

Rafting guides enjoy adventures of summer job

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

Rick Deats and his wife Kirsten Day have rafted rivers in Idaho, Utah, Arizona, California, and Colorado.

They're longtime fans of the excitement of large rapids, with the roar of rushing waves and echoes of cheers as passengers paddle through frothy white water.

But the couple from Lake Oswego had never taken their songs on a river trip—until recently, when they entrusted those at White Horse Adventures to guide them.

It's no doubt a different scene than Butch David and Luanne Foltz see during most of the year in the hallways of Jefferson County Middle School.

While they spend their days during the school year working in the education system, this summer they are two of several local people taking tourists on guided rafting trips down the Deschutes.

For the first-year guide Foltz, David serves as an example: navigating the river with ease while telling the passengers about life on the reservation, the names of certain landmarks, and swapping fishing stories and laughs.

This summer, Butch and Angie David are managing White Horse Adventures.

Butch David works as a cultural liaison at Jefferson County Middle School while Angie David teaches second grade at Warm Springs Elementary.

For those in the education system, they said, this presents an ideal summer job.

In fact, Butch David said, he was first offered a job as a guide through a fellow teacher four years ago.

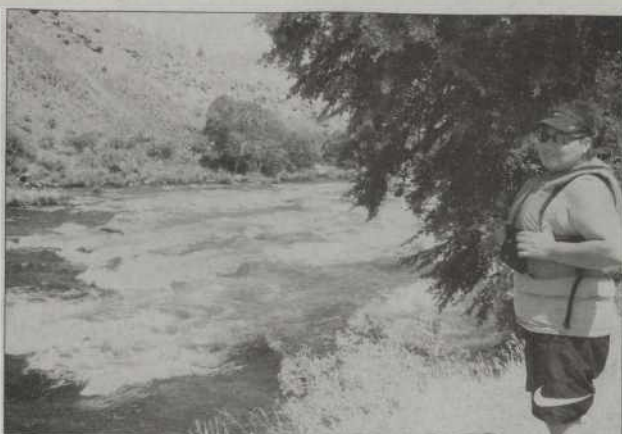
"I thought it was a joke at first," David said. Eventually, however, he found himself beginning work as a river guide with White Horse Adventures.

It's not a job he takes lightly—at one point, David wasn't even sure he wanted to be responsible so many people.

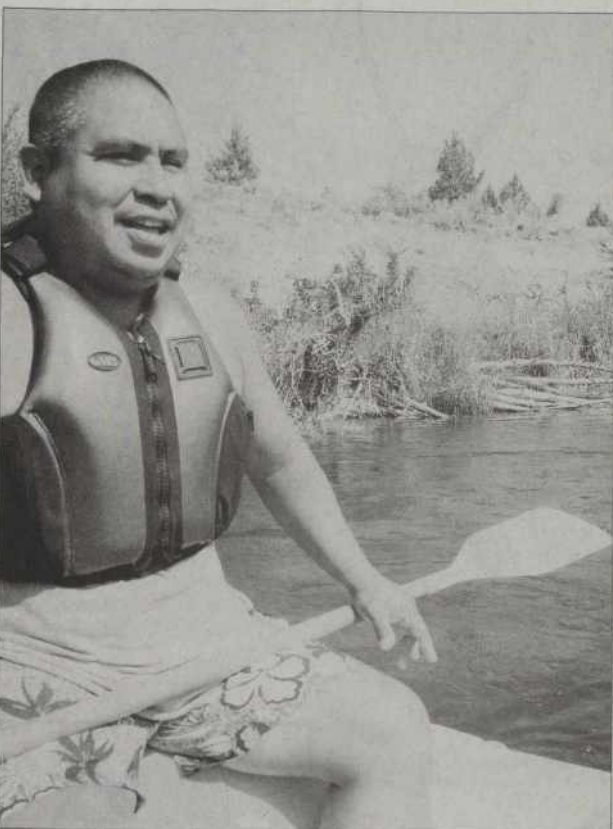
Now, however, he serves as head guide along with Matt Manion.

This is Foltz' first year working as a guide. Recently she completed a two-weekend training required of all guides.

In total, White Horse Adventures employs 12 river guides—half are tribal members. The business also employs seven



Luanne Foltz scouts the White Horse Rapids. This is her first summer working as a guide.



Butch David is managing White Horse Adventures this summer with his wife, Angie David. This is David's fourth year working as a river guide.

drivers, who are responsible for transporting the raft and its occupants to and from launch points. Of the seven drivers, six are tribal members.

At one point, the business only employed a few guides, David said.

However, he added, "As time went on we decided we needed more guides to have available."

According to Jim Manion, who owns White Horse Adventures along with Kevin Light, they originally bought the business because it was in a state of fluctuation.

"There wasn't a high level of activity," Manion said. "It was an employment opportunity, basically, for tribal members."

"We just basically try to employ as many tribal members as possible in that business,"

older on the river for a half-day or a full-day trip.

Though business varies at times, David said, they've often had weeks with trips scheduled every day.

One aspect that helps business is the ability to cater to the guests at Kah-Nee-Ta, he said.

Linking with their business provides a boost for local tourism, David said.

They have five rafts total, which allows them to accommodate relatively large groups as well, he added.

Recently, David said, they took out a group of 30 high school graduates from Crook County.

"They were jumping from raft to raft, trying to take each other out," David said with a chuckle.

It's an experience that some even want to re-live—"We get a lot of repeaters that come back and float," he added.

"It's a pretty fun job," David said. "I meet a lot of interesting people."

Recently he's guided trips for people from New York, Nebraska, and has even taken a girl from France, he said.

Plus, it's not a difficult way to spend the summer, he added with a laugh.

"People ask, 'How do you like your job?'" David said. "I think, 'It's not a job, man.'"

Before began guiding four years ago, David hadn't really spent much time on the water.

While he'd been fishing a few times, David had never taken advantage of what he feels is a great local resource.

Now he and his wife are even looking at options for buying the business after taking an entrepreneurship class through Eagle Tech Systems.

It's also a way to educate the public about the reservation, David said.

"We're starting to get a lot of tribal members interested," David said. "There are a lot of things I didn't know until I started guiding."

Many people who take trips

down the Deschutes are often curious about the way of life on the reservation, he said.

"A lot of them do not even know what our existing reservation used to be," David said.

That's why he relishes the opportunity to inform people about Warm Springs and surrounding areas, he said.

"That what I think every program should do," David said.

His favorite part, however, is working with people.

"Plus, it's not a real job," he said. "You meet a lot of interesting people, great people."

For Deats and Day, their day spent on the water was an excellent addition to their vacation.

"I thought it was fabulous," Day said. "We'll be back."

"Their knowledge of the river was exceptional," Deats added. "They instill a lot of confidence with their knowledge."

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4-H Culture Camp cancelled this summer

Day camps planned instead, Aug. 6-10

After much discussion and deliberation, the 4-H staff reached the very difficult decision of cancelling the residential 4-H Culture Camp.

There are significant safety concerns this year, as fires are burning in the area where the camp has been held in previous years.

All pre-registered campers will have their registration fee refunded.

In place of the residential overnight camp, the 4-H staff will be hosting a week of 4-

H day camps behind the Boys and Girls Club (the Vernon Jackson Home) and the Education building.

The day camps will be from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. from Monday, Aug. 6 through Friday, Aug. 10.

There will be no charge for the day camps. They are free to all youth in grades K-12.

Classes at the camp will be the same ones offered at the 4-H Culture Camp, and will include a few more exciting sessions.

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