



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Beth Fitch of Beavercreek, and Gregg Zessin of Milton-Freewater, talk about a Studebaker Bros. rockaway carriage up for auction at the Westward Ho! Wagon and Western Memorabilia Auction on Friday in Pendleton.

Auction: Auctioned items ranged from the expected to the bizarre

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After 12 p.m., Kelly Trout broke into the familiar stuttering patter of an auctioneer as staff members from Downs Auction paced around the floor to show off their wares, occasionally punctuating Trout's salesmanship with a "Yes!" whenever a bidder indicated they were willing to go higher.

The auctioned items ranged from the expected, like spurs, reins, bridles and harnesses, to the bizarre, like a concave rod with a piece of antler attached to it that Downs Auction owner Larry Downs called an "attitude adjuster."

Tongue planted in cheek, Trout called it a "spousal spur" and told the audience they were unlikely to see anything like it again. It sold for \$20.

Shane Laib of Walla Walla came to the Westward Ho! Auction as both a buyer and a seller. From his vendor's booth, Laib successfully bid for a plaster sculpture of a bull's head.

Laib plans to mount the bull's head in the western room at his house, but some of the other items he bought would go right back into his Three Doors Vintage, Laib's antique business.

A board director for the Walla Walla Fair and Frontier Days, Laib said bidding at auctions took quick wits and mental math because bidders



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Auctioneer Larry Bounds with Bounds Auction Company out of Boise calls out a bid during the first day of the Westward Ho! Wagon and Western Memorabilia Auction on Friday in Pendleton.

not only had to consider the dollar amount being asked for by the auctioneer, but the 10 percent seller's premium that would be charged.

But the event was a win-win for Laib, who not only came away with some items but also sold some of his own inventory as well.

Other attendees were more interested in finding fellowship in the community rather than bidding on items.

After carefully inspecting a Studebaker wagon, Gregg Zessin of Milton-Freewater said he doesn't do much collecting anymore,

but he still likes to come to wagon auctions to admire the craftsmanship.

In the era of mass-produced products, Zessin said the Round-Up is a good organization to keep wagon auctions going.

"Thank goodness for the people who keep it up," he said.

As fellow wagon enthusiasts, Beth Fitch and her husband Alan came out to support the Leonards.

The Fitches have participated in the wagon train for 30 years, and Beth said they don't have a need for more

wagons at their home in Beavercreek, a hamlet of about 4,500 near Oregon City.

The couple did end up with some equine equipment, and they were also happy that there was an auction show in Pendleton.

The Round-Up and Happy Canyon are aiming that this year's attendees will have something to come back to next year.

Vickie Leonard told the audience before the auction began that they intended to turn the auction into an annual event that happens each April.

"THANK GOODNESS FOR THE PEOPLE WHO KEEP IT UP."

Gregg Zessin, Milton-Freewater man who still likes to come to wagon auctions to admire the craftsmanship

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2019 Arts and Culture Festival Sense of Place - April 15-18

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE:

Bette Husted

- Writer and retired BMCC English instructor

Bette Lynch Husted lives and writes in Pendleton, Oregon. Her works include *At This Distance: Poems* (Wordcraft of Oregon, 2010), a chapbook *After Fire* (Pudding House, 2002), and a collection of memoir essays, *Above the Clearwater: Living on Stolen Land* (OSU Press, 2004), which was a finalist for the Oregon Book Award and winner of the WILLA Award in creative nonfiction. A second essay collection, *Lessons from the Borderlands*, is forthcoming in 2011 from Plain View Press.

Her essays, poems, and stories have appeared in *Northwest Review*, *Fourth Genre*, *UTNE*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Oregon Humanities*, *New Poets of the American West*, and elsewhere. She was a *Fishtrap* Fellow and received a 2007 Oregon Arts Commission Award.

Bette also shared her talents with students at BMCC as an English instructor. She retired from teaching in 2002.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

PENDLETON**MONDAY, APRIL 15**

9 am: Jamie McLeod Skinner, "Bridging the Divide in Oregon: a purposeful focus on how we communicate" P-132.

10 am: Bette Husted, author of *All Coyote's Children* and published poet, artist-in-residence, Theatre.

11 am: Luther's Boots. How does art alter a space? What if that space is a prison yard? 50th anniversary of Johnny Cash playing "At Folsom Prison," Theatre

12 pm: Bill and Kathy Aney. They gained an appreciation for the people, landscapes, and wildlife of Madagascar, and what they experienced there changed them. Theatre

6 pm: "100 Years: One Woman's Fight for Justice." Elouise Cobell, a Blackfoot warrior, activist, and tribal treasurer, files suit against the United States government. Documentary screening, ST-200

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

10 am: "Exploring Power and Privilege with Courage, Creativity, and Compassion." Oregon Humanities Conversation project. Rishi D'Cruz considers ways to heal and thrive in a beautiful but broken world. (90 minutes), M-100

12 pm: "The Space Between Us: Immigrants, Refugees, and Oregon." Oregon Humanities Conversation Project. Manuel Padilla asks participants to consider identity, perception, and integration after global displacement. (90 minutes), ST-200

12 pm: Adam Sims, photographer. Photography helps Adam appreciate and also interact with the natural world. Hands-on workshop. Max. 30 students. Registration required, Betty Feves Gallery

2 pm: Creative Writing Contest winners read their work (Contest Entry Form and Rules), Betty Feves Gallery

7 pm: EO Forum. Panel discussion on a new generation of leaders, featuring Susan Bower, Selene Torres-Medrano, and George Murdock, ST-200

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

8 am: "The Space Between Us: Immigrants, Refugees, and Oregon." Oregon Humanities Conversation Project led by Manuel Padilla. (50 minutes), P-8

9 am: Video contest kick off with JJ Hill, Student Union

2-4 pm: "Jenys Heart with Art" student Paint Along sponsored by ASG. Registration required. Click here to Register, Student Union

7 pm: Bette Husted, author of *All Coyote's Children* and published poet, Artist-in-Residence, Theatre

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

12 pm: Bette Husted, Rich Wandschneider, and Pam Steele-Reese. Writers in the round, Theatre

5 pm: Video contest showing and contest results, Student Union

TUESDAY, MAY 21

10 am: "Where are Queer People Welcome?" Oregon Humanities Conversation Project led by Jillian Winsor

HERMISTON

TUESDAY, APRIL 16

1 pm: "Exploring Power and Privilege with Courage, Creativity, and Compassion." Oregon Humanities Conversation project. Rishi D'Cruz considers ways to heal and thrive in a beautiful but broken world. (90 minutes), EOHEC Rm - 134

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

11 am: Koi Nyz. Koi recounts her walk as a child from Laos to Thailand as part of the *lu Mien* diaspora, EOHEC Rm-134

11:30am-1pm: ASG BBQ

1pm: "The Space Between Us: Immigrants, Refugees, and Oregon." Oregon Humanities Conversation Project led by Manuel Padilla, EOHEC Rm - 234 (50 minutes).

2pm: Bette Husted: artist-in-residence writer's workshop, EOHEC Rm - 231

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

11 am: BMCC alumni Carina Garcia and Ivan Hernandez discuss their work for immigrants' rights in Oregon. EOHEC Rm - 134

12 pm: "Mommy, Am I too fat to be a Princess?" Exploring the media's effect on young women's perceptions of self with Jacelyn Keys. EOHEC Rm - 134

1 pm: Voices of Hope: Promoting safety and education for young Maasai women facing FGM. (and African bazaar), EOHEC Rm - 134

2 pm: Courtney Platt, NPR reporter on her climb of Kilimanjaro and time in Tanzania. EOHEC Rm - 134.



Pensions: 'I am not willing to kick the can down the road'

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testified in front of legislators. "But make no mistake: By stabilizing PERS rates for schools, we also stabilize jobs for teachers and educators."

The state's Public Employee Retirement System, or PERS, has been paying out more in benefits than it has taken in in contributions, causing debt to skyrocket past \$26 billion. That has caused rate hikes, forcing public agencies to pay more into the system each year.

The state's unfunded liabilities are only set to get worse, especially as Baby Boomers continue to age out of the workforce. Around 30% of employees in the system are eligible for retirement, according to state estimates.

Brown wants to manage rising costs by shifting some of the pension responsibilities to educators. She's

asking for teachers to contribute between 1.5% and 3% of their pay to the state's pension fund, depending on when they were hired. The first \$20,000 in salary would be exempted. Teachers hired before 2004 — when the pension plan had more generous benefits — would pay the higher rates.

The Oregon Education Association, the largest teachers union in the state, slammed the idea, saying it diminishes teacher salary at a time when educators across the country are going on strike over low pay. Oregon teachers are planning a walkout in May to bring attention to what they say is the state's disinvestment in the education system.

"This proposal takes Oregon backwards and will harm students and schools by making it more difficult to recruit and retain qualified educators and increasing teacher shortages," said Jenny Smith, communi-

cations consultant for the Oregon Education Association.

But the executive director of the Oregon School Boards Association, Jim Green, seemed more encouraged. He said Brown offered a solution to mitigate rising costs without taking money from classrooms.

"She has at least put a plan forward that we can begin discussing this legislative session as opposed to no plans being put forward and everybody pointing fingers while students are left to suffer the costs," Green said.

Brown's plan also calls for \$800 million in one-time payments, either through a temporary surcharge on all state fees or by taking money from existing revenue funds, including from the state's workers' compensation company and from lottery and general funds.

Another option could dip into the state's so-called "2% kicker" rebate program, which returns excess funds

to taxpayers when Oregon has at least 2% more in revenue than what state economists forecast. This year's kicker, which comes in the form of a tax credit, was expected to be the highest in state history at \$748 million, with an average payout of \$367 per taxpayer. That number already went down to \$640 million after Brown signed a bill to take \$108 million from the kicker fund.

She's now thinking of giving taxpayers the first \$100 of their rebate, sending the rest to the pension fund. That would require a two-thirds vote from the legislature, likely a heavy lift.

"We are all in this together: taxpayers, elected officials, school board members, and public employees," Brown testified. "If we don't make the difficult decisions now, things are only going to get worse. I am not willing to kick the can down the road to a future legislature or governor."