

# Local

## Elkhorn Muzzleloaders meet

• GROUP HOLDS ANNUAL RENDEZVOUS

BY CHUCK BUCHANAN  
News@TheBakerCountyPress.com

During the heyday of the fur trade in the western United States, mountain men of all stripes gathered once or twice per year to trade their hard-earned furs and hides for those things that they were unable to make or procure for themselves any other way. A gathering was known as a rendezvous.

Such items as steel knives and hatchets, blankets, rifles, powder and ball, and even needles and other small goods could be found at a rendezvous. In addition to trading, competitions of all sorts, from shooting to foot racing, knife throwing to tobacco spitting, drinking to horse trading, and other displays of “manly skills,” all went on at a rendezvous.

The Elkhorn Muzzleloaders began in a meeting in the Baker County Library in 2007. Folks interested in the fine art of shooting and hunting with “primitive” weaponry gathered together to search for a venue on which to pursue their craft.

They found such a place near Oxman Crossing outside Durkee. The group comes together at 10 a.m.

on the first Saturday of every month, rain or shine to practice the fine arts of shooting both smooth-bore and rifled arms, and of throwing knives and “hawks” or hatchets.

Each month the club members police the range, picking up garbage no matter who tossed it out, and have also worked on improving the two-track road that goes through the property. They have even gone so far as to install several “water bars” in the road to control runoff. In 2014 the idea of having a Rendezvous of their own became a reality.

2015’s rendezvous was held June 4-7, 2015 in a sagebrush basin approximately a half mile from Old Highway 30.

Per Chief Grayhair, who is known “outside” as Don Smith, shooter numbers were not as good as the previous year, possibly due to the number of high school graduations that took place that weekend. However, those shooters present seemed to be determined to make up in fun what they didn’t have in numbers.

A modern muzzleloader rendezvous is a competition of the skills of shooting, archery and knife and “hawk” throwing that takes place, in this case, on a trio of trails. Each trail has a set of steel targets set out at unknown distances from the shooting stakes.



Chuck Buchanan / The Baker County Press

Chief Grayhair fires his trade gun.

Targets were everything from steel plates to chains suspended both vertically and horizontally. Points are scored for hits, and if your style of dress was authentic enough, the shooter could get an extra point or two. One trail was designed for smoothbore trade guns while the other was designed for pistols, rifles, knives and “hawks”.

A third trail was built around a set of archery targets. Archery targets were of course made of a softer material than steel in order to preserve as many arrows as possible.

In addition, a large “long shot” plate was set on the side of the ridge to the north of the camp.

Social activities were available as well, including a raffle for a number of nice prizes including a Lyman Great Plains rifle and a muzzleloading pistol. Awarding of prizes for the competition was based on total score, and were “blanket prizes.”

Each competitor supplied an item of muzzleloader equipment of some sort to the blanket, and took it in turn to pick a prize from the blanket based on their placing.

Unlike many competitions, which are timed, the competition at a rendezvous is based on points earned by hitting the target, and all scoring is on the honor system.

## OTEC linemen perform pole rescue exercises



Submitted Photos.

Rich Eskew (Top) and Tony Hellbusch perform rescue drills high above the ground.

Buckling on their new fall-restraint equipment belts and digging into the utility pole with their steel gaff “spikes”, the linemen at Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative began their annual pole top and bucket rescue safety training this week. As an OSHA mandated safety training requirement, OTEC linemen are required to pass this training to maintain employment with the cooperative.

While OTEC has never had to perform a pole top rescue in the field the training is an opportunity for the linemen to prepare and hone their skills if the need ever arises.

“The course is designed to evaluate each lineman on their ability to properly rescue an injured and/or stranded lineman,” stated Claude Morgan, Northern Division Superintendent for OTEC. “It’ll never be exactly the way they would perform the rescue out in the field. But, with this type of training comes repetition and it allows the linemen the opportunity to have it in their mind the things they will need to prepare for,” Morgan explained.

As part of the annual training course, each lineman must balance their skills with safety, climb a pole and rescue a 185 pound training mannequin. The lineman must then secure the mannequin using ropes and pulleys and safely deliver them back to the ground.

The bucket rescue is similar with the training involving the use of the bucket on the OTEC service trucks to get the mannequin out safely using the lower controls.

While no electricity is running through the lines, attention to detail remains key and the linemen are evaluated as if every aspect of the training were real. “We are not timing their performance,” said Morgan. “We are focused on the safe and efficient methods with which the rescue is accomplished.”

In addition to safety training for employees, OTEC continuously raises awareness of electrical safety in its four county service territory by performing demonstrations at local schools and community events.

“There, we show our members just how easy it is for an accident to occur when working with electricity and how to prevent these dangerous, and sometimes deadly, mishaps,” said OTEC’s Manager of Loss Control Jeff Anderson.

“We also increase awareness of electrical safety by offering free trainings with volunteer fire departments, emergency medical teams and sheriff’s departments on a regular basis. These programs keep service men and women, as well members of the community, safe,” explained Anderson.

OTEC always places safety first, and by performing annual trainings, the cooperative is assuring that the linemen and community members in service are properly trained to handle nearly any situation.

# GARY GRACE MEMORIAL RIDE

Join us for the 12th annual Gary Grace Memorial Motorcycle Ride

**RIDE STARTS  
SATURDAY, JUNE 27TH  
9 AM PDT with  
CLOSING DINNER  
at 6 PM**

**Meet at the  
Halfway  
Lion’s Club  
parking lot in  
Halfway, Ore.**



**For more information contact Briana Sutherlin at 541.410.8358. DEADLINE for registration is June 20, 2015. Register online at [www.GaryGraceMemorialRide.com](http://www.GaryGraceMemorialRide.com) or mail in the form below.**

Rider’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Passenger’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City / State / Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee is \$35 per bike. Includes patch & pin. \_\_\_\_\_. Additional pins (\$4 each) \_\_\_\_\_. Additional patches (\$8 each). Closing Dinners (\$18 each) \_\_\_\_\_.  
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Include payment (cash, check or money order) and mail to:  
Briana Sutherlin, PO Box 8099, Bend, OR 97708. All proceeds go to the Gary Grace Memorial Scholarship Fund, which benefits local high school seniors.

## Ladies bridge, golf

The June 3 results for the Quail Ridge Ladies Bridge and Golf Club are:

Golf Winners: 1st Flight Jennifer Godwin, 2nd Flight Virginia Babski, 3rd Flight Nancy Ferree

Bridge Winners: 1st place Deni Smith, 2nd place Lavelle Woodcock, 3rd place Marlene Cross

9 week winners: 1st Della Steele, 2nd Zena Edwards, 3rd Judy Karstens.