doing so could dislocate a shoulder, Kjellesvik said.

Lee Chapman, 30 and from Bend, took it all in. A guide-in-training at the time, Chapman has since passed her in-house certification to guide full time for Sun Country Tours on the Lower Deschutes and the McKenzie rivers.

"I did it! I'm checked off now!" Chapman said, adding that Kjellesvik's pop-up women's clinic was invaluable.

Sun Country shuttles as many six runs — with as many as six rafts — through the Big Eddy each day during summer. The company also leads runs through rapids on the North Umpqua and McKenzie rivers. Chapman is still training to lead runs on Big Eddy because it features a technical rapids section, but she is approved to guide runs through the

lower Deschutes River, which features Class III rapids. Chapman has lead groups that include grandparents and children.

"I'm learning to be more aware of my surroundings and learning to choose my paths more quickly," Chapman said.

Chapman feels a lot more in control and able to direct people with short commands. She laughs at mistakes as she rights them. During an on-river preamble before a run, one of Chapman's male clients fell into the water.

"For a moment, he thought he was going to be left behind," Chapman said, adding that she hadn't gotten to the part of the safety talk where she explained how to retrieve a swimmer.

"He pulled himself back in," Chapman said. "With adrenaline from the shock of unexpected cold water, he was very eager to get back in the boat."



**Cherry Fair**  
AUGUST 18, 2018

**FREE**  
ADMISSION

**Cove Ascension School Camp & Conference Center**

7:00am	Fun Run/Walk — 1-mile and 3-mile loops
7:00am-11:00am	Sourdough Pancake Breakfast
8:00am-4:00pm	Vendors/Food Booths City-wide yard sales
8:00am-9:30am	Hot Air Balloon Rides
10:00am-10:30am	Community Parade & Cherry Fairy Float
10:30am	National Anthem
11:00am-4:00pm	Hog Wild Train by Lions Club National Guard Games Bouncy House Arts & Crafts with Art Center East Bubble Machine by Cove Fire Dept. Side A Beer Garden Live Music Groups: 1853 - Jezebel's Mother - Elwood
11:30am	Polite Pie-Eating Contest
12:30pm	Hands-free Pie-Eating Contest
1:30pm	Cherry Pit-Spitting Contest
2:30pm	Old-Fashioned Games



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