

Ione readers hitch a ride



By Merlyn Robinson

Ione area children, whose ancestors may have come westward by covered wagon, recently experienced that type of slow-motion travel in a horse-drawn, authentic prairie schooner. Gene Westberg, Ione, brought his team and wagon to town to give rides to 24 children attending Ione Library's weekly story time. With a summer reading program entitled "Pioneer Children," this was an exciting, hands-on experience for these young readers.

Librarian Christy Crowell, along with volunteer readers, devised this program to encourage children to read books during vacation from school. The small, well-stocked library offers adventures in reading for all ages.

Living near the original Oregon

Septic system advice offered

Bernie Duffy, DEQ on-site septic system inspector, will offer advice and technical assistance on on-site septic system regulations, site evaluations, permitting and construction for Morrow County residents on Tuesday, July 10, at 9-11:30 a.m. at the Morrow County Planning Department, 205 N.E. 3rd Street in Irrigon.

Although advice and assistance

Trail route is part of the heritage of Ione residents. Westberg's wagon rides provided authenticity to the heritage of these excited modern-day residents.

Westberg has driven horses since he was six years old. He says he still enjoys hooking up teams whether it's for a parade or to pull authentic horse-drawn, farm machinery. Besides schooling teams for harness work, he has also trained his own saddle horses used for ranch work.

The Westbergs lived in Baker City for many years where he was brand inspector. They chose to retire near Ione to be near their son, Ross. When it's time to brand calves or gather cattle, Gene says he enjoys helping. His working partner is often 27-year old Charlie, a willing horse who is adept at pulling a wagon or being ridden to drag calves to the branding fire.

will be offered, on-site final applications and fees should be sent to the DEQ Pendleton office located at 700 SE Emigrant, Suite 330, Pendleton, OR 97801.

DEQ offers on-site septic system advice in Morrow County on the second Tuesday of each month. For more information, contact the Pendleton DEQ office at (541) 276-4063.

PRCA at its finest returns to Heppner

By Sue Gibbs

Heppner, Oregon: A state with a rich heritage in rodeos is home of the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo. It will be celebrating its 79th year on Aug. 17-19.

Heppner may be a small town in eastern Oregon, but it features big name PRCA cowboys, WPRA cowgirls, double-tough rodeo livestock, specialty entertainment and coveted awards. You definitely know professional rodeo is alive and kicking in Heppner.

Every two-and-a-half hour performance of the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo is a multi-faceted entertainment extravaganza, packed full of more wild, unrehearsed action than most folks see in a lifetime. Noted as one of the oldest PRCA rodeos in Oregon, the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo features more than 200 PRCA cowboys and cowgirls competing in seven world championship events.

The rough and rugged action of saddle bronc and bareback riding, the skill and precision of calf roping and steer wrestling, the color and speed of cowgirls' barrel racing and the heart-stopping danger and thrills of the world's most favorite and dangerous event—bull riding, can all be seen at the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo.

The stock is provided by the famous Big Bend Rodeo Company. Their bucking stock are consistently awarded national titles at the National Finals Rodeo every year. In 2000 Big Bend Rodeo took 15 head to the NFR and won the saddle bronc of the year, Skoals Spring Fling, and the bucking bull of the year, Skoals Border Patrol. This stock and past national award winning stock such as Rapid Fire, Unforgiven and Two Spot will be at this year's rodeo to "buck the britches off of any cowboy who tries to climb on their back," as stock contractor Donny Hutsel says. The quality stock challenges the professional cowboy contestants with some of the same stock they will run into at the NFR in December. Watching the performances is just a preview of the best stock and riders in the

world.

Each wild and western performance at the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo begins with mutton bustin' 30 minutes prior to each grand entry. The rodeo officially starts with the grand entry of the Rodeo Bandits and Rodeo Court members. The chutes open for he first performance at 7 p.m. on Friday, August 17. A new event will be featured during Friday night that has been growing in popularity all over the Pacific Northwest; the "Call Your Dog Contest."

The main show on Saturday, Aug. 18, will begin with grand entry at 1:15 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 19 will bring local rodeo entertainment with the Morrow County Rodeo and the "Businessman's Sheep Dressing Contest" at 1:15 p.m. Live music follows the PRCA shows and a good time is assured in the new "Spur Em" barn with a real juniper tree.

The added awards and money have always been an attraction for the contestants. An all-around saddle hand crafted by Rich Boyer is given each year. Other awards include the Mike Currin Memorial Calf Roping Buckle. Bounty money is available in bull riding and saddle bronc riding. The barrel racers also have bonus money for the fastest time and a best-dressed award.

But more than the money and awards, rodeo keeps alive and kicking the spirit of the 'Old West' and the legend of the cowboy and his way of life. The rodeo cowboy is an athlete, to be sure, but one like no other. The risks of professional rodeo are greater and the security less than perhaps those of all other competitive sports. Physical danger is a fact of life, yet a paycheck is never guaranteed and there are no pension plans, fringe benefits, travel subsidies or retirement plans. It's a rugged road built for a special breed. The only payment the cowboy can look forward to is what he can earn in the arena against rank, ornery animals and the scores and times of equally-determined contestants. The cowboy accepts the risk and the stress—financial, mental and physical—which have always been a part of the sport.

The cowboy was, and still is the original American professional athlete and some of the PRCA's best will be in action at the Oregon Trail Pro Rodeo at Heppner. Tickets may be purchased at the gate or VIP seating may be purchased by calling Tom Wolff at (541) 676-5114.

BMCC

registering for fall term now

For the first time in a number of years students planning to attend BMCC fall term 2001 have the opportunity to pre-register for classes. New freshmen and transfer students who have applied for admission will be sent information about registration and orientation.

New students will be invited to attend one of four registration and orientation sessions where placement testing, campus introduction and orientation, advising and registration will take place. Dates set for the orientations are: Saturday, July 28, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Monday, August 13, 4 to 9 p.m.; and Friday, September 21, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information on new student orientation contact, the admissions and records office at 278-5759. Students who are non-degree seeking or taking non-credit classes may register now by contacting the Distance and Extended Learning Office at 278-5962.

Local student named to list

Jacob McElligott, a junior from Ione, was among the 639 students named to the Gonzaga University President's List for spring semester. Students must earn a 3.7 or better grade point average to be listed.

Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, is an independent comprehensive university with a student enrollment of 4,700 and majors in 92 undergraduate and 21 graduate areas of study.

Chamber Chatter

By Claudia Hughes
Chamber Executive Director

Blue sky and it's already July. Will someone just figure out how to stop time or help me to experience boredom so it will go slower. There are so many things to do in our Willow Creek Valley and along the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway. It's no wonder our brains become fragmented with too many options.

Take a moment to fill your mind with wildflowers. On a recent excursion to assist in fence repair (well, at least I'm there in case of an accident or cougar attack), I returned with 22 different varieties of wildflowers. Have you ever seen a Sagebrush Mariposa Lily? They are truly lavender works of art and how they bloom in dry areas is a miracle in itself. So many times we miss what is right under our nose because our minds are elsewhere.

The Eastern Oregon Visitors Association annual survey reported that 28 percent of the visitors to Eastern Oregon come for sightseeing (flowers, wildlife, variety in topography); 21 percent to enjoy cultural or heritage attractions (the mural, museums, courthouse); 15 percent for shopping; 11 percent camping; six percent fishing and hunting; eight percent to visit family and friends; three percent boating; one percent bowling, golf and other general sport activities. Whether one believes surveys or not, we know that historic Heppner and the Willow Creek Valley have much to offer families and seniors tired of the rat race in larger areas. Here one can unwind and relax, especially if they're visiting.

Simplifying life is the new theme these days and Heppner can offer that to visitors, be it picking wildflowers, walking the volkswalk, bowling and golfing with family and friends or researching history. And maybe down the road, if we listen to the fifth grade letters to the editor, we can come up with that skating rink at the old pool site. Nothing is impossible in Heppner.

Thought for the week: "If enough people knock their heads against a brick wall, the brick wall will fall down."

A baby costs \$785 a month.

How much is your allowance?

Brought to you by the Morrow County Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition.
For further information, contact the Morrow County Health Department at 541-676-5421
or contact the Morrow County Commission on Children and Families at 541-676-9675.