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The Humboldt Sun



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Martin fire area gets a healthy crop of sagebrush

By Michelle Cook

m.cook@winnemuccapublishing.net

More than a year after the Martin fire in northern Humboldt County, restoration efforts are well underway. Part of the restoration program is to plant a keystone species — sagebrush — to a land scarred by wildfire. And a large part of that program is the Sagebrush in Prison program headed by projected coordinator Shannon Swim.

Swim oversees a group of inmates at the Lovelock Correctional Facility who have volunteered to plant sagebrush seeds, care for



Courtesy of Shannon Swim and the Institute for Applied Ecology

Over 350 species of animals, birds and lizards depend on sagebrush. Some of these species are sagebrush obligates which means that without access to the bush these species die. Sagebrush obligate species include the greater sage grouse, the pygmy rabbit and the black-tailed jack rabbit.

them and harvest them to be planted across the West. Swim says the purpose is to restore wildlife habitat especially for the sage grouse while also engaging state prison systems. Swim said the program not only grows desperately-needed plant material, but also teaches inmates a bit of ecology along the way.

“We go into these institutions and we teach the inmates how to grow the sagebrush which includes how to sow, how to care for it, and then we also have this whole educational aspect where we teach them not just how to grow but why we are growing,” she said.

According to BLM Pub-

lic Affairs Specialist Heather O’Hanlon, between Oct. 27 and Nov. 9, the BLM planted 246,000 sagebrush seedlings on 2,240 acres within three separate areas of the Martin Fire. The Prison project provided 110,000 of those plants for the Martin Fire rehabilitation efforts. An additional 176,000 seedlings came from four different prisons in Lovelock and Carson City and Herlong, Calif. to rehabilitate the Holloway Fire. This was the largest seedling acquisition from the prison system to date, O’Hanlon wrote in a follow-up email.

The sagebrush species — See **BRUSH**, Page Five —

Junior engineers build catapults —



ASHLEY MADEN • The Humboldt Sun

The Jr. Engineers at the library were challenged with another science-based problem solving project last week: how to build a snowball launching catapult out of recycled materials. Above, **Quincy Rowberry**, 6, puts pieces of recycled material together to build a snowball catapult. For more photos, see Page 28.

Services for those who served

Veteran resources in Winnemucca

By Ashley Maden

a.maden@winnemuccapublishing.net

There are several active veterans organizations in Winnemucca that help to provide services for vet-

erans, community service and provide scholarships to highschool students.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) is an organization of U.S. war veterans established September 29, 1899 (120 years ago) in Columbus, Ohio. The VFW has

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ASHLEY MADEN • The Humboldt Sun

Craig “Skip” Becker, Adjutant, VFW Post 12116, National Guard Family Assistance Center Specialist Barbara Stanton, American Legion Auxiliary and Lewis Trout, Commander, American Legion Post 5, represent organizations geared toward helping veterans in Winnemucca.

State e-scooter law allows local governments to regulate use

By Michelle Cook

m.cook@winnemuccapublishing.net

During the 80th session of the Nevada legislation, lawmakers passed a bill regulating electric scooters (e-scooter) like those made by the companies Lime and Bird. The bill went into effect June 2019.

The bill, now law, allows local governments to set regulations and impose reasonable fees on electric scooter share

operators and restricts ridership to those 16 or older. According to the text of the law, an electric scooter is "a vehicle with handlebars and an electric motor that is designated to be ridden on in an upright or seated position and propelled by its electric motor or by propulsion provided by the rider." In addition to this description, the electric scooter cannot weigh more than 100 pounds without a rider and cannot exceed 20 miles per hour when pow-

ered solely by its electric motor.

Since 2017, electric scooter startups like Bird (founded April 2017) and Lime (founded January 2017) have spread across the US and internationally.

Concerns have been raised about the safety of the motorized vehicles, which people often ride without a helmet. Riders often ride them on sidewalks, leading to accidents with pedestrians or other e-scooter users.

According to the National Association of City Transportation Officials, in 2018, e-scooters rocketed past station-based rental bikes as the most popular form of shared "micro-mobility" transportation, with rental companies like Lime and Bird renting 85,000 e-scooters in about 100 cities across the country.

As a result, some urban areas nationwide are slapping new regulations on e-scooters — and the

two major companies that rent them. Nevada joined a growing number of states which have passed laws governing the use of e-scooter rentals.

Mopeds, which could include scooters depending on legally-defined criteria, require registration, and may require inspection and vehicle insurance. These vehicles also require a current driver's license. E-scooters and electric bikes do not require a driv-

er's license and the state doesn't require a rider or passenger to wear a helmet for any motorized vehicle.

Neither Lime nor Bird currently operate e-scooter rentals in the state of Nevada. Lime had originally offered e-scooters in the Reno-Sparks area in 2018 but ceased the offering when the City of Reno sent the company a cease and desist order for violating Nevada law.

VETS

(Cont. from Page One)

approximately 6,300 posts around the world.

VFW post 12116 Adjutant Craig "Skip" Becker in Winnemucca helps facilitate veteran's services through the Winnemucca post, along with scholarships provided by the VFW.

Becker said that each member of the VFW counts as one vote in congress, with services and representation for veterans who currently or previously suffered from issues from agent orange contamination including leukemia and other types of can-

cer, birth defects or other issues.

Membership of the VFW consists of veterans, who, as soldiers, sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and airmen served that nation in wars, campaigns, and expeditions on foreign soil or hostile waters.

More information about the VFW and monthly meetings can be obtained by calling Becker at 775-304-3272.

American Legion Post No. 5 Commander Lewis Trout said for all veterans organizations, it's important for members to attend at least two meetings per year to stay informed about

program and benefit changes.

The American Legion is the nation's largest veterans service organization and assists veterans, mentors youth, provides college scholarships and improves communities. The American Legion provides services to both peacetime and wartime veterans.

Trout said that most recently, the American Legion Post No. 5 has been going through the Nevada State Treasurer dormant account lists for organizations and individuals who serve the community, with over \$5,000 in total identified.

The American Legion also awards a scholarship each year to a student in Winnemucca.

The American Legion Auxiliary supports the efforts of the American Auxiliary and provides services and scholarships to community members. The Auxiliary is for individuals with family members who are American Legion members.

The Auxiliary chapter in Winnemucca provides two high school students with a \$500 scholarship each year and sends one student to a legislative camp in Lake Tahoe which pro-

vides valuable experience that builds knowledge of the American government system.

More information about the American Legion Auxiliary can be found at <https://www.alaforveterans.org/>.

The National Guard Armory in Winnemucca provides assistance to families in determining local resources and gathering documents for veterans.

A Four Chaplains annual memorial ceremony will be held on Sunday, February 2 at the Winnemucca Masonic Lodge.

The chaplains, who represented three different

faiths, gave up their life jackets and their lives as their ship, the Dorchester, sank in the north Atlantic after being hit by an enemy torpedo on Feb. 3, 1943 during World War II.

Through the Veterans in Need program, veterans can find help with short-term needs and resources.

Funds are provided by the VFW, American Legion Post No. 5 and American Legion Auxiliary Post No. 5. Individuals who would like to know more about the Veterans in Need program can contact Skip Becker at 775-304-3272.

BRUSH

(Cont. from Page One)

the program grows for the BLM include Wyoming and Mountain Big sagebrush, but other species also grow in the Great Basin area including Basin Big Sagebrush and Low Sagebrush.

The Sagebrush in Prisons Project is coordinated by Institute for Applied Ecology's Ecological Education Program and is part of the Sustainability in Prisons Project. It is an environmental partnership between the Institute for Applied Ecology, Department of Corrections, and the BLM to provide activities for incarcerated adults with the goal of restoring native habitat for the greater sage-grouse in the Great Basin region through a five state plant production and ecological education initia-

tive. The program started as a pilot program in Oregon in 2014 and by 2016 northern Nevada had its own program at three prisons.

The program begins in February or March when Swim gets the sagebrush seeds from the BLM. Swim said the seeds are designated for certain areas and are genetically appropriate for that area. Once the seeds have been received, planting and maintenance can begin.

Inmates participating in the program care for the plants, spending three to four hours daily feeding, watering, weeding and keeping track of plant health.

This year, the Love-lock program experienced pathogen problems. We had two different patho-

gens that affected our plant growth," inmate Phillip Smith said. "But we were able to pull it together."

Samples were sent to the Nevada Department of Agriculture and test determined the sagebrush had root rot pathogens. Smith estimates that the pathogens affected about 2/3 of their crop. However, he said, the inmates learned how to deal with the problem and bring many of the plants back to health.

Smith and other program participants have put together a program log of the 2019 sagebrush growing season. The log includes germination information, growth rates, mortality rates, and notes from guest lectures.

Smith hopes that the Institute for Applied Ecology or the BLM will make

the information available to the public to educate people about the importance of sagebrush.

Swim said she takes the data the inmates collect, and the Institute for Applied Ecology incorporates it into final reports which are sent to the BLM to show what the inmates been doing and what they've been learning. Swim said these reports help with outreach efforts because this program is about so much more than just growing sagebrush.

"Most people don't know how important sagebrush is and just think of it as kind of a weed," she said. "But the reality is that it's a keystone species that holds together this huge ecosystem and without it, it will collapse, and so the outreach is crucial."



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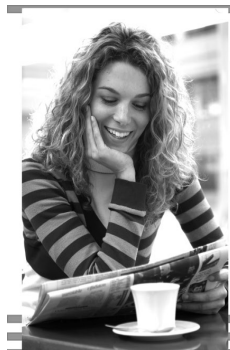
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Phone (775) 623-5011 Fax (775) 623-5243

Toll Free (866) 644-5011

Email addresses: editorial@winnemuccapublishing.net
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