



Steven Mitchell/Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County's Taytyn Harper hangs on in the first go-round of the mini-bull riding competition during the John Day Bull Bash on May 28, 2022, at the Grant County Fairgrounds.

Heavy rain did not dampen Bull Bash

By STEVEN MITCHELL
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Rainy weather did not dampen the spirits of hundreds of rodeo fans recently in John Day.

In its second year, the John Day Bull Bash — May 27-28 at the Grant County Fairgrounds — featured bull, steer and calf riding as well as professional bullfighting, with both local and out-of-town competitors from the bull riding community, according to organizer and Grant County resident Joe Oakes.

Oakes, a former professional bull rider himself, said he thought people would skip the event because of the unrelenting rain.

“(The weather) was just depressing and I didn’t think anyone would come,” Oakes said, “but then I couldn’t believe how many people came in that kind of weather.”

Oakes said 400 to 500 people attended the first night and no fewer than 400 came out for the second.

Last year — without the rain — he said the event drew a much larger crowd. Oakes, who grew up competing in high school rodeos at the

Grant County Fairgrounds, said he was inspired to organize the event amid the fatigue many in the county and across the country were feeling with the ongoing pandemic restrictions.

“I was depressed and wanted to do something,” Oakes said. “I felt like the community was ready to do something.”

Oakes said he called his friends in the bull riding community and others in the county got involved and people packed the grandstands at the fairgrounds.

Oakes said he grew up riding bulls, but now he is too old. Nonetheless, he still wants to be involved with the sport.

The bull riding community, he said, is a family-oriented group of people and the rodeo community is its own family, too. Not just the contestants but the fans as well. Events like the bull bash, he added, bring commerce to the county’s restaurants and other businesses.

“It’s a big shot in the arm for them,” he said. “(The rodeo) gives people something to remember and they love it, and they’ll come back next year.”

Golf:

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Richland, Washington.

At the District 8 tournament, Cannell shot an 87 on the first day, and an 84 during the second round for a two-day 171. She tied for fifth overall with Brooke Bloom of Mead.

Morrison opened the tournament with a 101, then followed with a 108 for a two-day 209 to finish 17th.

Both qualified for the 3A state tournament at Meadow-Wood Golf Course in Liberty Lake, Washington. Cannell finished tied for 25th with a two-round 159, while Morrison shot a 100 on the first day and did not make the cut for the second round.

Hermiston did not have any boys selected to the all-conference team.

Richland swept the awards, with Evan Johnson selected as Player of the Year, and Mike Neidhold was named Coach of the Year.

Lacrosse:

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named a first team defensive midfielder. The senior had five goals and 35 ground balls.

Junior Kahn Schlegel was the first team long stick midfielder. He had 39 ground balls.

Senior defensemen Marcus Winebarger and Isaiah Sandoval were first-team selections. Sandoval had 44 ground balls, while Winebarger had 30 ground balls and two assists.

Senior Andrew Guerrero was named a second-team attacker. He had 31 goals, 15 assists and 28 ground balls. He has signed to play at Adams State University in Colorado.

A boatload of embarrassing moments



GARY LEWIS
ON THE TRAIL

If you ever shake hands with my dad, you will comment on his grip. He got it milking cows, and it has saved his life more than once. One time while fishing the Cowlitz River with friends, it was time for my dad to get out of the boat and fish from shore. Our guide assured me and dad it was a safe place to climb out, despite the river being at flood stage.

I protested three times, but the captain was so sure, dad jumped out and went in up to his neck. The river was near raging and dad’s legs were sucked under the boat. Fortunately, dad had a good grip. He kept a tight hold on the side of the boat with one hand and that’s what kept him from being swept under the boat and out into the main current where he would have drowned.

Anyone who has owned a boat has an embarrassing story.

Several of the boats I have owned were embarrassing just sitting in the driveway. Here is a list of boating mistakes people make every day.

We hit the dock too hard. Watch an experienced captain drive a boat up next to a dock and cut the engine, using the wind and current to glide right in. It’s a thing of beauty. But 50% of the time, the current and the wind are against you and it’s



Gary Lewis/Contributed Photo

Here is one way to break-in a new boat.

a thing of entertainment. For anyone watching.

The hardest boat I ever drove was a twin-engine houseboat. In fact, fellow outdoor scribe Terry Sheely and I took turns on that trip. But it was my job to get it into the mouth of the tiny harbor. The wind was blowing 20-miles-per and the boat acted like a big sail. I barely kept it off the rocks while everyone watched.

We misjudge the weather. Once on Crane Prairie Reservoir south-west of Bend, we launched a canoe on the west shore and paddled out. By the time we were in the standing timber, the wind was howling and the whitecaps were up. Water was coming in over the sides. We blew to shore and I ended up walking halfway around the lake to get the vehicle.

We misjudge the depth. I’ve done it out in the middle of the Columbia. It’s a good way to meet your fellow boaters. And get them to tow you off a mud flat.

We forget to secure the boat. There is a lot going on

at a boat ramp. Remember to strap that boat to the trailer or to the top of the vehicle. Once, I used the wrong kind of straps. You should ask my wife about picking up her kayak off the highway.

We use the wrong fuel. It’s easy to get the wrong fuel in the tank. This happened to me in a borrowed boat. We had bad fishing to start, but the fellowship was good. The conversation stalled when the motor quit working. That was on the far side of the lake. It was a long limp back to the dock with the trolling motor, with frequent pauses to let the battery juice come back up enough to turn the prop.

Our politicians have saddled us with burning corn (which used to be considered food) in our engines. The federal mandate requires a conversion to ethanol. More than 90% of the fuel available at pumps is E10, which doesn’t work well in marine systems. Buy the wrong fuel and your face is going to be red. Average cost for

repairs caused by poor fuel is \$1,000.

We use the wrong life-jacket. If you have a boat, keep child-size jackets on board. A child in a lifejacket that is too big is in just as much danger as if they didn’t have one.

We fall out. One of the most common things we do around boats is fall out of them. A marine patrol officer once told me most drowning victims have their zippers down when their bodies are recovered. If you’re going to drown, at least do it zipped up.

Once I saw a couple of gray-haired guys with a spanking new Hewes Craft. They were backed almost down to the water, trying to shove her off the trailer from dry land into the river. They never thought to watch someone else launch a boat or ask for advice.

It was great fun to watch. Eventually they figured out the trailer was supposed to go in the water so the boat would float off.

Speaking of the boat ramp. ... This is one of the best places to collect your own embarrassing moments. Once I backed another guy’s trailer off the ramp and hung a tire on the concrete, letting the air out of said tire. Red face.

You can collect a boat-load of other people’s embarrassing memories. Trust me, it’s more fun to tell their stories than your own.

Gary Lewis is the author of *Fishing Central Oregon and Oregon Lake Maps and Fishing Guide and other titles*. To contact Gary, visit www.garylewisoutdoors.com.

HIV isn't just a big city issue.

More than half of Oregonians with HIV live outside of Portland, often in suburbs and small towns like this one.

Good neighbors chip in to get the job done. And we’ve got work to do on HIV prevention. People in rural Oregon are more likely to get a late-stage diagnosis, and a lack of HIV treatment may harm your health, or your partner’s. Detected early, HIV is more easily managed and you can live a long, healthy life. Getting tested is a sign of strength, not weakness. Learn more and find free testing at endhivoregon.org








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