



Contributed photo

Columnist Rod Carpenter poses with a turkey.

SHOOTING THE BREEZE

Ten-year tom

Since I moved home to John Day 10 years ago, I have been chasing turkeys off and on pretty hard without success. With all the turkeys around, that is kind of embarrassing to say, but I freely admit that I'm not a very good bird hunter. I don't know what I am saying when I am scratching on my call, but it must not be good.

With the help of friends, we managed to get my boy a nice tom opening day of the youth hunt. My buddy called him right in to his decoys. I was amazed that it actually worked!

I went out the first couple of days of my hunt and couldn't even get a response to my calls. That was a little disheartening. Usually I can at least get a gobbler or two. Luckily, I got permission to hunt some private land where I knew they roosted. The problem was that it was at the far end of a wide open field.

The plan was to get up way before daylight and be in position as the sun came up. Well, you know what they say about the best laid plans. We got up pretty early, but it seems like some gear had pulled a runner in the night, and we had to spend some time finding it. By the time we parked, it was just starting to get light in the east.

As we made our way across the field, we could hear the turkeys gobbling up in the trees. But after we set up our decoy and got into position, they stopped calling. I was sure they had seen us

crossing the field and equally sure that we were wasting our time. I decided that since we were there, we might as well give it a go.

Every couple of minutes I would do some hen clucks, alternating between my reed and box calls, hoping to sound like a whole flock of anxious hens looking for a man. I kept at it for about 45 minutes without even getting a response.

Discouraged, Tuck and I were standing in the brush trying to decide what to do next. I glanced off to the east just in time to see a bunch of turkeys come around the corner of the field about 200 yards away. We quickly dropped back into place and set up.

There were two toms and four hens. Those toms homed in on my decoy and came running in. It was pretty darn cool to watch them strut for my decoy.

When they got to 15 yards I raised my Remington 870 and collected my first tom in 10 years. The other tom was so focused on our decoy that he was still strutting around trying to get a date after the shot. Tuck was sad he hadn't picked up a second tag.

After seeing it all come together, I guess I will have to have another go at it next year. Hopefully I won't have to wait 10 years for the next one.

Tell us your hunting stories at shootingthebreezeme@gmail.com.

Rod Carpenter is a husband, father and hunting fool.

NEW NEIGHBORS

From Portland to Prairie City

Dunn embraces nature and a warm community

By Rudy Diaz
Blue Mountain Eagle

From the city lights and fast-paced life to natural heights in the country life, Kati Dunn is enjoying the change of scenery in Grant County.

Dunn moved to Prairie City in November 2019 after 20 years in Portland and works as an attorney for Strawberry Mountain Law, PC.

"I'm originally from the Midwest, and I moved to Oregon because I got a taste for the outdoors when I waited tables one summer at Yellowstone Park (as an undergraduate student), and that was the first time in my life I have seen snow-capped mountains, rushing rivers and deep forests," Dunn said. "I had never seen the majestic nature out here in the West."

Dunn was enthralled with the lifestyle, which was not available in her home state of Illinois.

When Dunn was in law school at the University of Illinois, her hunt for a place to settle and begin her career as a lawyer focused on a location that would give her chances to hike and enjoy outdoor opportunities. She looked at Wyoming, Montana and Washington, but Oregon provided the great combination of outdoor opportunities and a welcoming legal system.

Dunn decided to make Oregon her home. She studied for the Oregon State Bar exam and started her first job as an attorney in Newport on the coast. She then pursued a public defender position in Coos County for about two years.

Desiring the excitement of the city, she then accepted a position with Metropolitan Public Defender in Portland. She said it was a great city, but she began looking for a different opportunity.

"Towards my last three or four years at MPD, I spent more time



The Eagle/Rudy Diaz

Kati Dunn is enjoying the change in scenery, having moved from Portland to Prairie City.

backpacking and out in the woods and came to understand that that's when I feel the happiest and most alive and most connected — when I am in nature and can witness the beauty it has," Dunn said. "I started to realize that doesn't need to be limited to vacations and weekends because there are people who live in beautiful settings all the time, like here."

Since making the move to Prairie City, she has enjoyed the breathtaking view of the Strawberry Mountains as she commutes to Canyon City and feels lucky to live a life she only experienced during vacations.

Along with the natural beauty,

Dunn has been impressed by the community in Grant County.

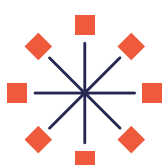
"I feel like in a bigger city sometimes you feel like you're in someone's way when you're at the store and blocking their path to what they want from the freezer," Dunn said. "When here, at Chester's (Thriftway) you see someone you recognize, and you visit and it's nice. I've found the Grant County folks to be very welcoming."

Still, she said, she can't wait for spring so she can explore the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness and hike through miles and miles of solitude among nature.

Together

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