

WAGON: ‘They are so obedient and willing to listen. They have great minds.’

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is de Mol?,” where Dutch celebrities earn prize money by accomplishing assorted challenges. The subtitled episode retraced the Oregon Trail and was shot at the Pendleton Round-Up Grounds, local ranches and on Battle Mountain.

Both Leonard and Cook experienced driving wagons on the streets of Portland when they appeared in the Portland Rose Parade. Leonard said Wagon Train Adventures to her knowledge is the only carriage company licensed in Portland.

“It wasn’t easy to get a permit,” said Leonard, who added that she even had to take a pedi driver’s test.

Neither Leonard nor Cook seem worried about taking a team of mules to busy Portland streets, though they said anything can happen. The mules must stay cool as cars and the occasional skateboarder whoosh by.

“Our horses and mules have to trust us and we have to trust them,” Leonard said. “We desensitize them as much as we can. There are always things you don’t expect.”

Cook, who lives in Irrigon, expects his pair of six-year-old mules to weather the experience just fine.

“They are so obedient and willing to listen,” he said. “They have great minds.”

Both animals pulled wagons during the Portland Rose Parade. Cook said he worries more about people than he does his mules. A child, for example, once ran



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Vickie Leonard is greeted by her two Percheron draft horses, Duke and Doc, in a pasture near her home in Pendleton.



Left: Safety features such as running lights and flashing lights are required to make the wagon street legal and to get insurance. Right: Leonard has multiple covered wagons that she plans on using for commercial wagon excursions.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

underneath one of the mules.

“Every time I’ve had an incident, it’s been because people weren’t thinking,” he said. “It wasn’t the animals.”

Leonard said she spends a lot of time preparing horse and mule teams for the unforeseen, systematically desensitizing them by taking them to downtown Pendleton, rolling balls underneath them, exposing them to loud noises and other such techniques.

“I get them jazzed up and then calm them down with my voice,” Leonard said.

She looks forward to giving people the experience of a covered wagon ride. Usually, the team gets rock-star treatment. A typical reaction is one of awe.

“They’re just enthralled,” she said. “We get mobbed wherever we are.”

Lyft customers can get a free ride (up to \$10) to the Oregon Historical Society by going to the Lyft app, clicking on the face icon in the upper lefthand corner, clicking on “promo codes” and entering OREGON-TRAIL175. For a wagon ride, sign up outside the Historical Society. The Historical Society will offer free entry to anyone who takes a wagon ride, which lasts approximately 15 minutes and travels through the park blocks.

Leonard and Cook will preface the four days in downtown Portland by giving mule-drawn wagon rides at the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Oregon City Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

TOURISM: Less than one percent of land in the three states affected by fires

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travelers polled said wildfires prompted them to cancel their trips to California in July, a \$20 million loss in that month alone, she said, noting tourists are dissuaded by fire images. Nearly half said they would choose another state to visit, given active wildfires.

But officials from the three states stressed that less than one percent of land in the three states has been affected by fires.

“The real crisis for the tourism industry isn’t the fire itself but the news coverage and conversation around the fire,” Beteta said. “Videos can be alarming and cause people to cancel their trip, particularly international trips.”

Hospitality businesses in and near California parks, such as popular Yosemite National Park, are still reeling from a three-week closure during the park’s peak visitor season. The park reopened on Aug. 14 and the

fire that threatened Yosemite Valley is fully contained. In nearby Madera County, officials estimate they’ll lose \$10 million this year due to the prolonged closure of a main artery into the park.

Oregon also lost \$51 million in tourism revenue last year, according to a 2017 wildfire study by Travel Oregon.

“Fire and smoke may not care much about state lines, but we do care about the experience and the perception that it’s inaccessible due

to the fires,” Travel Oregon CEO Todd Davidson said.

The group says it will work together to communicate with tourism businesses, residents and visitors, but officials said there is no ad campaign planned yet.

Washington state tourism officials said the number of trips canceled to their state has not been severe, rather, most tourists are adjusting their schedules. But tour companies have canceled trips to protect customers’ health from poor

air quality, said Shiloh Burgess, co-chair of Washington Tourism Alliance.

Air quality conditions are improving in the Seattle region after days of unhealthy smoke and haze but officials warned it’s not over yet. An air quality alert issued Sunday remains in effect until noon Thursday. Air quality was also a concern in eastern Washington, as the state has endured a second straight summer of unhealthy, smoky air from wildfires.

In California, Cal Fire firefighters are gaining ground in the battle against fires in Northern California affecting the counties of Shasta, Trinity, Mendocino, Lake, Colusa and Glenn. The fires have burned more than 1,000 square miles (2,600 square kilometers) combined to date this year. Air quality in San Francisco, Oakland, and Yreka continued to be at unhealthy levels as of Thursday afternoon, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

MURDER: Cantu one of four suspects

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The charges come from a secret indictment, according to court records, which a grand jury handed up Tuesday after hearing from four witnesses, including two Milton-Freewater police officers.

Cantu is one of four suspects in the shooting, which Milton-Freewater police reported was gang-related. There were no injuries. He was in jail in Walla Walla for attempting to elude a police vehicle, according to the *Walla Walla Union-Bulletin*, but posted bail Tuesday. Milton-Freewater police took Cantu into custody Wednesday afternoon in Pendleton.

Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts said Milton-Freewater police detec-

tive Morgan Dunlap asked for help in contacting Cantu, who works at Keystone RV off Westgate in Pendleton. Dunlap and Pendleton officers met with Cantu, and the detective booked the suspect into the Pendleton jail on the secret indictment.

Charley Lozano Magana and Juan Venegas Esquivel, both 24 and Walla Walla residents, remain in jail in Walla Walla. The *Union-Bulletin* reported they appeared Thursday in Walla Walla County Superior Court and waived extradition to face charges in Umatilla County.

Police reported the fourth suspect is a juvenile but have not released his identity.

The shooting took place late Friday, according to police, and the suspects fled in a vehicle to Walla Walla,

where law enforcement spotted and pursued them. They crashed near 5-Mile Road, bailed out and ran.

Officers soon caught Magana and Esquivel, and later arrested Cantu. Walla Walla police reported catching the juvenile took a bit more effort.

After the crash, Farel joined the search for the suspects. Farel is one of the police dogs for Walla Walla. Farel found a piece of clothing and tracked the scent to a nearby winery.

“Officers found people outside enjoying an event,” according to a written statement from Walla Walla police, “and were advised the suspect took an Uber.”

Police called the ride service and arrested the teen in Milton-Freewater.

BISON: When he saw the bison on the road he decided to try to herd it off

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out of the car to see if there was a way he could help clear a traffic jam.

When he saw the bison on the road he decided to try to herd it off, the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* reported.

“I thought I was doing what was appropriate,” Reinke said. “I just didn’t think. That’s my stupidity.”

In the viral video, Reinke is seen walking up to a bison waving his arms. The animal charges him a couple times, but he was not injured. Yellowstone National Park regulations require people to stay

25 yards (23 meters) away from bison.

He was cited for intentionally disturbing wildlife and having an open container of alcohol, but rangers were unaware of the conditions of his bond, which required him to remain law-abiding and avoid alcohol.

However, Reinke had mentioned his next stop was Glacier National Park. When officials put the whole story together a judge revoked Reinke’s bond in the Grand Teton case and rangers arrested him in Glacier park on Aug. 3. Officials say he was causing a disturbance there, as well,

but he was not cited.

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