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Memorial Day ceremony schedule, See B5 | Colville teams advance, See C1



Buffaloed



Catch the reality show at Win-Tur Farm in Springdale

By RaeLynn Ricarte
Statesman-Examiner

SPRINGDALE — “Dodge” might be the bull of the bison herd but, even at nearly 2,000 pounds, he doesn’t argue with “Puddin,” the head cow who is half his size.

When it comes to getting grain cookies, Puddin and Dude are first in line and, if she doesn’t feel like sharing, she’ll make sure he gets the point — literally. She is unafraid to give him a not-so-gentle poke in the behind with her horns when the mood strikes her.

“Bison are a matriarchal society and Puddin keeps Dude on his toes,” said Jessie Turney, who co-owns the farm south of Springdale with partner Andrew Winter, hence “Win-Tur” as the name of the business.

The 21-head herd at the farm near Springdale has only one other adult male, “Dodge,” who, at nearly 20, is reaching the end of his life expectancy — about 25 for the average bison.

Also on the farm is Lucy and her new calf, as well as Ethel, Peaches and a host of other females in Dodge’s harem.

It isn’t so much that the females respond to his charms, it’s more a situation where he just wears them down with his persistence, said Turney.

Studying the personali-



“Peaches” noses around for treats at Win-Tur Farm near Springdale. The 21 bison on the farm each have their own personalities that make watching them more interesting than TV, say owners.

ties of the herd and learning about their eccentricities and habits is better than television, she said.

To add even more interest to their reality show, there is a flock of chickens on the property hunting for worms and other delicacies.

“Sometimes the kids like the birds more than the bison because they are a little bit smaller,” said Turney.

The resident guard geese are “Screech” and “Holla,” which is somewhat of a problem for Turney since Screech has taken a dislike to her.

Winter knows how that goes, except his foe is much larger and potentially more lethal. Dodge views him as a competing Alpha, especially when he is driving the

tractor around the property.

After having the tractor attacked a few times, Winter and Turney make sure Dodge is in another location when the machinery is in operation.

Dodge also feels his manhood threatened by the livestock water tanks, which are now ringed by rubber tires so they won’t be perforated.

“He is always looking for something to destroy,” said Winter.

He and Turney have a healthy respect for the fact that bison are wild animals and they don’t go into the pasture where the herd hangs out unless it is necessary. They like to enter the field when

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Duane Vaagen, president of Vaagen Brothers Lumber, uses his tablet to snap a photo of county commissioners who climbed the 30-ton portal crane to check out the log yard in Colville.

Western state group tours Vaagen, forest

Local officials talk of public/private collaboration

Editor’s Note: This is the first of two stories about Vaagen Brothers Lumber projects. Next week features an interview with Duane Vaagen, president of the company.

By RaeLynn Ricarte
Statesman-Examiner

COLVILLE — The Mill Creek A to Z stewardship pilot project in the Colville National Forest was visited last week by county officials from several states.

The tour by members of the Western Interstate Region of the National Association of Counties, that includes 15 states, was hosted by the Stevens County Commission, U.S. Forest Service and Vaagen Brothers Lumber.

While in Spokane for a conference last week, the delegation was given two choices for a field trip, either the local national forest or Grand Coulee Dam.

The trips were intended to facilitate discussion on the topics of the week: public land issues, community stability and economic

development, and promotion of the traditional Western way of life,” said Wes McCart, chair of the local commission.

Rodney Smolden, forest supervisor, explained what the county’s guests were seeing from bus windows on their morning tour of work being done in the Mill Creek watershed north-east of Colville by Vaagen foresters.

“What’s really notable is the good relationship all the entities have to make this work,” said Montrose Colorado County Commissioner Sue Hansen.

Traditionally, projects on federal land have been sold after the Forest Service has cleared regulatory hurdles mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act.

However, that process can take years to complete so Vaagen and the Forest Service came to a first-of-its-kind agreement — sell the project and include the NEPA work as part of the 10-year experimental project, hence the A to Z name.

The agency wanted thinning and restoration done across 54,000 acres of the 1.2 million acre forest. Years of overgrowth had left parts of the forest too dense and full of diseased and bug-infested trees that

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Muddy Moment

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Brittany Lamica guides her horse carefully around the Arden arena during Saturday’s barrel racing competition. Heavy rains the night before turned the dirt into slick mud that slowed activities because of the potential for injuries. Despite overcast skies that threatened more rain, the annual Old Timer’s Rodeo drew a crowd and kicked off the season in Stevens County with a variety of activities, including a Potato Race, calf roping and cow milking.

‘Freedom capital’ gears up for gun show

Chief’s stance on I-1639 attracted people across U.S.

By RaeLynn Ricarte
Statesman-Examiner

REPUBLIC — Police Chief Loren Culp’s refusal to enforce new gun control laws enacted after the passage of Initiative 1639 has motivated about 700 vendors — some from as far away as Missouri and Florida — to flock to the small town for a gun show over Memorial Day weekend.

“People are making a statement by coming,” said Michael Scribner, owner of Falcon Productions, which is putting on the event. “I’ve never had this kind of response to any other show that I have planned — it’s going to be huge.”



Culp

The show’s name “Gunstock” is a play on “Woodstock,” a 1969 music festival on a farm in New York that drew hundreds of thousands, he said.

Scribner is expecting 8,000-10,000 people to come to the fairgrounds outside Republic May 24-26, for the family-friendly event.

Hours will be 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

“It’s really a classic gun and knife show, it’s just getting a lot of attention,” said Scribner.

The show came about, he said, after Culp announced immediately after passage of I-1639 last November that he refused to enforce the new law out of the belief it violated the state and federal constitutions.

Culp said “mob rule” could not amend the constitution to strip people of their Second Amendment rights.

Republic then dubbed itself the “Freedom Capital of the World” and Culp

published a book earlier about the issue that has become a bestseller in its category on Amazon.

I-1639 raised the minimum age for adults to buy a semi-automatic rifle to 21, redefines “assault rifles,” and mandates safety classes for purchases. In addition, it requires firearms dealers to sell trigger locks and gun safes, and prevents them from selling to out-of-state residents.

The law could also make firearms owners criminally liable if their guns are involved in any criminal incidents, even if the weapons were stolen.

The measure is being challenged in U.S. District Court by the Second Amendment Foundation as well as the NRA.

“Chief Culp was the first to take the opposition stance and I reached out to him and said it would be great to have a show up in his neck of the woods,” said Scribner.

He initially planned for 200 tables and booked one

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