

# Teens in the Steens

Written by the Lone Journalism Club

A pre-dawn party of 16 Lone High School juniors and seniors set out armed with camping gear, warm clothes and a notebook for Southern Oregon. The entourage was chaperoned by four parents, four community members, their principal and their teacher. The objective of this Natural Resources field trip was to observe the geological wonders of Oregon, however, these students came away with a lot more.

Amy Jepsen, 11<sup>th</sup> grade, said, "My favorite part was climbing to the summit of the Steens and seeing such an incredible view from 10,000 feet high. We could see in all directions and for miles."

"It was fun. I learned different terms for geology like what a gunsight ridge was. People who live out there are very rural and far away from civilization. I could only handle living out there for a little bit; not all the time. The landscape was similar to here which surprised me with the sagebrush, but it was way more flat." Commented Kyle Palmateer, 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

Tyler Brown, 11<sup>th</sup> grade, added, "I liked it when we went cave spelunking in the Diamond Craters. Crawling around underground was cool—collecting lava bombs and stuff. My dad went on the trip too; I guess that was cool too."

"I think everyone should view the Kiger Gorge at some point in their life—it was absolutely awesome," remarks Barbara Holland, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade.

"This is an opportunity to learn about natural resources in the field, anything from the new

management policies of the Steens Cooperative agreement to looking at alpine glaciation features, to traveling on the highest road in Oregon. The camping and the camaraderie is fun also," said Duane Neiffer, Natural Resources teacher.

Recalls Bryn Browning, "The most amazing part of this trip were the students. At each stop they jumped out with notebooks and pencils. This group climbed anything and everything and loved to throw rocks into any type of water. They were divided into cook groups, car groups and camp groups. I did bring extra food, but soon realized that each student pulled their own weight and some are pretty good cooks. No one complained about setting up and breaking camp three times and everyone pitched in to help others. We all rotated cars so that we could spend time with the different chaperones and it seems that we laughed most of the trip. My favorite part was the aspen groves with all the vibrant oranges, reds and yellows."

The group had an extensive itinerary, which follows:

**Day One**— Ione to Diamond, OR via Ironside, Beulah Reservoir, Juntura and Crane;

**Day Two**— Diamond, OR to Roaring Springs Ranch (south of French Glen) via lava beds, Hammond Ranch and the Malheur Wildlife Refuge;

**Day Three**— Roaring Springs Ranch to Inglewood, OR (north of Burns) via the summit of the Steens Mountain Range, French Round Barn, The Narrows and Roaring Springs Cave; and

**Day Four**— Inglewood, OR to Ione via



Pictured from left to right (Front Row) Austin Arballo, Kelly Thompson, Taylor McElligott, Bryn Browning, Kyle Palmateer (Back Row) Duane Neiffer, Ashly Grams, (behind Ashly, Virgil Morgan) Abby Key, Tyler Raible, Tyler Brown, Barbara Holland, Amy Jepsen, John Walton, Dan Long, James Acock, Sara Peck, Arthur Eckstrom, Jenny Griffith.

John Day Fossil Beds, Cant Ranch and Dairy Queen. After almost 900

miles, one shower, cold nights and hot days, the group pulled into Ione ready to unload notebooks full of notes, soil samples and several varieties and sizes of rocks. At the next Ione board meeting, which will be held Nov. 8 at 7 p.m., the class will present their trip logs. Please join us if you can.

## Umatilla-Morrow ESD to take over Union-Baker contracts worth \$9 million

On Friday, October 8, Oregon School Superintendent Susan Castillo announced that the Department of Education would be removing almost \$13 million worth of contracts from the troubled Union-Baker Education Service District. This amount is spread over a two-year biennium and includes instructional services for youth corrections, regional special education oversight and early intervention/early childhood education.

The Department also announced that they would be searching for alternative providers for those contracts.

Today, ODE formally notified the

Umatilla-Morrow Education Service District that they are the recommended contractor for approximately \$9 million worth of those contracts covering regional special education management and early intervention/childhood education programs. Regional oversight would include Umatilla, Morrow, Union, Baker, Wallowa, Grant and Malheur counties.

As part of the contracting process, ODE will be sending a special team to Pendleton for an on-site visitation prior to completely turning the programs over to the new contractor. In addition, Judge Frank Yraguen, who served as the mediator between Ione and the

### Preschool students trot through Ione



Kristi Crowell, with help from Penny Krebs, gave the students of Creative Care Preschool in Ione pony cart rides. (Front Row L-R): Aaron Smythe, Kristi Crowell and Wyatt McNary; (Back Row L-R): Maggie Flynn, Wyatt Steagall, Penny Krebs and Ivy Sandford.



(Front Row L-R): Leslie Browning, Kristi Crowell and Kaitlin Garrett; (Back Row L-R): Joey Olsen, Penny Krebs and Morgan Orem.

Morrow County School District, will be facilitating the contract transfers on behalf of ODE.

In learning of the news, Superintendent George Murdock said he was extremely pleased that the Department is recommending the Umatilla-Morrow ESD for this responsibility. "More than half of the students served by these programs live in our ESD and as the largest regional agency in Eastern Oregon, I believe that we have staff and the capacity to provide the kind of high quality management that ODE is seeking."

He went on to say, "there are excellent people already providing direct services in the other five counties including Union and Baker and I am looking forward to the opportunity of working closely with them to help perpetuate the outstanding work they are doing in serving the needs of children who qualify for these services."

"I know that there has been considerable consternation on the part of parents, students and staff at the grassroots level as these events have unfolded and we are anxious to provide assurances that there will be no breaks in program continuity. Many of these services require licensed staff members with complex certification and unusual skills and we want to make sure that we can keep them on-board."

Murdock was in Salem on Oct. 13 and 14 meeting with state officials and he was in LaGrande on Oct. 18 meeting with staff at the Union-Baker ESD. "It is our hope," he said, "to be able to meld together the administrators and staff from our two agencies in order to be able to capitalize on the strengths of all involved. While the issues that have distracted us during the past several months have involved adults, we need to continue to be reminded that our primary focus needs to

be on the students and their unique needs."


ODE has made it very clear that accountability will be a top priority for their new contractors and that they plan to accelerate their involvement in terms of program oversight.

The contracts involving instructional programs for youth detention and juvenile corrections will most likely be turned over to agencies located nearer the institutions they serve. The Umatilla-Morrow ESD is not involved in those contracts and also does not provide alternative education programs. Two of the programs—long-term care and treatment and the Riverbend Corrections program, are both in the LaGrande School District and could be handled by that district. Should LaGrande choose not to go that direction, then the Umatilla-Morrow ESD considered option two by ODE.

Added Murdock, "Our board has long felt that the regional contracts and oversight of the early childhood/early intervention programs ought to be in our ESD since we have the majority of the students. We have experience in this area and it is a natural fit. If we were to look at other questions related to Union-Baker such as alternative education or a potential merger, that would require more discussion and direction from the board."

There are 20 education service districts in the State of Oregon providing a wide range of regional services with the largest responsibility being Special Education. The ESDs also provide a wide array of services in support of the No Child Left Behind Act including curriculum, staff development, services for second language learners and assessment and testing. Some education service districts also provide a series of specialized services such as information technology, cooperative purchasing, alternative education, media, technology in the classroom and printing.


The Umatilla-Morrow ESD handles a variety of management contracts in the areas of business services, technology, human resources, purchasing, and Special Education. The ESD serves as the business office for Ione, Helix, Ukiah, the Oregon Association of Education Service Districts, the Oregon Small Schools Association and the Nixyaawii Charter School.



**There's absolutely no substitute for 26 years judicial experience.**

**Re-elect Charlotte Gray for Justice of the Peace**

Paid for by Charlotte Gray



**Elect Cyde Marie Estes Morrow County Clerk**

**"A History of Service"**


I will represent you efficiently, effectively and cheerfully providing the accountability that is critical to sustain trust in local government.

*I hope you will allow me the opportunity to serve you.*

Paid for by the Committee to Elect Cyde Marie Estes

**Northwest Windshields™**

**Congratulations Jim Shelton!**



In the tradition of 20 years of excellence in Auto Glass replacement and repair, NORTHWEST WINDSHIELDS, INC. is proud to welcome another Master Glazier to the team! As the only NGA Master Certified Technician in Eastern Oregon, Jim Shelton is one of the latest of our glass professionals to achieve the prestigious rating of "Auto Glass Expert". Welcome and congratulations Jim!

**Proudly Serving the Northwest Since 1985**

**(800) 421-0022**

**NGA**