

Bikeway ride this weekend

Drivers are reminded to watch for "slow moving traffic" this weekend, Sept. 17-18, during the fifth annual Blue Mountain Century Ride.

The Blue Mountain Century Bikeway is a scenic loop of approximately 108 miles starting and ending in Heppner. The route initially follows the Blue Mountain Scenic Byway east through the Blue Mountains to Hwy. 395. It then travels north from forest to rangelands to Nye Junction, and west through eastern Oregon's rolling hills to Heppner.

Recreation Dept. refers to the Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway as one of the best-of-the-best road bike routes in Oregon. The bikeway offers some of the most remote and extreme road riding in Oregon, so riders will be especially glad for the lunch and water supplied and carried by the ride organizers. Also part of the fully-supported bicycle tour are sag wagons, food and mechanic support.

More information and is available at <http://www.heppnerchamber.com/recreation-cycling>.

The Oregon Parks and

Vets who need routine audiology, optometry appointments can soon directly schedule

WASHINGTON—Veterans receiving care at Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Centers will now be able to schedule routine ear and eye appointments at local VA audiology and optometry clinics without a primary care referral—a move that eliminates multiple steps and gets veterans into appointments quicker.

Before now, veterans seeking appointments with audiologists or optometrists had to first make an appointment with a primary care physician for a referral for a routine clinic consult visit. A clinic representative would contact the patient to set up the consult appointment, which could result in a several weeks' lag between the appointment and when the veteran was actually seen.

The new process, the Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative, which began as a successful pilot at three sites in 2015, is being expanded to all VA Medical Centers.

"The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative allows veterans who need eye and ear care to be seen sooner," said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. "It also has the benefit of freeing up primary care physicians so access to primary care im-

proves for other veterans as well. This kind of process improvement is exactly the type of innovation we expected when we launched MyVA in 2014. In the end, we changed a VA process by considering the needs of our veterans, a change that allows for more timely care and an improved veteran experience."

The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is one of a number of efforts underway at VA to improve veterans' access to care and wait times. However, as access to care improves, more and more veterans are choosing VA care, so even though the VA is completing millions more appointments, they continue to have more work to do.

"We want our veterans and those who care for them to know that we are doing everything that we can to improve their experience with VA and to provide the care our veterans deserve in a thoughtful and timely way," said VA Under Secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. "We have made progress, but know there is more work to be done."

The Audiology and Optometry Direct Scheduling Initiative is expected to be fully operational within all VA Medical Centers by the end of 2016.

Third Morrow County Harvest Festival coming Oct. 1

Free event set to showcase region's produce, local artisans, and other food products with family activities and beer and wine tasting

BOARDMAN—The third annual Morrow County Harvest Festival is coming to the SAGE Center on Saturday, Oct. 1, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The event is presented by the Boardman, Heppner and Irrigon chambers of commerce in conjunction with the SAGE Center and will be held at 101 Olson Road in Boardman.

This year the Morrow County Harvest Festival will feature a variety of vendors with homemade items. Beer and wine tasting will be available from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. by local producers Sno Road Winery and Ordinance Brewing. Available all day, the Kids Corner will include horse and buggy rides, new obstacle course, miniature horses, pumpkin painting, and photo booth.

SAGE Center Manager, Kalie Davis, says she is excited to see the festival continue to grow.

"The Morrow County chambers of commerce and the SAGE Center wanted to



Attendees at last year's harvest festival pile in the mule-driven wagon for a ride. Over 800 people attended the event. —Photo Courtesy of the SAGE Center

put together a fun harvest festival with our own spin on it. Each year the event has grown in size and the vendors have done a tremendous job of providing creative homemade goods." Davis said.

Event sponsors include the Kiwanis Club of Boardman, Tillamook, Lamb

Weston, Cascade Specialties, and the River Lodge and Grill.

"All of the Morrow County Harvest Festival activities are free for families to participate in thanks to the generous donations from our sponsors." Davis said.

For more information

about the event go to www.visitsage.com or call the SAGE Center at 541-481-7243, Boardman Chamber of Commerce at 541-481-3014, Heppner Chamber of Commerce at 541-676-5536, or Irrigon Chamber of Commerce at 541-922-3857.

A View from the Hill

By Doris Brosnan

Readers who view with appreciation the long history and unique sound of accordion music will want to watch news from Willow Creek Terrace for an announcement that Kelly Weaver will be returning. The Residents thoroughly enjoyed his one-hour accordion concert on Aug. 11 and agree that they will invite him for encore performances and invite area friends to join them.

Readers are also invited to join the Community on the Hill Sept. 16, either by coming up or by taking time at 11 a.m. wherever they are, to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. This coordinated effort across our nation on Constitution Day attempts to have the pledge recited from coast to coast at the same time, the more voices the better. More information can be found on the internet.

September is a sort of slow-down month after the summer months' activities, which included Music-in-the-Park concerts and the Morrow County Fair. No September outings are yet planned, but Residents will continue to have opportunities for at-home activities that include Bingo, crossword puzzles, morning conversations and exercises, movies, and seasonal crafts. The Residents who participate in these stimulating activities appreciate the many volunteers and Staff who provide them. Crafts persons who wish to offer craft-making opportunities for the Residents are invited to contact George Nairns, 676-0004.

The perfect Fall weather will invite Residents to wander out for some "sidewalk supervising" as the landscaping project on the adjacent lot resumes tomorrow. Project supervi-

sor Joanne Burlinson reports that the laying of water lines will be followed by the water pump, sidewalks, grass, plants, and benches, with the end of October as the hoped-for conclusion. This project is only possible because of a gracious financial donation and the donation of time and expertise by several volunteers.

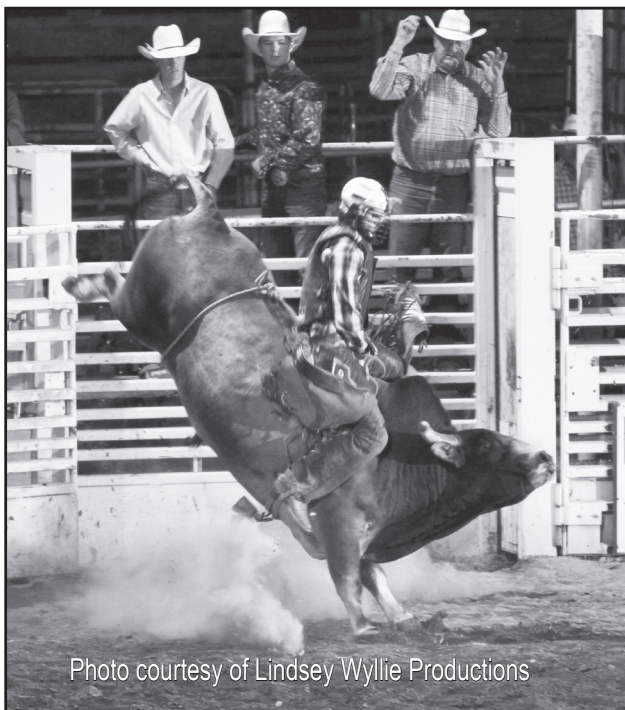
Residents can also continue to lose themselves in some good books when not busy with other commitments. The book-exchange service Ed Struthers provided before moving away will continue, thanks to the local librarians. Another act of kindness the Community appreciates.

A new service introduced this month is the transportation to church services provided through the cooperation of the Morrow County LOOP program and the Shared Ministries of All Saints' Episcopal and Hope Lutheran Churches. For area residents, including those at the Terrace, a free ride to one's church on Sunday mornings can be arranged by calling Suzanne Jepsen, 541-676-9850.

September has already ushered in two more birthdays at the Terrace: Bonnie Gates celebrated her special day on the fourth. Barbara Struthers welcomed her huge family on her 95th birthday on the 11th. No more scheduled birthdays this month or next month, but maybe a new Resident will move into the available apartment and bring an October birthday celebration along. Readers are invited to call 541-676-0004 for information about the apartment.

The Community has recently welcomed Juanita Garnicia to their kitchen as the head cook. Juanita has worked at the Terrace for some time but only stepped into this spot when Cindy Johnson moved from Heppner. Soon, they will welcome two new staff members who are now in training. The Residents and Staff on the Hill always look forward to welcoming a newcomer—staff and resident—as they view the event as filled with opportunities for themselves and the new personality.

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124 N. MAIN STREET HEPPNER OR 97836

Chamber lunch meeting

There will be no chamber lunch meeting on Sept. 15, as the chamber will be getting ready for the fifth annual Blue Mountain Century Scenic Bikeway ride Sept. 17-18.

The next lunch meeting of the Heppner Chamber of Commerce will be an all entities report on Thursday, Oct. 6, at noon in Heppner City Hall conference room.

On Thursday, Oct. 20, the chamber will hold a candidate's forum for Heppner mayor and city council candidates. RSVPs will be required at 541-676-5536, and this lunch will be open to the community.



HEPPNER ELKS 358
676-9181 "Where Friends Meet" 142 North Main

HUNTER'S NIGHT

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

**STEAK DINNER
AT 6PM
LODGE AT 8PM**

PRIZES & RAFFLE

