

Business & Ag

Real Ranching Adventures

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The adventures offered include:

“Rodeo. We’ll share our real family tradition. Bucking horses and bulls, single and team roping. Local cowboys and cowgirls practice for rodeo competitions.

“Buffalo. See these majestic iconic animals up close and personal as you ride the feed wagon into the herds.

“Cute Animals. Ride the haywagon to feed livestock. Milk a cow or goat. February-March see baby lambs, goats, calves, horses; bottle feed or play with!

“Branding. Get up close for roping and branding calves. Not for the faint of heart!

“Animal Training. Starting horses, training dogs to work stock shows and ranch, kids preparing for 4-H competitions.

“Cattle Drives. Come along as cattle are moved to pasture, to new grass and home for the winter.

“Livestock care. Weaning, vaccinating, preparing cattle for sale, shipping

calves.

“Fencing. Learn how to build a fence, fix fence, get pasture ready for cattle. Great for wildlife viewing as well!

“Farming. See how crops are grown and harvested. Tour local gardens and greenhouses, where the Geiser’s restaurant produce comes from.

“Winery. Tour the local winery; see how grapes are grown, harvested, made into wine. Includes tasting a bottle of wine to take home!

Said Sidway, “In recent years, we’ve had increased interest from travelers that want to experience the ‘real west,’ which is our own cowboy and ranching heritage. So on more than a dozen occasions, we’ve arranged for guests to hang out at family rodeo practice and so forth. The feedback has been great. For example, writers traveled from Paris to write about Lewis and Clark. When they got out on a local ranch, Baker County just stole the story, which morphed into the wild west.”

She added, “We had



Submitted Photo

Guests took photos of buffalo feeding in Halfway.

planned to launch this new offering in spring. Then the plight of Eastern Oregon ranchers was suddenly brought to the forefront of everyone’s mind. We recognize that no small business can do much to change the course of events.

“However, we see the Geiser Grand’s ‘Ranch Experience’ is our contribution to better understanding by facilitating real interaction and com-

munication with our local ranchers. Proceeds go to the ranchers, while they pretty much go about their daily business as usual, so we’ve gotten good reception.

“Guests love this because it’s available 365 days per year, its easy and really fun! And you don’t have to be an overnight guest at the hotel; it’s open to everyone interested in learning more about our ranching heritage.”

2016 Women in Ag Conference scheduled for March 19

On Saturday, Mar. 19, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., women from Northeast Oregon have the opportunity to participate in the 2016 Women in Agriculture Conference. Organized by Washington State University extension, the one-day conference brings together women at 31 locations in Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Alaska for a unique opportunity to hear knowledgeable speakers and inspiring stories, network, and take home practical advice and new skills.

The conference will be hosted at the Union County Extension Office, 10507 N McAlister Rd., in La Grande, with host site facilitation by Sara Miller from Northeast Oregon Economic Development District.

Early bird registration, which is \$25, includes a communication workshop, light breakfast, lunch, and conference materials.

After March 18, regis-

tration increases to \$30.

A limited number of scholarships are available for aspiring farmers, college agriculture students, and 4-H and FFA members.

Visit the website at www.womeninag.wsu.edu for registration and details, or contact Miller at 541-426-3598 or saramiller@neoedd.org.

“Power Up Your Farm” is the theme for this year’s conference, with two sub-themes:

Power Up Your Communications!

Facilitated by Wendy Knopp and Michael Stolp with Northwest Farm Credit Services Communication is the most powerful tool for building business and personal relationships. People’s ability to influence people is directly related to how they communicate. This conference will help attendees discover their communication style and how to use it to manage,

motivate, and influence people. Attendees will learn to “pull out” their personality traits to change as the situation changes. Confidence in one’s ability to be a successful farmer will strengthen a farming operation.

Power Up Your Farm!

Different personality styles affect the way people interact with customers, family, business contacts, and employees.

Women farmers know how to produce their product. Sometimes, however, their communication style makes it difficult to sell that product, motivate an employee, convince a lender or landlord, or get along with family members or a business partner.

Attendees will build new skills to help them build better teams, improve decision-making, and connect marketing to what motivates prospects and customers.

Oregon farmer Shelly Boshart Davis will explain

how she improved her communications approach with people and how it improved her business strategies.

The conference is designed for women who have been farming for years, as well as new and aspiring farmers.

Supporting spouses, students, interns or people who own an agriculture-related business are also welcome.

The number of women in agriculture grows every year, and the conference helps meet their need to connect with other women farmers and ranchers, and share resources.

The Northeast Oregon Economic Development District’s mission is to provide resources and facilitate quality decision-making for the benefit of entrepreneurs, businesses and communities in Baker, Union, and Wallowa counties. Learn more about its programs at neoedd.org.

County financial position focus of session

BY TODD ARRIOLA
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The Baker County Board of Commissioners held a work session on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, 9 a.m., in the Commission Chambers of the Baker County Courthouse, in order to discuss the County’s financial position, and to receive a facilities update.

Present from the Board were Commission Chair Bill Harvey, Commissioners Mark Bennett and Tim Kerns, and Executive Assistant Heidi Martin.

Attendance also included Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash, Baker County Facilities Foreman Dan McQuisten, Baker County Administrative Service Director Christena Cook, Baker County Planning Director Holly Kerns,

CPA Bruce Nichols, Baker County Weed Master Arnie Grammon, Baker County Health Department Director Robin Nudd, Baker County Health Department Registered Nurse Alicia Hills, Baker County Emergency Management Director Jason Yencopal, Baker County Emergency Management Deputy Director Gary Timm, Baker County 911 Consolidated Dispatch Director Lindsey Hope, and Baker County Parks and Recreation Director Karen Spencer.

Harvey called the meeting to order, and Cook discussed details regarding the County’s financial situation, after providing a revenue and expense report (with estimations) to the Board.

While no decisions were made, as this was a work

session, several items were discussed.

Revenue (fund balance coverage from the budget, as of March 8, 2016) is estimated at \$424,527, with expenses estimated at a total of \$607,563.87, for a difference of \$183,036.87. Expenses include: the McCarty settlement, at \$306,000; BCLA union negotiations, at \$100,000; ODOT building purchase at \$110,000; repairs/utilities costs for the ODOT building, at \$31,511.89; property by the Road Department, at \$57,051.98; and a Parks Department building lease, at \$3,000.

Projected revenue for fiscal year 2016-2017 includes estimated revenue of \$816,536.60, broken down as: \$700,000 from Secure Rural Schools (SRS); Title III funds, of

\$80,000; rental amounts totaling \$12,105.60; and Watermaster revenue of \$24,431.

Estimated costs for fiscal year 2016-2017 includes a total of \$378,891, broken down as: Justice Court staffing adjustments, in the amount of \$11,422; District Attorney software (Karpell), in the amount of \$40,000; a Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) increase of 20%, in the amount of \$174,300; a medical/dental insurance increase of 8.7%, in the amount of \$134,900; and a property/liability insurance increase of 9%, in the amount of \$18,269.

Also noted by Cook is the contingency fund, in the amount of \$694,882.

SEE WORK SESSION
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— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, March 4, 2016 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady compared to week ago prices in a very limited test. Many producers have decided to hold on to their hay for now, in hopes for higher prices or to feed to their own animals. Many hay producers are sold out for the year.

Tons Price Range Wtd Avg
Alfalfa —Large Square Good/Premium
85 135.00-135.00 135.00

Last week:

Alfalfa —Large Square Good
40 120.00-120.00 120.00
Alfalfa / Orchard Mix —Small Square Premium
25 190.00-195.00 192.00
Timothy Grass—Small Square Premium
3 195.00-195.00 195.00
Meadow Grass—Small Square Good
2 150.00-150.00 150.00

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 1,127

Steer Calves

300-400# Bulk 206.00 - 221.00 Top 229.00
400-500# Bulk 182.00 - 217.00 Top 220.00
500-600# Bulk 176.00 - 201.00 Top 210.25

Heifer Calves

300-400# Bulk 167.00 - 191.00 Top 202.00
400-500# Bulk 164.00 - 197.00 Top 205.00
500-600# Bulk 149.00 - 173.00 Top 175.00

Yearling Steers

600-700# Bulk 154.00 - 179.00 Top 180.50
700-800# Bulk 144.00 - 156.00 Top 159.00
800-900# Bulk 127.00 - 140.00 Top 141.00
900-1,000# Bulk 121.00 - 136.00 Top 139.00

Yearling Heifers

600-700# Bulk 139.00 - 155.00 Top 156.00
700-800# Bulk 135.00 - 143.00 Top 160.00
800-900# Bulk 121.00 - 134.00 Top 135.00
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Thin Shelly Cows 44.00 - 61.00
Butcher Cows 66.00 - 75.00
Butcher Bulls 66.00 - 87.00
Stock Cows Yng. N/A
Younger Hfrts. 81.00 - 124.00
Stock Cows Older. - 975.00 - 1225.00

ProducersLivestock.com

541-473-3136

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Price per 1,000 board feet: Northeast Oregon

Currently the local log market is flooded with fire salvage logs. The log buyer for Malheur Lumber Co. stated they have all the logs they need under contract and are not accepting any new purchases. BCC/LLC of La Grande has receive so many burned fire salvage logs they are no longer accepting logs at the La Grande log yard. Any additional pine logs have to be delivered to the Elgin Log yard cut in plywood lengths and to a 8 inch top. For these pine logs cut in plywood lengths, BCC is offering \$280.00/mbf. They are also paying \$410.00/mbf for Doug Fir & Western Larch. For White Fir they are offering \$310.00/mbf. At the Pilot Rock Saw Mill BCC is offering \$360.00/mbf for a 12 to 15 inch top, for 16 to 19 inch top \$400.00/mbf & offering \$425.00/mbf for 20 inch plus top

Courtesy of Arvid Andersen,
Andersen Forestry Consulting

— PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1,265.60

Silver: \$15.45

Platinum: \$987.65

Palladium: \$566.18

Bloomberg.com

— AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$361.75/bu/USD

Wheat: \$464.75/bu/USD

Soybeans: \$883.75/bu/USD

Oats: \$188.25 bu/USD

Rough Rice: \$10.66/cwt/USD

Canola: \$456.30 CAD/mwt

Live Cattle: \$137.25/lb./USD

Feeder Cattle: \$158.85/lb./USD

Lean Hogs: \$68.98/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com