



Get ready for the Grant County NPRA Rodeo coming Aug. 9-10

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County NPRA Rodeo is coming to town 7-9:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday, Aug. 9-10, with saddle bronc and bull riders, barrel racers and more ready to compete and entertain at the fairgrounds in John Day.

"We're proud that we can keep this tradition alive and hope we can get everyone out," said Fair Manager Mindy Winegar. "We promise, it'll be great entertainment and a great way to kick off the 110th fair."

The cost of admission is \$10 for ages 13 and up, \$2 for ages 6-12 and for seniors 65 and older. Children ages 6 and under enter for free.

This year's rodeo will kick off with an old-fashioned barbecue that includes a barbecue beef dinner with a drink and dessert. The cost is \$10 a person or \$35 for a family of four.

Lindsey Wyllie of Long Creek is the Grant County NPRA announcer, and Lazy HK Bar is the stock contractor again this year. Grant County Fair and

Rodeo Queen Courtney Nichols and Junior Miss Rodeo Oregon Rowdy Israel will ride in during the grand entry both nights, help at the rodeo and sign autographs afterward.

There will be hide races during the intermission.

After Saturday's rodeo, there will be a Queens Dance, and all ages are invited to enjoy live music from the band Last Call and play corn hole at the fairgrounds pavilion.

Fair & Rodeo queen contestants

Katie Barker, 15, of

Dayville and Kelsei Kiser, 19, of Fox will be introduced as the Grant County Fair and Rodeo 2020 queen contestants.

Kiser is starting her second year at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario, studying horse production and management. She is currently the Baker County and Panhandle Rodeo Queen. She was also the Adams County, Idaho, fair and rodeo queen.

Barker will be a sophomore at Dayville High School. She's active in FFA, and her hobbies include horseback riding, basket-



Eagle file photo

Ty Holly of Mt. Vernon competes in calf roping at last year's NPRA Rodeo at the Grant County Fairgrounds in John Day.

ball and volleyball. She has also participated in youth rodeos.

Girls (who will be ages 15-19 next year) who are interested in trying out next year can call court advisor Deanna Maley at 541-620-2407.

Tryouts for the contestants will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 8, at the fairgrounds, and the queen and princess will be announced during the Freestyle Bullfighting event Saturday, Aug. 17, at the fair, which is free with fair admittance.

SHOOTING THE BREEZE

Take a hike

Hunting season is still a ways off, and you don't feel much like fishing, so now is a great time to take a hike. Grant County has lots of hiking opportunities for everyone from the casual stroller to the extreme sports nut.

Looking for a casual evening stroll? The Prospector Trail runs along the river behind the fairgrounds and is relatively flat. One step up in difficulty is the dirt bike track north of the Seventh Street Complex. The trails to Strawberry Lake or Aldrich ponds are both a little under 1.5 miles long and well maintained, plus you can do some fishing when you get there. The Strawberry trail is a little steeper, but not bad. All of the national parks in the area, like the

Fossil Beds, have well-maintained trails to check out.

If you really want to get out into nature, stop by one of the hardware stores or the Forest Service office and pick up a map of the area you are interested in.

They will show you the trails that are available. If you are looking for an amazing view, I suggest the top of Strawberry Mountain. The trail from Strawberry Campground is in good shape, but plan for a seven-plus hour hike depending on the kind of shape you are in. The lazy man's way is to go from Road's End on the south side of the mountain. The trail isn't too bad until you start the final climb to the top.

A word of caution on our trail systems. The farther from the road you get, the worse shape the trail may be in — sometimes disappearing altogether. A good GPS or map and compass with the knowledge of how to use them is a good idea. Also, in the areas recently affected by fires, you are going to experience a lot of blow-downs that you will have to crawl over, under or around.

Wherever you choose to go, use some common sense in your preparation. Make sure to tell someone where you are going. I know, you are a big boy and can take care of yourself. But from personal experience, I can tell you that "crap happens" even to big boys. Be sure to take along some food and water plus a little extra just to be safe. Don't forget bug spray for the flies, mosquitoes and ticks. Weather can change pretty fast so a weather-proof jacket is a good idea. I like to carry a cheap plastic rain poncho. Of course, you never go anywhere without a knife and fire starter. That would just be stupid. Sunscreen! Don't forget the sunscreen. Those UV rays can be pretty intense on top of our mountains. And last, but maybe most important, the trailheads may or may not have bathroom facilities. Always, always remember to pack some TP.

We have some amazing country around us here in Grant County. I hope you take some time this summer and get out and enjoy it.

Have a favorite hike you would like to tell us about? Drop us a line at shootingthebreezebme@gmail.com.

Rod Carpenter is a husband, father and hunting fool.



The Eagle photos/Angel Carpenter

Youths, their parents and other volunteers take part in the Cinnabar Mountain Playdays rodeo on Saturday, Aug. 3, at the Grant County Fairgrounds. A total of 59 kids competed that day with 55 out the following day.

HORSIN' AROUND

Record-breaking number of rodeo youth compete at Grant County Fairgrounds



Grayson Schmadeka of Dayville competes in the goat tail untying event.



Callie Arriola of Willowcreek competes in the Figure 8 event at the Aug. 3 Cinnabar Mountain Playdays rodeo.



Brooklyn Kimball of John Day competes in the Figure 8 at the Aug. 3 Cinnabar Mountain Playdays youth rodeo.



Tavin Desadier of Monument guides his horse through the Figure 8 event.

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A total of 59 rodeo youth competed at the Saturday, Aug. 3, Cinnabar Mountain Playdays youth rodeo series at the Grant County Fairgrounds in John Day. There were 55 youth at the fairgrounds arena on Sunday for another round of rodeo fun.

Jessi Arriola, 15, and her sister Callie Jo, 13, of Willowcreek were enjoying the events. "I like how everybody supports each other," said Jessi, who is in the senior division. "Even though it's a competition, everybody tells each other 'good job' and 'nice try.'"

Callie Jo, in the intermediate division, agreed. "I enjoy that everybody is friendly."

She said her favorite event is pole bending. CMP treasurer Emma Winkelman was on hand to record results, along with board member Nicole Israel and others.

"We had a wonderful weekend with record breaking participation," Winkelman said. "There were 59 contestants on Saturday and 55 on Sunday."

"It was great that we had so many kids, and so many families there to support all the kids," Israel said.

She noted families, including grandparents, came from Grant County, Central Oregon, Burns and Vale.

"I think it's great that everyone comes together," Israel said. "It's a very positive learning environment — there to have fun and learn and enjoy."

"We are so happy to see our organization growing and to see the smiles on the faces of all the kids as they learn and grow in the sport of rodeo," Winkelman said. "The CMP Board of Directors would like to thank all of those who came to participate, and all of those who volunteer for us at each event and help keep things running smoothly."

The final weekend of Playdays is coming up Aug. 24-25 with their Tough Enough to Wear Pink theme. The CMP annual awards banquet will be held Sept. 28 at 1 p.m. at the Mt. Vernon Community Hall.