

Umatilla National Forest holds Fire and Fuels Career Camp

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Service. Wednesday night brought a campfire discussion with representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Central Oregon Fire Management Services, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, Oregon Department of Forestry, and former Umatilla National Forest Supervisor Jeff Blackwood talking about their careers and career options with federal and state agencies.

On Thursday, camp involved learning about fire suppression techniques such as the use of pumps, water, and engines.

Students filled out an evaluation every day so that adjustments can be made for next year's camp.

The Umatilla National Forest, working in partnership with the Morrow County School District, sent representatives to talk to students that would be high school seniors during the time of the camp about the aspects that would be involved. Interested students were required to fill out an application and applicants were later interviewed before the students were selected. The Forest Service chose seniors for this camp because a person must be 18 years of age to work with the Forest Service.

The students each had different reasons for wanting to be involved with the camp. "My uncle and aunt work for the Forest Service and I heard this would be a good place to start. It's fun and efficient," said Kurt Hill of Irrigon High School.

Hill said he had four years of experience with a propane torch but had never worked with a drip torch. "I had some experience (with fire) and this was a great opportunity," said Joe Rupe of Riverside High School. "I have worked for four years with Boardman Fire Department but this is my first time working with a drip torch. It was a fun experience."

Some students were not sure what the experience would be like, but were pleasantly surprised. "This is a really fun experience. I thought it would be a lot of talking and walking but it turned out to be a lot more. I learned there were more jobs in the industry than I thought," said Kylie Doherty of Heppner High School. "Different people came to my school to talk about different jobs. This was the job description I liked the most," said Rene Montes of Riverside High School. "I will definitely pursue a job with the Forest Service." Montes said his only experience with fire before the camp was helping his dad burn piles of tumbleweed.

One and a half years with the Heppner Volunteer Fire Department is what motivated Eric Skaggs of Heppner High School to apply for the camp. "I always wanted a job with anything to do with fire. I love the work," said Skaggs.

Approximately 80% of permanent employees with the Forest Service come from the seasonal work force. The Forest Ser-



Students attending the Umatilla National Forest Fire and Fuels Orientation Camp performed many tasks during their weeklong camp. Among those was a prescribed burn in which non-commercial thinning was piled up and burned. Kristen Marshall of the Heppner Ranger District was the camp coordinator. -Photos by Autumn Morgan

vice hopes that having camp now may stimulate interest in the jobs. The Forest Service hopes that interested students would apply for the seasonal work force next year with Umatilla National Forest. "Working as a seasonal employee gets their foot in the door for more

permanent jobs down the line," said Tom Mafera, district ranger of the Heppner Ranger District. The Forest Service hires 40-50 seasonal employees each year for fire suppression alone. "It (the camp) sounded interesting. I like it, I didn't expect much but it has been very fun.

Everything is very new," said Amy Grider of Riverside High School. "I might be interested in a part time job."

Kristen Marshall, camp coordinator and permanent district employee, works as an engine captain/module leader. "This was a

different and interesting experience," said Marshall.

At the end of the camp, each student was presented with a certificate of appreciation and recognition of their completion of the Umatilla National Forest Fire and Fuels Career Orientation Camp.

Preschoolers visit Assisted Living Center, trick-or-treat



The 4 year old preschool class from the Heppner Day Care dressed up in their Halloween costumes and visited the Willow Creek Terrace Assisted Living Center on Tuesday, October 30. The residents at the Center provided pumpkins from their garden for the students to paint. After painting, the preschoolers joined the residents for some Halloween snacks. The preschoolers later entertained the residents with some songs they have been practicing at the Day Care.

On Monday, October 29, the 3 year old preschool class went trick-or-treating around town.



Left Photo: Harley Anderson shows off her artistic ability to Sylvia McDaniel.

Center Photo: Emily Smith and Michael Jacka get some encouraging words from Juanita Martin as they paint their pumpkins at the Willow Creek Terrace Assisted Living Center.

Top Right Photo: Jace Coe (left) and Jackson Lehman (far right) impress Nina Harshman and Ed Dick with their artwork.

Middle Right Photo: George Jeffries admires 4 year old Joseph Sherman's pumpkin artwork.

Bottom Right Photo: Three year old students from Heppner Day Care stopped by the Heppner Gazette-Times to trick-or-treat on Monday, October 29.



Electric Co-Op Annual Meeting Thursday, November 1st

The Annual Dinner meeting of Columbia Basin Electric Cooperative, Inc. is planned for Thursday, Nov. 1st at the St. Patrick's Parish Hall in Heppner. Registration starts at 4:30 p.m. with dinner served at 5:15 p.m. The annual meeting and election of Directors will follow the dinner. Multiple door prizes will be awarded and results of the annual 4th grade Electrical Safety Poster contest and the Annual Photographic contest will be announced, with winning entries on display. New this year will be a special section of door prizes devoted just for youth when accompanied to the meeting by their parents. MP3 Players, iTunes Cards, and other prizes for students will be given out.

All members are welcome to come and learn about their Electric Co-Op.

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