

Young family enjoys ranching lifestyle

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Brandon and Sydney Thompson of Dayville keep busy, raising four young children with a ranching way of life.

As soon as 10-year-old Ethan and 8-year-old Tyler step off the school bus, they load up in the pickup with their parents and younger siblings, Carson, 4, and McKenzie, 3, to feed cattle.

Sydney said that's the best thing, ranching together as a family.

During haying season, it is not unusual to see Brandon and Sydney driving tractors, carting two children each in the cabs as they rake fields.

"That's pretty much how it works," Sydney said. "It's really a good time to just talk to your kids and find out what's going on their life."

When other ranchers visit, "they'll say, 'I remember when our kids were little, and we were doing the same thing,'" she said.

Sydney said there are many things she enjoys about ranching in Dayville, including the good weather and the community. She said most of her boys' classmates are also have families who ranch and farm.

"They get together and help their friends when it's time to brand, and they help us," she said.

Brandon works full time as a wildlife technician for Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and he and Sydney share ranching duties.

They run Angus-cross cattle for the Auxier Ranch,



Three of the Thompson kids ride horses on March 9, at their Dayville home, before going out to feed the cattle. From left: Ethan, Carson and McKenzie Thompson.

which includes some of their own cattle, and they also have cattle on leased land, working about 200 head in all.

The couple have lived in Dayville for 10 years. Both grew up on ranches, Brandon in North Powder and Sydney in Northern California, and both of their dads worked full time at other jobs while ranching, receiving lots of help from family. Sydney said ranching followed Brandon, and he started doing some side jobs.

"I told him, if you're going to do this, we have to be really involved, so we can spend time together," she said.

"That's the kicker for me," Brandon said, adding if they didn't work it out that way, they'd never see each other.

"It works out pretty well, and it's a good way to teach your kids that there is more to life," Sydney said.

"We pray as a family for

rain or for calves to get better, and they see the results," she said. "It's kind of a 'faith-based' business."

Brandon said he appreciates the value of hard work his children are learning.

See FAMILY, Page A10



The Thompson family pauses after feeding cattle on Thursday, March 9, in Dayville. Front, from left, Sydney, 3-year-old McKenzie and Brandon; back, Carson, Tyler and Ethan.

Eagle photos/Angel Carpenter

GIBCO
AG & INDUSTRIAL

Family Owned for 34 Years
Providing Grant County with feed and farm supplies for its agricultural industry.

311 N Canyon City Blvd, Canyon City 541-575-2050

Grant County Chamber of Commerce

would like to recognize the hard work our local ranchers and farmers do for our county this Ag Day. Thank you for everything!

JOHN DAY NAPA

IS PROUD TO SPONSOR EASTERN OREGON'S AGRICULTURE BUSINESS.

WE HAVE BEEN HELPING KEEP FARM & RANCH EQUIPMENT RUNNING SMOOTHLY SINCE 1966.

NAPA AUTO & TRUCK PARTS

721 W Main • John Day • 541-575-1850

AG DAY

OTEC Celebrates National Ag Day as your rural, electric co-op. OTEC fights every day to continue to provide our members with some of the most affordable energy and reliable rates in the country.

All OTEC members are invited to our **2017 Annual Membership Meeting** Saturday, April 29 at the Blue Mountain Conference Center 404 12th Street, La Grande, OR
Free Transportation | Live Music | Catered Lunch | Drawings and Giveaways
Call us for more information at: 541-575-0161
Putting Our Energy To Work For YOU! • 400 Patterson Bridge Road, John Day, OR • www.otecc.com

Mills Building Supply

Build With The Best For All Your Agricultural Needs

Horse Barns • Storage Buildings • Hay Barns • Sheds & Building Supplies
Metal Roofing & Siding

751 W Main St. • John Day
541-575-1021

John Day Polaris
is a proud sponsor of Ag Day

We are the guys that want you to have Fun!

POLARIS
Sales & Service
541-575-0828

We carry everything you need to get the job done.

LS Tractor **efco** **OLD HICKORY SHEDS**

821 W Hwy. 26, John Day • www.jdpolaris.com