

BMCC named Military Friendly School "Wild Beauty" Program to be held Sept. 21 at Heppner Library

Blue Mountain Community College has earned the distinction of being a Military Friendly School. This honor roll of 1,000 schools features the top 15 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools doing the most to embrace America's veterans as students.

According to Dr. Harvey Franklin, associate vice president of enrollment management and the veterans' project coordinator, "BMCC is focused on making enrollment and degree attainment readily accessible for military personnel. We offer support services to assist active military and veterans have a successful educational

experience; these services include tutoring, a veterans' club, and the opportunity to turn military training and experience into college credits."

The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs has recently hired retired Coast Guard veteran Martin Ornelas as the veteran Service officer for BMCC, Treasure Valley Community College, Central Oregon Community College and Eastern Oregon University. Ornelas will be on the BMCC Pendleton campus regularly to meet with veterans to help them maximize their education and military benefits. His first visit to BMCC is September 29 and 30, with

a veterans' reception on the 30th from 2-4 p.m. in Morrow Hall, room M-208. Private appointments with Ornelas can be made by calling 503-559-3460 or ornelam@odva.state.or.us.

According to the Military Friendly Schools guide, the Serviceman's Readjustment Act — commonly known as the GI Bill — opened the halls of education to millions of veterans returning from World War II and helped education an entire generation. The post-9/11 GI Bill holds the same promise. The law, which took effect August 1, 2009, offers even more generous education benefits and many veterans will realize a free education.

A special program celebrating "Wild Beauty: Photographs of the Columbia River Gorge 1867-1957" — the first book published by the Northwest Photography Archive — will be held at the Oregon Trail Library District's Heppner branch library on Tuesday, September 21, at 6:30 p.m.

The free program is hosted by the library district in partnership with Libraries of Eastern Oregon (LEO). All ages are welcome to attend.

"Wild Beauty" illuminates the rich photographic heritage of the Columbia River Gorge over a century of dramatic change, with 134 images by three dozen photographers, including the famed

Carleton Watkins, Benjamin Gifford, Fred Kister, Lily White, Sarah Ladd, Alfred Monner and Ray Atkeson.

Much of the extraordinary work created during this period by Watkins and his successors has never been able to public view. The original prints or negatives are fragile; they exist today primarily because they have been preserved in archival collections.

These rare photographs have been meticulously restored and then carefully reproduced in a four-color process to capture the nuanced tones and subtle coloring of albumen silver prints, gelatin silver prints, platinum prints,

hand-colored photographs and early Kodachromes.

The first volume in the Northwest Photography Series, "Wild Beauty" is published by the nonprofit Northwest Photography Archive in collaboration with Oregon State University Press.

"Wild Beauty" was nominated for the Oregon Books Awards, and is Oregon's first American Masterpieces project, supported by the Oregon Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The program will be presented by John Laursen, co-author of the book. Laursen is the owner/operator of Press-22, a Portland studio specializing in the design and production of high quality books and text-based public art projects.

"I'm enthusiastic about the prospect of doing these presentations in eastern Oregon," Laursen said. "The event I do is a PowerPoint presentation of photographs from the book."

"As I go through the images I talk about the book, and the pictures, and the Gorge, and the photographers, and the circumstances under which the photographers were working. It's a pretty free-flowing talk rather than a lecture per se, and generally I invite questions both during the presentation and after."

Laursen will have copies of the book available for signing.

"Wild Beauty" captures not only the spectacular landscapes that draw us to the river's shores, but the complex and conflicting histories that have played out in the Columbia River Gorge over the past two centuries," said Toby Jurorovics, Curator of Photography for the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

"Wild Beauty" is a gift to the Columbia and to all who love this majestic and elegant river."

Funding for the program tour in eastern Oregon has been provided to LEO by the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS). IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums.

The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more, please visit www.imls.gov.

For more information about program, contact library district director Marsha Richmond at 541-481-3365 or LEO director Lyn Craig at 541-763-2355.



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