



RODEO

The tradition continues at the Grant County Fair

Visitors flock to and fill grandstands

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — Rodeo competitors made John Day their destination for the Grant County Northwest Professional Rodeo Association (NPRA) Rodeo during the county fair, Aug. 7 and 8.

Likewise, rodeo fans from Grant County and beyond made a beeline to the action, filling the grandstands.

Rodeo contractor Claude Rickman said he appreciates making a return to John Day each summer.

"It's always a pleasure to come to the John Day Valley and the Grant County Fair and Rodeo," he said.

Rickman's wife, Chris, is the rodeo secretary.

The total payout was just under \$20,000.

"A person can tell the pride that is taken with the people of Grant County by the improvements and maintenance of the facility," Claude Rickman added. "It gives us great pleasure to be able to come back to John Day every year and see old friends."



Contributed photos/LindseyWyllie.com

Monica Williams hits her target at the Grant County NPRA Rodeo.

Grant County Rodeo results

(Top five)
Bareback
1, Cameron Craig, 80 (score)
2, Kevin Lusk, 78
3, Blake Anglen, 74
Saddle Bronc
1, Johnny Espeland, 79
2, Tucker Hill, 74
3, Justin Chappell, 73
Bull Riding - Day Money
1, Harlan Knowles

Tie Down Roping
1, Cody Craig, 8.10
2, Matt Nauman, 9.10
3, Blake Eliason, 9.50
Steer Wrestling
1, Jared Parke, 4.70
2, Taylor Gregg, 5.30
3, Bodee Foster, 5.40
Team Roping
1, Bill Justus, Mike McGinn, 6.40
2, Bucky Campbell, Jake Stanley, 7.10
3, Chancy Bott, Zane Palmer, 8.10
4, Dayton Stafford, Austin Stafford, 9.00

Breakaway
1, Jordan Minor, 2.30
2, Kayse Winkle, 2.30
3, Jessie Loper, 2.60
4, Hope Luttrell, 2.70
5, Stevie Rae Willis, 2.90
Barrel Racing
1, Jade Crossley, 18.04
2, Jordan Minor, 18.08
3, Leslie Penhollow, 18.08
4, Ellie Beukelman, 18.11
5, Hope Luttrell, 18.12



Sam Elliott hangs on, competing in the bull riding event at the Grant County NPRA Rodeo.



Riley Clark flies into action, competing in steer wrestling at the Grant County NPRA Rodeo.



The Eagle/Angel Carpenter

Malheur Rappel Crew member Jessica Pfister, left, helps give helicopter crew member training last year, working with several ODF firefighters.

Facing the fire

Jessica Pfister finds rewards in rappelling career

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

CANYON CITY — When the fires that created the Canyon Creek Complex broke out, Jessica Pfister was rappelling a fire at Lookout Mountain on the eastern part of the Malheur National Forest.

She and some of the 27 members of the Malheur Rappel Crew are working the Canyon Creek Complex fire.

Pfister is working in her own backyard: She has lived in Canyon City for two years. She's been working as a wildland firefighter for a total of eight years, including three as a member of the U.S. Forest Service Malheur Rappel Crew, based in John Day.

"I'd say rappelling has been one of the best experiences that I've had in my life," she said. "I have a lot of pride in the job I do and the crew — the crew is practically my family."

She started work on the Canyon Creek Complex on Aug. 16, joining other rappellers who had been on the local scene earlier.

What makes their work unique among other wildland firefighters, is their responsibility to respond as the initial attack in remote locations.

"We're generally IA resources — initial attack," she said. "We decide what sort of resources are needed on the fire."

For now the rappel crew is working on single resource assignments, including dozer boss and engine boss.

When the fire crossed the containment line and blew up on Aug. 14, a squad from the rappel crew was sent to provide structure protection.

Right now, she is working at the helibase as an air-based radio operator.

"I'm talking on the radio and letting aircraft know when it's OK to land and take off and relaying the assignments to the aircraft," Pfister said.

She's working with two light helicopters, four medium aircraft and one heavy aircraft, all helicopters, helping support the fire fight. The rappellers fly out to the fire two or four at a time in an aircraft.

A group of four would include a range of experience, from a type 5 incident commander, who can handle a fire of four acres or less, to type 1 incident commander, who has the experience with massive fires such as the Canyon Creek Complex.

Malheur rappellers are on standby prepared to respond to an initial attack, the helibase in John Day, if one pops up.

Pfister is one of them, and ready.

She said the job is rewarding.

"It pays off really well, between working hard and being able to make decisions — you learn a lot about leadership," she said. "I plan to be in this job for quite a few more years."



Contributed photo/Thomas Routt

Jessica Pfister, left, and a fellow Malheur Rappel Crew member watch the Canyon Creek Complex fire blow up from their separate work area on Lookout Mountain.

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