

PENDLETON

Residents wrangle bucks by renting homes during Round-Up

By EMILY OLSON
East Oregonian

Jared Tesch didn't go to Round-Up last year. He didn't even stick around town.

"I'm not much of a cowboy myself," he said, though growing up in Umatilla meant he had witnessed quite a bit of rodeo action. When he moved to Pendleton three years ago, he made sure to introduce his wife and four kids to the festivities. But rather than see the show year after year, he wanted to try something new. So he packed up his family and took them to Disneyland.

Meanwhile, a group of Korean businessmen rented out his home, giving the Teschs an extra \$2,000 to put toward the happiest place on earth.

Every year, Pendleton residents seize the lucrative potential of renting out their homes during the city's busiest week of the year. Some leave tradition behind in search of new adventures, and others bunk with friends or family to make a few extra bucks off Let 'er Buck season.

It's a tradition that's been going on for decades, said Adrienne Lapp, communications coordinator for the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber offers advertisements for the private housing on their website for a \$25 fee. They expanded the program this year to include Pendleton Whisky Music Fest and Bike Week, but it's too early to tell if those events will prove as popular



Staff photo by Emily Olson

The Tesch family rents their three-bedroom house to Round-Up visitors for \$400 per night while they head out of town.

with those looking to rent.

In a typical year, Lapp said they get about 50 clients looking to rent out their houses, RV spots, single rooms or tent spaces. The list price ranges from \$25 per night for a tent space to \$625 for an entire house. Some offer their spaces from Saturday to Saturday while others just offer the latter half of Round-Up week.

A few residents rely on Craigslist or Airbnb to advertise, but that is less frequent than going through

the Chamber of Commerce.

"People who come to Round-Up know about the chamber website," said Terry Fife, a longtime Pendleton resident who has rented out his house for the past three rodeos. He said most of the 25 calls he gets come from mid- to late-age professional types from Portland.

Rod Theis, who has welcomed Round-Up renters for the past 10 years, said most of his patrons are well-to-do ranchers. He has also rented out to volunteers with

Tough Enough to Wear Pink and the Urban League of Portland.

"I've never had a bad experience," he said. "All I do is screen (them) over the phone."

To guard against cancellations, he asks for a refundable security deposit and the full fee up front before handing over the keys.

"I am a bit anxious," said Kathy Beck, mostly in jest. She's renting her house out for the first time this year to save up for a winter skiing adventure. It was easy enough

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— Rod Theis, has rented his home during Round-Up for the past 10 years

to find an extra bed with a local friend for Round-Up week, she said. But the process of readying her house for visitors isn't that simple.

"I was out there this morning at 6 a.m. trying to get the final stain on my deck," she said. "It's put me quite under the gun for some projects I've been working on. I have an idea for what sort of state my house should be in for guests. It's a pretty high standard."

It's that hospitality-first philosophy that led Tesch to rent out his house in the first place. While he appreciates the Round-Up and accompanying culture, he's not one to volunteer. So with 50,000 people visiting, the least he can do is offer a place to stay, he said.

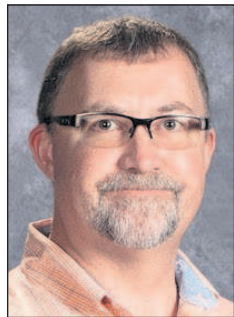
Plus, his kids enjoyed Disneyland more than Round-Up. Visiting the park in its off-season meant the weather was great, the lines were short — "but inevitably, you run into people from Pendleton," he said. "If they're not at Round-Up, they're all over the place."

Contact Emily Olson at eolson@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0809

UMATILLA

High School teacher named state civic scholar

East Oregonian



Early

A Umatilla School District teacher has been named a 2017-2018 civic scholar, a statewide honor that recognizes teachers dedicated to civics education.

Chris Early, a civics teacher at Umatilla High School, was selected by State Representative Greg Smith for the honor. Each state representative selects two teachers from their

district to be civic scholars, and those teachers are enrolled for the Civics Conference at the state Capitol in December.

Early has taught in the Umatilla School District for 13 years. He said he was surprised by the nomination, but was looking forward to attending the conference.

"I wouldn't miss it," he said. "I'll be in good company."

Early said he tries to help

students become critical thinkers.

"I look to equip students to discern what's good information and what's not," he said. That includes talking about the U.S. government from a structural standpoint.

"I try to give students a thorough grounding in the Constitution," he said. "This is why our government looks the way it does."

The conference will feature presentations from each branch of government, and lessons from master teachers about how to implement civics lessons into curriculum.

"I expect to come away with a lot of good stuff for my students," Early said.

The conference is put on by the Classroom Law Project, a program dedicated to engaging students in government.

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2801 St. Anthony Way,
Pendleton, OR
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