

Steamin' ahead in 2021

Sumpter Valley Railroad seeing 'record numbers'

By Lisa Britton
Go! Magazine

SUMPTER — The echo of a steam whistle fills Sumpter Valley most weekends this summer as riders take a trip back in time aboard a steam-powered train.

"People have been so happy to get out and we have had record numbers," said Kim Svaty, of the Sumpter Valley Railroad. "Memorial Day weekend was over the top."

It's been a process, she said, adjusting operations due to



Courtesy of the Sumpter Valley Railroad

health guidelines over the past year. However, some changes proved popular and are continuing this summer, such as the short runs that go from Sumpter to the river and back.

"It's been a great success — the shorter ride has accommodated everyone's busy schedule, plus passengers are not in

the heat as long, our crew has less work in the intense heat, and it's accommodated more walk-in passengers that did not know we were running. Plus we are able to run more trains per day," Svaty said.

The traditional long runs still happen on select weekends, taking riders on a 40-minute

trip from the McEwen Depot to Sumpter. A 40-minute layover allows riders time to visit the Sumpter Valley Dredge before the return trip to McEwen.

Returning this summer are the Gold Rush Bandits, who stage a train robbery to reenact the famous McCarty Brothers who robbed banks from Baker

SUMPTER VALLEY RAILROAD

Reserve tickets in advance
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541-894-2268

to Wallowa County. The next "robbery" is scheduled for Aug. 14 and 15. There will be two trains each day, at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Fares are \$25 adults, \$22 seniors/military, \$15 for ages 3 to 17, free for 2 and younger, or \$70 for a family.

The following weekend, Aug. 21 and 22, will feature short runs from Sumpter at 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. Fares are \$18.50 adults, \$15 seniors/military, and \$10 for ages 3 to 17.

The next weekend of Aug. 28 and 29 will have full rides departing McEwen at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. (fares are the same price as the bandit weekend).

September begins busy with Hunter Noack's "In a Landscape: Classical Music in the Wild" at 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 4 at the Sumpter Valley Dredge. The concert is free for Baker County residents. Tickets are \$30 for non-residents. For information, go to www.inalandscape.org.

For Labor Day weekend, which includes the Sumpter Flea Market, the SVRR will offer short runs from the Sumpter Depot at 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 4 and 5.

To reserve tickets, go to sumptervalleyrailroad.org and click on "reservations."

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