

Riders in the Sky tear it up at OK Theatre

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Grammy Award-winning classic cowboy group, Riders in the Sky, played a high-energy show to a very appreciative OK Theatre sellout audience the evening of April 23. The group is currently touring in support of their Roy Rogers tribute album although they performed many classics and some originals during the show.

Mike Midlo, part-time musician and interim Fishtrap executive director, opened the show for RIS. Midlo, along with his living room accoutrements of lamps and an end table, delivered his own high-octane blend of country

music classics and originals as well as a generous side helping of clever stage patter that wowed the audience.

The crowd greeted the Riders with rousing applause when they took to the stage and the group did not disappoint. The group numbers “Ranger Doug” on a Gibson carved-top guitar, “Too Slim” on upright bass, Wood Paul on fiddle and “Joey the Cow Polka King” on accordion. The group performed amusing skits, including an appearance by deranged sometime-member and range cook, “Sidemeat.” Regardless of the reputation of cowboy music as “three chords and a yodel” music, all the Riders members are excellent musicians and play many of their songs utilizing jazz chords and progressions.

As befitting a Roy Rogers tribute album, the group performed several of Rogers’ classics — “Navajo Trail,” “Blue Shadows on the Trail,” and of course, “Happy Trails.”

After nearly two hours of non-stop entertainment, the group closed its show with “Happy Trails,” but the rousing standing ovation they received from the Wallowa County audience brought them back for several other numbers including “Ghost Riders in the Sky” and closing with the classic “Tumbling Tumbleweeds.”

Throughout the performance the group mentioned the beauty of Wallowa County and said they hope to return to Enterprise for future performances.



Riders in the Sky in all their glory. From left: Joey the Cow Polka King, Wood Paul, Ranger Doug and Too Slim.

Rape victim stumps for HB 2317

Tudor urges locals to help extend statute of limitations for certain crimes

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

On April 15 the Oregon House of Representatives unanimously voted to double the statute of limitations for certain sexual assault crimes from six years to 12 years. Additionally, if the victim was a minor when the offense occurred, then the statute of limitations expires 12 years from date of offense or when the victim turns 30 years old — whichever is later.

The reason why this change in law was necessary was brought home to Wallowa County service providers just a week before the bill was voted through the house when rape victim and victims’ advocate Danielle Tudor came to town.

On April 7, Tudor spoke to an audience that included representatives of Oregon State Police, Wallowa County Sheriff’s Office, Building Healthy Families, DHS Child Welfare, Safe Harbors, The District Attorney’s Office, Wallowa County Juvenile Department, and Summit Church. Bobbi Duncan, executive director of Safe Harbors, organized the public event.

Tudor was assaulted in her home in 1979 when she was 17 years old, one of many victims targeted by a serial rapist, Richard Troy Gillmore, the so-called “Jogger Rapist,” in Portland. Gillmore was never brought to trial for Tudor’s rape or the rape of at least seven others — not because either victims or law enforcement had any doubt as to the guilt of the man arrested seven years later. In fact, Gillmore admitted to assaulting eight other women in the 1970s and 80s. But the statute of limitations had run out on those other eight cases.

Gillmore went to trial in 1987 for the rape of 13-year-old Tiffany Eden and was sentenced to at least 30 years with a maximum of 60.

But the parole board “redefined his sentence,” according to Tudor, and Gillmore came up for parole in 2008 despite the testimony of mental health professionals who felt he remained a threat to society. Gillmore is currently held in the Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla.

When Multnomah County District Attorney Russ Ratto



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Danielle Tudor makes her case for changing Oregon law to protect the rights of rape victims by either extending or eliminating the statute of limitations on prosecuting rape cases.

contacted Tudor and told her that Gillmore would get out without her testimony, Tudor wanted nothing to do with the case. She had spent years rebuilding her life, had not told her two sons, friends or workmates about the assault, and had survived by so successfully compartmentalizing the attack that she could not immediately recall Gillmore’s name.

She’d had to self-insulate. Before the assault Tudor was an excellent student, involved in multiple extracurricular activities, a devout Christian, a virgin, and a happy young woman with a bright future. After the assault, Tudor says, “It was too much for me to understand,” and she described an unraveling of life that is all too familiar to the friends and family of other victims. “I gave up everything from before. I was lucky to even graduate from high school,” she said.

Now, all she had worked to forget was back on the front page and she recalled a prayer she had made the night of the rape. “I’d said, ‘God, you have got to help me, because I don’t know if I can make it. If you help me I will help other rape victims,’” she recalled.

And now it was time to make good on that promise.

Both Tudor and the district attorney’s office filed lawsuits against the parole board for failing to contact victims prior

to their decision. Those suits resulted in a reconsideration and eventual denial of parole.

Since then, Tudor has appeared at every parole hearing in an effort to see to it that Gillmore serves the original sentence imposed. Gillmore has another hearing in 2016.

Tudor has also been working to extend the statute of limitations on the prosecution of rape. Before HB 2317 Oregon had one of the shortest statute of limitations in the nation for such crimes, just six years. Although HB 2317 doubles that time to 12 years, Tudor would like to see it increased to 20 years or eliminated entirely.

Eliminating the statute of limitations is not an outrageous request, she said. Twenty states have no statute of limitations on similar crimes.

But it’s been a tough fight in the Oregon Legislature. The House was unwilling to extend the statute of limitations to more than 12 years and HB 2317 is now going to the Senate.

District 29 Senator Bill Hansell needs to know that Oregonians want that statute of limitations increased or eliminated, Tudor told the Wallowa County gathering.

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