

CLAYCOMB

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numerous awards

- AR — Who doesn't love an AR? For an economical AR check out the Anderson Mfg. AM-15, M-LOK, 5.56
- Henry's lever actions.

How can you not love lever actions? Check out their .22, .22 mag, 30-30 and 45-70. All super cool!

- Air guns are super popular. Check out the Umarex Synergis or the Umarex .25 caliber Gauntlet. Love these guns or another fun one is the Umarex Steel Force BB gun. It shoots 6-round bursts
- Boots — I love the Danner Recurve Moc Toe

and my daughter likes the La Crosse Lodestar

- Caldwell Stable Table and Hydro Sled
- 5.11 Atmos warming jacket
- Riton Optics 10x42 binoculars and their 3-9x40 or 4-16x44 scopes

Stocking stuffers

Here's where you can impress them with little economical items that they'll love.

- Flies
- Adventure Medical Kits first aid gear. This is the gear I use
- JSB pellets for their air guns
- Aquimira filtered water bottles
- Mountain House back-

packing meals (These are almost gourmet!)

- Ammo — very specific what caliber, manufacturer and grain he or she shoots. Testing some Nosler ammo right now
- Mister Twister plastics and jigs
- Pautzke Fireballs
- Swab-Its cleaning gun cleaning swabs
- Clamtainers, plastic ammo containers. Great for flying
- Talon Snap pistol cleaning kit
- Freedom Baby ABC, an outdoors ABC book for kids learning their alphabet
- IOU that you'll go fishing/hunting with him or her. This will be the best gift you could give.



Tom Claycomb/Contributed Photo

Outdoor enthusiasts can be easy to shop for — if you know what sort of gear they want.

TRAIL

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She gave some statistics on the online popularity of the trails group.

“With Instagram and Facebook, we've grown our membership by about 50% in the past year,” she said. “We have 1,200 Instagram followers and almost 800 Facebook followers. We've been able to open up conversations through that. So we're reaching younger folks who are working full time who want to do day trips and projects and we're incorporating that into our next season of planning.”

Bombaci spoke highly of Humphrey's ability — as a younger person — to connect via social media.

“Asch has done a great job of getting the word out there because I sure am not a Facebook or Instagram person, I don't know about you guys,” he laughed. “She's been very successful at that.”

Showing their work

Bombaci gave a slide show to the commissioners showing photographs of their work, maps of the trails systems and charts detailing the work.

“We primarily work in the Eagle Cap and Hells Canyon wilderness areas,” he said. “We have done some work outside the wil-

derness, but most of our work's been inside the wilderness boundaries. We've done a little bit of work in the Wenaha-Tucannon Wilderness in the north part of the county and that has been in coordination with the Umatilla National Forest. We've done a little bit of work on the trail at the Nez Perce Wallowa Homeland and a couple other places that have nothing to do with the Forest Service, but it's mostly the Forest Service land that we're working on.”

Emphasizing the scope of the group's work, he noted that most of their efforts are in official wilderness areas and come with restrictions.

“I think there's about 1,200 miles of trails,” he said. “Because most of our work is in the wilderness, almost all of our work is with hand tools. We use loppers, crosscut saws, Pulaskis. There's a lot of teamwork involved.”

He then showed a photo of men lifting a log off a trail.

“These guys were just using brute strength,” he said.

“We do, occasionally, do work outside the wilderness boundary where motorized equipment is allowed,” he said.

Commissioner John Hillock sought further details on this.

“Would a battery-powered chain saw be legal?” Hillock asked.

But Bombaci said even an electric-powered tool is banned from

federal wilderness areas.

Nash talked about the difficulty working just with hand tools can bring.

“I've cut my share of trees and I can only imagine how discouraging it would be to get in there with a crosscut saw and see it wedge into place and not be able to move it,” he said. “I've had to cut those four or five times with chain saws in order to get the first piece to move.”

The main job the trails group does is clearing trails for recreationists.

“No. 1 is we clear trails using crosscut saws,” Bombaci said. “Much of the trail clearing is just about cutting out logs, but also there's a huge brush problem, especially in areas that have burned, as you can imagine, the timber's burned up and there's a lot more sunlight hitting the ground so we have these terrible brush problems. It's very labor intensive to do brush with hand tools. I'm not quite sure what the long-term game plan is for that. We had a group of people ... and in four solid days of work they covered less than 2 miles. The brushing is going to be a challenge.”

Heritage sites

Another part of the group's mission is to work on heritage sites, such as cultural resources, historic structures and Nez Perce crossing of the Snake River.

“Our biggest project to date has been the Lick Creek Guard Station. It has a lot of rot. It still has a lot of rot,” Bombaci said of the building that was erected in 1930 and is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. “It was in danger of falling apart. We managed to clean up the grounds around the building, moved some outbuildings that were causing snow to build up against it and exacerbate the moisture problem, we repainted the whole thing, we cut a hole in and I was down there in the dirt to dig out the crawl-space to make it bigger and put a vapor barrier and pulled out some rotten timbers and replaced them.”

But the project is still not done. “We were unable to finish the job and I think if the Forest Service really wants to save that building, they're going to need to come up with probably a few hundred thousand dollars to get some professionals in there to do the rest of the work,” he said. “But we did save a lot of the building so that it's not going to continue to deteriorate at least.”

This year, the group also replaced a footbridge on BC Creek, Bombaci said, showing slides of the work there.

“This was a thorn in our side for several years, Todd can testify to that,” Bombaci said. “That Forest Service bridge blew out in 2002. Almost 20 years had gone by without the Forest Service

replacing it and we nagged them and tried to get them to move a suspension bridge up there, but that didn't pan out. As a result of our efforts, they did get in gear and now we have this great footbridge there. That tree (used as the basis of the bridge) was growing right there. They didn't have to move it; they just had to winch it into place. ... That's vastly improved the usability of that trail. It's a very popular trail. ... That was a great win for us this year.”

The trails group also goes high-tech when possible. Bombaci said that since money from Travel Oregon granted for the BC Creek bridge wasn't used on the suspension bridge, the group asked if it could use those funds to buy a computer-controlled router to make signs. They're now manufacturing signs that their volunteers and the Forest Service both are putting up. Bombaci said they will continue making signs this winter so they'll have some to erect in the spring.

“It's a very visible sign that something's happening out there and we're getting a lot of positive public feedback,” he said.

Bombaci emphasized that the trails group is in no way political. “The organization was formed with the explicit intent that we're not a political lobbying group,” he said. “We're just a bunch of folks who want to get out there and do some good.”

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2021

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Calendar abbr.
- Clean the deck
- Abyss
- Beast of the zodiac
- Wanderer
- Popular cookie
- Raggedy doll
- Island near Corsica
- Server system
- Appear in court
- Film rating
- Mini-guitar
- Nordiques' home
- Smells
- Do some tape editing
- Charlotte of "Bananas"
- Cold-war capital
- Medicine monitors
- Bouquet holder
- Climbing plant

- Deep hole
- Kelly and Barry
- Musical combo
- Above, to a bard
- News agcy.
- Bicker
- Make keener
- Bean for sprouting
- Untold centuries
- Gutter site
- Sotto —
- Yalie
- Play the lead
- Gangplank locale
- Just a bit

DOWN

- Londoner's apartment
- Artist — Magritte
- Charged particles
- Harem owners

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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