

To step back in time

(By Claudia Hughes who had the opportunity to experience the recent "Gathering in the Blues". For Pam Wunderlich, whose pioneer spirit is going to see her through her Rendezvous experience.)

Billowy white clouds, tall grass waving in the wind, the clip-clop of a horse, the gentle breeze, a bird soaring overhead and the backdrop of the Blue Mountains set the stage for the 1999 Pacific Primitive Rendezvous.

It indeed felt like a movie set and stepping back in time. "You are now in 1838", the sign said. Picture tepees, tents of the 1800's, people of all ages dressed in buckskins, calico and ribbon dresses, waistcoats, frocks, breeches, trousers, colonial dress and even loin cloths, an abundance of loin cloths (or maybe the correct description is breech).

The wagon jogged along past the horse camp, primitive camp, tepee village, ranger camp, colonial village, through traders row. It appeared to be a silent movie, a village in slow motion, with children playing games, the scent of breakfast cooking over the campfires, traders selling their wares, women shaking out their bedding and making up their tiny living quarters. Up the canyon, sounds of the black powder shoot echoed in the distance. Flags flying in the breeze represented Canada, France, Scotland and numerous states. Folks waved, smiled, and stopped to ask when the ice wagon would arrive.

Wonderful craftsmen, these people. Many pursue their talents year round, while for others it is during the Rendezvous that their artistic vein surfaces. The black powder horns and creation of the beautiful muzzle loaders were a work of art. Back then, it took patient loading, careful aim and hours of practice to have food for the winter. The origin of the saying, "lock, stock, and barrel" suddenly became clear.

A group was building a Red River cart, which they had been working on since 1994 and continue at each annual Rendezvous. Traders were carving, weaving, sewing, making baskets, candles, trunks, and even hammer dulcimer and bowed psaltery instruments. Some, there for the short stay, were packing up trunks, poles, and bedding to return to reality via a horse drawn wagon.

Boredom? Not possible with a myriad of crafts offered for young and old from pine basket making, wool rug braiding, tepees, to cannon building. Children could participate in string games, do bead work, make lanterns and sage bundles or attend nature seminars.

Who are these folks anyway? There are nurses, teachers, doctors, wine makers, blacksmiths, lawyers, chefs, photographers, tent smiths, retired military, engineers, appraiser, Norm Thompson editor and even a jovial gentleman with a white beard who was truly Santa Claus eight weeks out of the year. He was also the "head honcho" of the corporation who called the camp meetings.

Just as with any community or colony, concerns needed to be dealt with such as controlling camp dogs. Business had to be attended to on a regular basis. "Dog soldiers," the camp police, were present to deal with any problems in the encampment.

Badger, Whiner, Ironjaw, Raggedy Ann, Babbles, Leprechaun, Two Ponies, No Show, Pants on Backwards, were just a few of the honored "handles" some of the folks had earned over the years. Humorous campfire stories resulted in being labeled. You did something funny and you were awarded a new name. Frenchy, 79 years young, born in Normandy, France, was the chef at Frenchy's restaurant. He has become famous for his buffalo burgers and ran strong competition with the Indian Taco restaurant on Traders Row. Tacos on fry bread were a mouth watering treat.

What moment of insanity causes these people to spend their vacation cooking over an open fire, sleeping in a tent, going without a shower, sitting under a trillion stars at night around a campfire? (By the way,



there were porta-potties, disguised under yards of brown burlap to blend in.) Why do they strive for such authenticity for a few days? Some say it's the camaraderie, the reunion of friends, the experience for their family and doing without the basics. For others, it's the muzzle loading competition, creating things with their hands, the outdoor setting, a good night's sleep, the slower pace and no telephones. A few reluctantly admitted that it was good to get back to the switches (electricity) and showers, after a week without. However, for many the lifestyle is addictive, which is why they are found in Rendezvous settings scattered across the U.S. all during the year.

Participants wished Heppner to know that they truly enjoyed "going to town", which entailed walking a few miles or jolting along in a cart until they reached their motor vehicles. One camper was so thrilled to find "real hardware" in Coast-to-Coast. He said the big city where he was from no longer carried the real thing. They all were so grateful to Dick and Virginia Wilkinson for providing the beautiful Hinton Creek site, to Mark and Pam Wunderlich and to the Westbergs for suggesting the site as a possible location. Participants of some 20 years said it was the best site by far. Booshow Gary Miller and Segundo Brian Deglow were the "big guns" who set the stage and pulled it off.

The Heppner businesses enjoyed serving these people and would welcome them back for another "Gathering in the Blues". It isn't every day a thousand gentle visitors pass through a community. They, too, appreciated the Wilkinsons willingness to share their land. I appreciated the opportunity to experience 1938. Somehow I felt like I had been there in another time, another place.

Harvest price down

As expected, the harvest this year is not very good, according to Morrow County Grain Growers General Manager Chris Meyer.

Meyer said MCGG has been receiving grain at the North Lex, Lexington, Hogue-Warner and Ione elevators and "early returns indicate around 20 bushels to the acre," which is "down over half" from several previous years.

Meyer said that Tuesday wheat was \$3 a bushel in Portland and \$2.75 delivered to the river, which is below loan price.

Harvesting has begun in the north Willow Creek Valley, the north Lex and Buttercreek areas and the area west of Ione.

Meyer said that the lack of moisture was the main contributor to the poor harvest, with winterkill having some bearing on it.

Volunteers needed

By Doris Brosnan

Remember last year's "Celebrate Heppner" children's events? Volunteers are needed for those activities this year. Just a half hour of your time will help guarantee a good time. Call Merry at 676-5429.

Remember last year's "Celebrate Heppner" fun music? Musically talented individuals need to volunteer to help make this year's event just as

enjoyable. Call Joyce at 676-5241.

The fair will be here soon, and with it comes a need for volunteers to be models for the Style Revue. Call Liz at 676-9832. All ages, males and females, are needed.

That volunteer-wanna-be mentioned in last week's paper still looks for a job. Call 676-5886 to get your need for a volunteer listed.

Day care plans farewell party

The Heppner DayCare/Pre-school has planned a farewell party for Sue Norton on Thursday, July 15, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the daycare center.

"We would like to acknowledge Sue for her dedication and devo-

tion to so many children for the last 13 years," said DayCare director Merry Brannon. "We welcome everyone to come and celebrate and say farewell to our very dear friend."

St. Patrick's Senior Center Bulletin Board

Eighty-four people were present for the senior dinner July 7. Members of the Episcopal Church served. There was a bit of excitement before the meal. As the hamburgers were being barbecued outside the back door, a load of commodities for the meal site arrived, and, as they were being brought into the kitchen, the smoke from the barbecue blew in and set off the fire alarm, which brought the fire and police department personnel in. Everything was restored to normal and dinner was served almost on time.

The menu for July 21 is barbecued chicken, mashed potato bake, Mexi-corn, hot zucchini dish, apricots, rolls and brownies. Members of the First Christian Church will serve.

The bus trip to Spray was cancelled as only one rider signed up. The bus will go to the Hermiston meal site July 22. Sign up at the Senior Center office or phone 676-9039 to have your name put on the list.

Volunteers folded newsletters for the Extension Service, Tuesday, July 6. Cards were played that afternoon and on Friday Jane Rawlins, committee chairperson, and many volunteers have been pricing articles for the rummage/yard sale. There is a large assortment of quality items coming in. There are also many larger items for the silent auction. Bidding on the silent auction closes Saturday, July 17, at 11 a.m. Come by the Senior Center dining room Friday and Saturday, July 16-7 for shopping at this huge sale. Proceeds will help support the Senior Center.

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Class of 1979 reunion

Over thirty-five alumni of Heppner High School's Class of 1979 will celebrate their 20-year reunion on Saturday, July 24.

The day will begin at 10:30 a.m. with a family brunch at the fairgrounds. A 1 p.m. tee-off time is set for a class golf tournament. Special guest golfers include Don Cole and Tom Shear. The reunion will be capped off during a dinner and dance at the Heppner Elks at beginning at 8:30 p.m.

Friends and family of the class of 1979 are invited to drop in to visit with class members at any of the day's events, especially during the dance by 3D

Productions.


For additional information concerning the reunion, contact Julie Grieb Weimar at 509-735-7491 or Marie Yocom Jones at 541-276-1591.

Golf lessons set at WCCC

Pete Strawick will begin junior golf lessons at Willow Creek Country Club on Wednesday, July 21.

Lessons will be from 3-4:30 p.m. The cost is \$10 per child.

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- 1999 Oldsmobile Bravada, 4-door, 4x4, sunroof, leather.**
- 1998 Chevrolet Blazer LS, 4-door, 4x4.**
- 1997 Chevrolet Blazer LS, 2-door, 5-speed, sunroof.**
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- 1998 Chevrolet Venture Van, 4-door.**
- 1998 Chevrolet Cavalier, Z24, 5-speed, sunroof.**

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