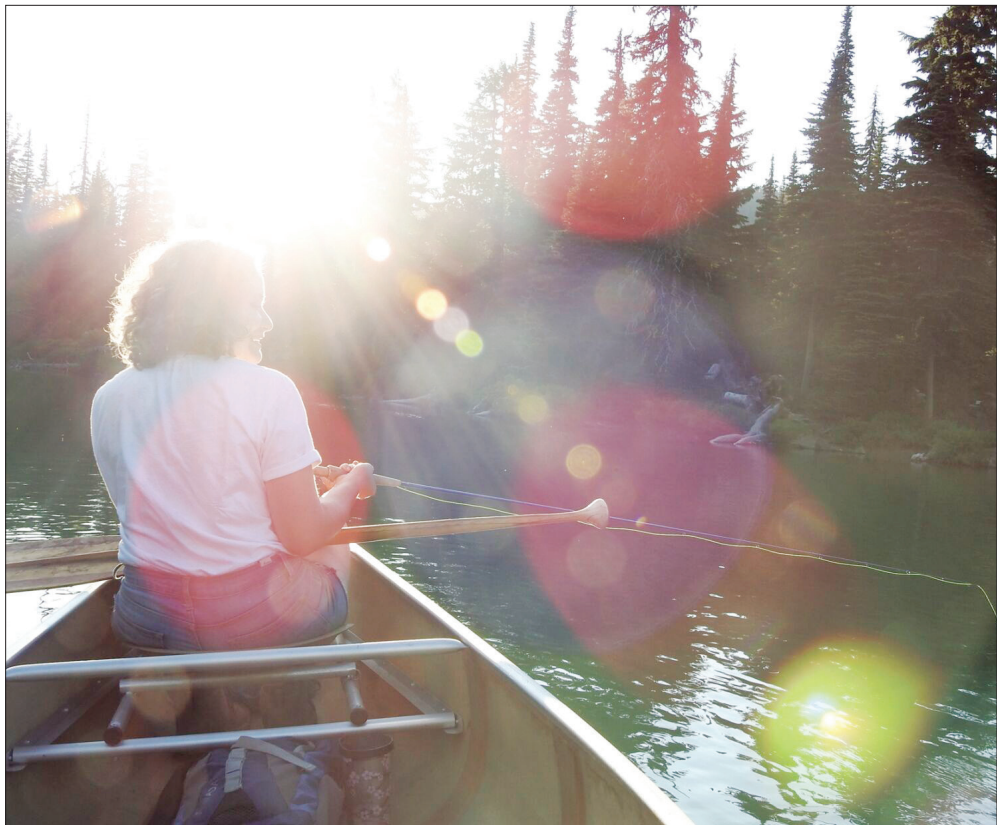


Seven steps to fly-fishing freedom



GARY LEWIS

ON THE TRAIL



Mikayla Lewis trolling a fly for trout. A low rod position allows the angler to both feel the fish strike and respond with plenty of arc to set the hook.

Gary Lewis/Contributed Photo

Stroll into any fly shop in Eastern Oregon and chances are the person that walks in behind you has never fly-fished before. They're looking to get into the sport and don't know how to start.

Here's what happens. Somebody has invited them on a trip. Perhaps it's a "bucket list" thing — they need to check it off as something they've done. Maybe they just moved here from California and have always wanted to fly-fish. Maybe they saw a movie with the young Brad Pitt casting a fly on a rollicking cutthroat stream.

For whatever reason, they are here and ready to fly-fish. They're a bit scared, afraid what other people might think when they see them hang a fly in a tree.

Here's the thing. We all start at zero, ground level. No one is born knowing how to tie a knot or execute a roll cast or dead-drift a dry. We have to learn it. Sometimes at an early age. Sometimes later. Fly-fishermen, despite our self-righteous tendencies, are welcoming. We like to see people learn to cast, select a fly and take it to water.

Yet the first-timer's fear, it lingers.

Picture the president of a successful company. He does everything well, he is admired, successful and now he wants to fly-fish. He knows he has no skills, he knows he has to start at ground level and work his way into a sport in which he is a latecomer. Some people never get past this point. It is time to face the fear, pick up a rod and learn a new way of life. That's what it is.

Let's say you are fishing next week. This might be the first time, it might be the first time in a long time. If you want to hide the fact you are a rank amateur, here is how to get ready for the first trip.



Gary Lewis/Contributed Photo
This Eastern Oregon rainbow fell for a CJ Rufus, a streamer with a marabou underwing and lots of flash.

Take a casting lesson

You're going to have to admit to someone that you don't know how to cast. Go into a fly shop. Schedule a lesson. Learn the simple pick-up and lay-down, the basic overhead and the roll cast. It can all be taught and absorbed in an hour.

Learn a knot

Go online and learn to tie the improved clinch knot. That's the only one you really need to know right now. Later on you will want to learn the blood knot and the surgeon's knot, but that can wait.

Get a fly rod

Don't borrow someone else's gear. Get your own. It doesn't have to cost a lot of money. There are

combo outfits on the shelves at sporting goods stores. Put it together, watch some YouTube videos and practice simple casts in the backyard.

Hang out in a fly shop

Wander around, buy a fly box and a few trout flies, look at the recommendations of where to fish that are usually posted on the wall. Listen to other anglers. You need to pick up a few buzz words to know what they're talking about. Lines, line weights, rod actions, leaders, tippets, wet flies, dry flies, nymphs. There is a lot to learn, but it is easy to pick up.

Read a comic book

This is important. "Curtis Creek Manifesto" was written in a style that appeals to the 11-year-old in all of us. Pick it up and read it cover to cover. Other options: "The Secrets of St. Anthony's Creek" by Michael Rahtz or "Get Started Fly-fishing" by Craig Schuhmann. All are available from Frank Amato Publications and can be found in any fly shop. Either book will help to lay a foundation for a fly-fishing future.

Buy a funny hat

Stick a fly in it. Stick

another fly in it. You need a hat anyway, to shade the eyes while you watch for fish. If you have flies in your hat it implies you have fished before and rejected those patterns for something better.

Get a fishing license

And not just a day license. Don't wait for Free Fishing Weekend. Get a license for the whole year. You're either a fisherman or you're not.

Last summer my youngest daughter bought her fishing license and we packed the canoe in the back of the Ford. At the lake, I made her leave her spinning rod in the truck.

"It's time to continue your fly-fishing education," I said.

She frowned when I handed her a 3-weight fly rod. But she remembered what she knew about fly-fishing and caught and released nine trout.

"You have a fly rod of your own," I reminded her as we put the boat back on the truck. "Yes, I should use it more."

That's what I was thinking.

Gary Lewis is the author of "Bob Nosler Born Ballistic," "Fishing Central Oregon" and other titles. To contact Gary, visit www.garylewisoutdoors.com.

Club:

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punter and honorable mention kicker.

In addition to his rushing yards, he had 821 receiving yards with six touchdowns, threw for four touchdowns and had two more on returns. Defensively, he had 59 solo tackles, 37 assists, three interceptions and four quarterback sacks.

Burns also is a standout basketball player, helping the Golden Eagles to a state title in 2019, and a third-place finish in 2020.

In the classroom, Burns has carried a 4.0 GPA his junior and senior years.

He received an academic scholarship to Eastern Washington University, where he plans to attend in the fall.

Blake Swanson

A third-generation Buckaroo, Swanson excelled in football, basketball and baseball.

He started playing football in the third grade through the Pendleton Youth Football program, and his "Black" team won the Requa Bowl.

His first experience with the Pendleton High team came as a ball boy — a job he did for four years.

While playing with the Bucks, Swanson lined up at receiver, tight end, fullback, defensive end and punter. His senior year, he was named to the Intermountain Conference second team as a defensive lineman.

On the baseball diamond, Swanson was named to the IMC second team as an outfielder and received the team's Golden Glove for his position.

The Bucks are in the midst of their basketball season, where Swanson plays center and is the team's leading rebounder.

Swanson and Nic Sheley were awarded the Damon Flagg Award, which is presented to a senior who has dedicated himself to

basketball, academics and community service throughout his four high school years. Each athlete will receive a \$250 scholarship.

Swanson also was one of the recipients of the Walt Johnson Award, recognizing him for being a three-sport athlete all four years of high school.

Swanson, regarded as a two-star recruit by 24/7 Sports, has signed a letter of intent to play football at Western Oregon University. He plans to major in either criminal justice or education.

Sam Coleman

A football player and honor student, Coleman leaves Pendleton with fond memories.

He was part of the state semifinal team as a sophomore and had success as a senior during a season affected by COVID-19. The Bucks

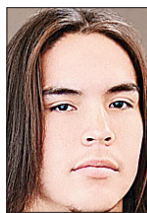
finished with a 4-2 record in a shortened season that did not include state playoffs.

Coleman was an Intermountain Conference selection at linebacker his senior year.

Academically, Coleman graduated with a 3.9 GPA, and has been a member of the National Honor Society the past two years. During graduation, he was able to wear honor cords for performing more than 20 hours of community service as a member of the NHS.

"I am extremely grateful for the Linebackers Club and all they do for the Pendleton football program," Coleman wrote in his biography for the Linebackers' award ceremony. "I'm grateful for their willingness to help me further my education with this scholarship and help me accomplish my future aspirations."

Coleman, who also participated in track and field, plans to attend Brigham Young University to study business management.



Burns



Coleman



Swanson

Bull riding:

Continued from Page B1

around cattle and I'm fairly athletic, so I decided to combine the two," he said.

Peterson has been bullfighting professionally for five years, which has taken him to rodeos all over the Pacific Northwest. He said he is grateful for the opportunity to live out his dream and make a living from it.

"When he first started, I had a hard time with it because it was hard for me to watch," Peterson's mother, Connie Buchanan, said. "And as he became better and better and more skilled and more respectful of the bulls and became a professional, then it was easier."

The reality of bullfighting is there's a limit on how long people can do it before their bodies can no longer handle it. According to Buchanan, Peterson particularly realized this after COVID-19 forced rodeo cancellations last year.

"The thing about it, though, is you get a year older each time," Buchanan said. "And so, he has to be more agile and quick."

Donnie Landis, a rodeo clown from Idaho, isn't so worried about age. He's been a professional rodeo clown since 1978 — with no plan to slow down anytime soon.

"The crowd here is super hospitable, and I hope to come here until I'm 100 years old," he said.

Between riders and

stages of competition, Landis ensured the audience always was entertained. A bull owner himself, Landis first started bullfighting and performing when he was 12. Now 61, he said he still looks forward to EOLS every year.

"The Eastern Oregon Livestock Show and rodeo is one of the best rodeos in the Northwest, and it's a pleasure being part of it," he said. "The country, the terrain around here is awesome, and it's super fun being around the crowd here."

Landis said many audience members don't understand the connection between the livestock and the bullfighters and riders.

"There's a lot that goes into this livestock that some people don't understand,"

he said. "People care about these livestock like some people care about their kids."

Landis said it's that respect that makes rodeos so important to keeping the culture of rural areas alive. As a fourth-generation rodeo cowboy, he said he has a responsibility to continue the tradition.

He's not the only one with this mindset.

For West, who grew up in Union, the yearly livestock show serves as a reminder to uphold the legacy of rodeo life ingrained in him.

"I grew up with this rodeo, and I remember being 8 years old looking up at these guys," he said. "So every rodeo I go to, I try to create a good image for the younger generation."

Softball:

Continued from Page B1

runs. She drove in 21 runs and scored a team-high 28 runs. In the field, she had zero errors.

"Maria had a great season on offense and defense," Cary said. "That is a tough place to play with no errors."

Taber, who patrolled right field, hit .500 with 33 hits, which included 28 singles, five doubles and 17 RBUs. She also scored 25 runs and had just one error in 17 games.

"Chloe was very consistent offensively," Cary said. "It seems like she was on base all the time. She is fast, so we were able to get her around to score. She

played golf last year, so it was nice to have her back on the field."

Garton was a dual threat of the Bucks. In the circle, she threw 44 innings over 12 games and finished with a 6-0 record. She struck out 95, walked 18 and had an ERA of 1.114.

At the plate, Garton hit .476, with five singles, five doubles, six triples and four home runs. She also drove in 18 runs and scored 26 times.

Samford hit .366 with a team-high five home runs and a team-high 22 RBIs.

The Bucks won the IMC regular-season title with a 9-0 record, but dropped an 8-4 game to Ridgeview in the district title game. They finished the season 15-2.

SPORTS BRIEFING

Cary family awards softball scholarships

PENDLETON — Steve Cary Memorial Scholarships in the amount of \$500 were recently awarded to Pendleton High School senior softball players Maria Lilienthal, Kylie Parsons and Delaney Duchek.

Cary's family has award the scholarships since 2013 in memory of the longtime Pendleton resident, who taught United States history at the middle school for 34 years and coached football, basketball and softball for 40 years in the Pendleton School District.

—EO Media Group

ON THE SLATE

Schedule subject to change

SATURDAY, JUNE 12

Prep boys basketball
Crosshill Christian at Nixyaawii, 12:30 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Grant Union, 3 p.m.
Umatilla at McLoughlin, 6 p.m.
Prep girls basketball
Umatilla at McLoughlin, 4:30 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Grant Union, 1:30 p.m.
Prep wrestling
Heppner at Pine Eagle, 11 a.m.
Hood River, The Dalles at Pendleton, at Happy Canyon

Arena, 6 p.m.

MONDAY, JUNE 14

Prep boys basketball
Umatilla at Weston-McEwen, 7:30 p.m.
Heppner at Pilot Rock, 7:30 p.m.
Echo at Stanfield, 7:30 p.m.
Dufur at Lone/Arlington, 7:30 p.m.
Nixyaawii at La Grande, 7:30 p.m.
Prep girls basketball
Umatilla at Weston-McEwen, 6 p.m.
Heppner at Pilot Rock, 6 p.m.
Echo at Stanfield, 6 p.m.

Dufur at Lone/Arlington, 6 p.m.
Nixyaawii at La Grande, 6 p.m.
Prep wrestling
Pendleton at McLoughlin, 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, JUNE 15

Prep boys basketball
Hermiston at Chiawana, 7 p.m.
Pendleton at The Dalles, 6:30 p.m.
Riverside at Irrigon, 7:30 p.m.
Grant Union at Stanfield, 6 p.m.
Prep girls basketball
Chiawana at Hermiston, 7 p.m.
The Dalles at Pendleton, 6:30 p.m.

Riverside at Irrigon, 6 p.m.
BMC playoffs: Heppner vs. Union, at Riverside, 5 p.m.
Prep bowling
Pasco at Hermiston, 3:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 16

Prep boys basketball
Walla Walla at Hermiston, 7 p.m.
McLoughlin at Nixyaawii, 7:30 p.m.
Riverside at Pilot Rock, 7:30 p.m.
Prep girls basketball
Hermiston at Walla Walla, 7 p.m.
Riverside at Pilot Rock, 6 p.m.

McLoughlin at Nixyaawii, 6 p.m.
Prep wrestling
Hermiston at MCC Championships, TBD

THURSDAY, JUNE 17

Prep boys basketball
Redmond at Pendleton, 6:30 p.m.
Grant Union at Irrigon, 7:30 p.m.
Prep girls basketball
Pendleton at Redmond, 6:30 p.m.
Grant Union at Irrigon, 6 p.m.
Prep wrestling
Heppner at district tournament, Culver, TBD

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