

Sumpter News

LeAnne Woolf
541-894-2303, leannemywo@gmail.com

As with the rest of the state, Sumpter's weather has been erratic. We had a couple of nights that got down in the mid to low thirties. Maybe not the time to put out those zucchini starts. Irrigation release from Phillips has also shifted. The fill on the reservoir was almost down to 31,000 acre-feet on June 12th.

Calendar (as of June 13)

Thursday, June 16: Bag Ladies, noon, Community Center
Thursday, June 16: Planning Commission, 7 pm, City Hall
Friday, June 17: Bingo, 7 pm, Community Center
Tuesday, June 21: SVFD and PRR fire training, 6:30 pm
Tuesday, June 28: recall election ballots due back to County
Tuesday, June 28: O.E.S. Alpine Chapter, 8 pm, Masonic Hall
Friday, July 1: Flea Market opens
Monday, July 4: Flea Market closes
City

We're up to yellow alert: NO GROUND FIRES. This means

that you need to use burn barrels and other containers when having a fire. Burn permits are required in the City of Sumpter for burning needles and such. Burn permits are available at City Hall for five dollars, but approval is subject to the inspection of your burn barrel.

Organizations

Sumpter Valley Community Volunteers (SVCV) met on June 9. The covered walkway for the ramp at the Schoolhouse Community Center has received zoning approval and the building permit application has been filed with Baker City Building Department. Three acts have been confirmed for Music in the Meadow (September 17-18): Frank Carlson of Baker City, Mad Cassidy of La Grande, and Just Us from Seneca. The board is back to full strength with the addition of Dick Browne.

Upcoming Fun Events

The Fire Department Auxiliary is hosting Bingo at 7 pm at the Community Center on June 17.

The jackpot is up to \$460. SVCV is hosting a potluck and horse-shoe extravaganza at Volunteer Park at 5:30 pm on Monday, June 20, the first day of summer. Bring a side dish and your own table service and non-alcoholic beverages.

Churches

Sumpter Sunday morning services are held at St. Brigid's in the Pines at Auburn and Bonanza on the first and third Sundays of the month at 11 a.m., followed by a coffee 'hour.' Weekly services at McEwen Bible Fellowship include Sunday School at 9:45 a.m., Morning Worship at 11 a.m., and Wednesday evening prayer at 6:45 p.m.

Deadline and Disclaimer

Send in news and/or photos by Sunday evening to be included in the Sumpter column the following week. Include captions with photos.

I am involved in several of the organizations appearing in this column, but I do not report as an official representative of any of them.

WOODLANDS *continued from page 2*

The Defrees Family: An Operation for the Generations



Submitted photo

Approximately 150 people braved the chilly morning temperatures to tour the forestry and ranching operations of Lyle and Dean and Sharon Defrees. Located in the Sumpter Valley, just south of Baker City, the family has managed their property for more than 107 years. They have focused on wood, water, recreation, wildlife and ranching. It is a certified Century Ranch.

The spectacular beauty of the property was not lost on anyone taking the tour. Unlike many private forest properties on the west side of the state, the Defrees operation underscored to participants how cattle and timber co-exist in order for families on the east side of the state to make a living. A management balance the Defrees family has accomplished with great success.

A third generation family member, retired ranch manager, and a Master Woodland Manager, Lyle Defrees, addressed the large crowd. He shared a history of the ranch and changes made through the years.

"My grandfather purchased part of the property in 1904. 'In 1946, we used a portable saw. In 1949, we added a circular saw. Now we use a band saw," said Defrees. "We cut the lumber needed for the ranch."

"I'm going to show you how we use our equipment and how we manage our property. It might be different than how others do it, but this is how we do it and it has worked for us."

Today, Dean and his wife, Sharon, manage the 2,000 acre operation. Approximately 1,200 acres are timberland, the remaining acres are used for the cattle operation. Third, fourth and fifth generation family members call the ranch home.

5th generation, Dallas Defrees addressed the crowd about her role in the restoration of gold dredge tailings that reside on the northern border of their property. "I needed a project for my senior thesis. I liked the idea because it meant something to my family."

Beginning in 1913, and over the next 40 years, gold dredges snaked their way through the Sumpter Valley. They dredged 18-20 feet below the ground surface. In total, 2500 acres of land was altered.

The property was an eyesore. It was overrun by weeds, allowing very little other vegetation a chance to grow. The family saw an active way to gain land for winter and summer feeding, while working with the County to reduce a runaway weed problem. They leased from Baker County the 10.6 acre plot for 10 years.

A balanced plan for grazing and seeding was agreed upon. Year three brought noticeable improvement with an extensive increase in organic matter. Another 40-acre plot was added.

"With the help of my professor, I picked three test sites to monitor the soil changes," said Defrees. "Tests and observations were conducted to demonstrate what had changed in 20 years of treatment. Data was collected and compiled so that I could de-

termine if there was a real difference being made."

20 years later, with the help of Dallas' data, the family continues to demonstrate positive changes in the soil composition, increased vegetation, species change and an increased value of aesthetics.

Following Dallas' presentation, participants boarded a series of wagons. Benches on the wagons had been constructed by Dean Defrees out of oak trees found on the property and lumbered thru the family mill.

One of the stops on the tour was an impressive stand of aspen trees. Dean Defrees has been very involved in this project.

"We started the project with six aspen trees that had been cloned from the ranch," stated Defrees.

Fencing was erected to protect the seedlings from elk, deer and cattle browsing. Though modest in its start, participants were impressed with its success. "There a number of changes as a result of the trees," said Defrees. "One that is very noticeable is the number of bats that have returned to the area."

Several tour participants were curious about elk and the impact they might have on the grazing and timber areas.

Lyle Defrees fielded that question. "We have about 50-100 resident elk. We don't have elk fences. They just break them down. I have estimated the cost to us is about \$6,000 per year to let them remain here. They are intelligent thieves. We don't try to keep them out."

Several tour stops embraced the family's committed and inventive efforts to develop a water source for wildlife, cattle and fire abatement. Dean Defrees smiled and said, "It's always good to have water when you have a fire."

The final stop for the group focused on a thinning and logging project completed by the family. Lyle Defrees gave a detailed outline to the group including costs and revenues associated with this type of project.

It was suggested by a participant that fire could be used as a tool to manage underbrush. Defrees was clear in his response. "Fire is our enemy, not our friend." He has good reason to feel this way. In 1986, the Defrees family lost "a lot of timber" as a result of an aggressive fire. Defrees went on to say, "Man has not learned to control fire. Others might do it differently, but this is our way."

A lesson not lost on any of the participants having heard Eileen Gyllenberg's story just two days earlier.

And, Like the Gyllenberg family on Thursday, the Defrees family rolled out the Chuck Wagon for a superb Country Natural Beef lunch at the completion of the tour.

Before departing, members of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association presented the Defrees family with the 2015 Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year award. In addition, the family has been nominated for the Northwest Regional Tree Farmer of the Year.

Eastern Oregon HS Rodeo Team: Where Champions are Made



Submitted photo

Members of the Eastern Oregon Rodeo Team who qualified for the OHSRA state finals. Left to Right: Duncan MacKenzie, Samantha Kerns, Lexie Harrell, Kimberly Williams and Matt Siddoway. Not pictured are Team Members Logan Nedrow and Dylan Orr.

2016 Final Standing

Team Roping Headers

Place	Points
5th Kimberly Williams	170.0

Steer Wrestling

Place	Time
4th Matt Siddoway	14.51

Tie Down Roping

Place	Points
Duncan Mackenzie	101.0

Steer Wrestling

Place	Points
Matt Siddoway	74

Barrel Racing

Place	Points
4th Samantha Kerns	120.0

Pole Bending

Place	Points
9th Kimberly Williams	57.0

Boys Cutting

Place	Points
Duncan Mackenzie	54.5

Girls Cutting

Place	Points
10th Lexie Harrell	16.83



Quail Ridge Ladies Day • June 8, 2016

Golf Winners

1st Flight	Birdie Carp; Irvine
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1st Myrna Evans

2nd Lavelle Woodcock

2nd Flight

1st Kathy Hopkins

3rd Flight

1st (tie) Roxanne McAdams;

Carol Irvine

Bridge Winners:

1st Margo Kenworthy

2nd Dianne Ellingson

3rd Marlene Cross

Frank and Shirley Randall Chosen
2016 Eagle Valley Day Grand Marshalls

Hells Canyon Journal photo



Woodlands group tours family ranch by wagon. Submitted photo