

HORSES

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lot like turning back the clock.

Bernard said Ruby and Amber's always has visitors, whether it's a handful of interns intent on learning the biodynamic system at the farm or the cars full of customers for the farmstand out front. On its 70 or so acres — most of which is worked with good old-fashioned horsepower — they learn the intricacies of a system that Bernard says can be every bit as productive as the mechanized farming methods that have largely replaced it.

"Biodynamic farming is high-

ly sustainable, and it offers high yields without a lot of off-farm inputs," Bernard said. "Fertilizers and other inputs are produced on the farm as much as we can."

Horses, Bernard says, are a key component of the farm; they run on fuel that's available on the farm, and their manure becomes compost, feeding a circular system that aims to continually nourish itself.

"It's slower, but it's all about scale," he said. "If you set it up right, you can work just as efficiently. It can also be quite profitable with horses if you factor

into it the ability to sell their offspring."

Unlike tractors, Bernard said horses appreciate in value, and at the end of their lifespan, it's possible to get a net positive return on money invested in them. The Pacific Northwest is one of two hotspots for the use of draft horses, with the other being the Northeast.

"More people are using them than you think," said Bernard, who added that the region hosts an annual gathering of draft horse devotees.

Briner can be counted among the draft-horse faithful. She said

she first experienced farming with horses on a farm in eastern Washington and that she loves driving a team.

"I try to find ways to justify it," she said. "I love the pace of the work; it's challenging and keeps me engaged, and I'm fascinated with the way the horses are a part of the farm. It's important to have animals for the overall fertility of the system."

Ruby and Amber's will host another afternoon of visits to its pumpkin patch this Sunday, Oct. 18 from 12-4 p.m. The farm is located at 75976 Booth Kelly Camp Road.

APC

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kindergarten coordinator position in 1989, she started formulating plans for the resource center and "buying stuff" that could prove useful. On Oct. 9, 1990, Lintula paced the halls in the district office, wondering nervously if anyone would show up at the newly opened facility. Soon, a car pulled up, and from it emerged Jennifer, Julie and Martha Anderson, whom Lintula referred to as the "first family" of A Primary Connection, a family that again gathered there for last week's celebration.

"I look around me, and I see the faces of so many that have

given so much to this effort," Lintula said. "It takes a community to sustain a family resource center."

Lintula especially recognized Dudley and longtime employee Leslie Canales.

"There are not two people on this earth that I love, respect or appreciate more," she said.

South Lane Superintendent Krista Parent said that, while budget constraints have at times threatened A Primary Connection and its umbrella organization, Parent Partnership, the need for the service it provides has never been in doubt.

"Support for families before

they enter K-12 education is vitally important," Parent said, adding that she believes having A Primary Connection at LCC can be of assistance to young parents attending classes there.

At the celebration, many young parents described the benefit the resource center provides to their lives.

"They give me good ideas of things I can do at home when we have one-on-one time," one young mother said.

"I just have one, and here he gets great interaction with other kids, especially when the weather is bad," said another. "I get to talk to other moms."

DRIVERS

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from community requests. "It's an effort to try to address community concerns about poor driving habits," he said. "We want to be responsive and have our officers look for those kind of things when they're able."

The Cottage Grove Police Department doesn't currently write many such tickets, though Shepherd said he witnesses distracted driving on a daily basis, particularly when he's driving his unmarked police vehicle.

And truthfully, there may not be that many tickets written, at least in the short term.

"I'm cautious about the expectation to write a bunch of tickets, because when we have only two officers on duty, we have to respond to incidents on a call-to-call basis, and traffic enforcement understandably takes a back seat," Shepherd said.

Shepherd pointed out that CGPD is still understaffed by

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— Interim Police Chief Scott Shepherd

two officers, as its newest officer has yet to complete academy training and the position vacated by Shepherd's move to become interim police chief has not yet been filled. Still, he said officers will be on the lookout for poor driving whenever possible.

"We want to be responsive to these types of issues as they're brought to us," he said.

NUTS

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between the nut halves breaks with a snap. If the divider is still rubbery, the nut is not dry enough.

Hazelnut kernels are firm at first and become spongy during the drying process. As they approach dryness, they become firm again. The internal color gradually changes from white to a creamy color, starting at the outside. When the color reaches the center of the kernel, the nut is dry.

Unlike hazelnuts and walnuts, chestnuts are a fairly perishable product. They are a high-starch, low-fat food more like an apple or potato than a tree nut. Clean

and refrigerate soon after harvest to prevent problems with mold and decay. For short-term storage (no more than three months), refrigerate or freeze fresh chestnuts. To prepare chestnuts for long-term storage, dry them following the instructions for walnuts and hazelnuts. Nuts will be rock-hard when dry.

Whether storing dried nuts (walnuts, hazelnuts, or chestnuts) or fresh chestnuts, the best choice is to store them in a freezer or refrigerator. You also can store them in a cool room (55 degrees or lower) if refrigeration is not possible. However, longevity is lower.



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