

Burnt River OR, LDMA Camp Outing
June 2 to 5, 2017

The Burnt River Oregon, LDMA Camp is known for its dark, bronze-colored gold, but during our trip to the Snake River Invitational, planned and hosted by the Snake River Region, GPAA Chapter from Twin Falls, Idaho, there was a lot more than just the gold to create an attraction. Upon entering the area near the camp, you are greeted by a sign that says, "Big Horn Sheep, Next 12 Miles, Be Prepared To Stop." After a few days, we wondered if there *really* were Big Horn Sheep in the narrow valley, but then Bob, one of the caretaker helpers, stopped by our camp and told us that the sheep were down the road a ways, if we wanted to see them. We jumped into the truck and sure enough, there was a whole herd of Big Horn Sheep in the road, in the meadow below and the hills next to the road. I got lots of chances to get photos of the beautiful animals. Just before we left, many new babies were born.

Along with the Big Horn Sheep, we had deer meandering through camp at all times of the day, not seeming to be afraid of the RVs and mining equipment. We also sat in camp and watched eagles and Red Tail Hawks flying above. One of the eagles was carrying a baby lamb or goat in its talons. Thankfully, we only saw one of the rattlesnakes that we were told inhabited the area. He crawled on a rock to get some sun and we left him alone.

There is a dirt road – up Deer Creek Canyon, that goes from the Burnt River LDMA camp buildings all the way into Baker, which was the old stage route to Baker. A nice man named Ron Rogers, who was staying at the camp for the summer, asked us if we wanted to take a trip on our quads and side-by-side, up Deer Creek Canyon? We had gotten to the camp several days before the outing started, along with Bob's brother and wife, and it was a little hot that day, so we thought that sounded like a good idea. As we followed Ron, we could feel the air get cooler as we climbed and after about 4 miles, we could look back through the valley toward camp. It was a wonderful view! There had been a terrible fire that had swept through that area the year or so before, and you could see the damage from the burned trees and vegetation. Thankfully, the Burnt River Camp was fine. From where we stopped, we were level with the big hill that was behind our camp. It was a gentle climb and we saw many colorful wild flowers, butterflies and even a mama elk and her newly born calf. We saw a man out gathering wild mushrooms, on the lush, green slopes of the canyon. There had been a lot of rain there as well, so in late May/early June, it was still very green. We made the same trip again on our quads a few days later, with just Bob's brother and wife, and we went up about 5 or so miles. I would definitely recommend that jaunt to anyone who goes to the Burnt River camp. (: The view is beautiful!

We also drove up the road from the camp past Clarksville, to see where the Hoffman's of the TV program, Gold Rush, had tried their luck. The area is posted, so we stayed in our truck and I just took some photos.

We were blessed by the friendly and helpful members of the Snake River Region Chapter. Bob soon found out that the uneven ground was hard for him to navigate, due to his bad knee, from the accident last year. We had run some material we had dug from above the camp, but Bob didn't have the equipment to run a pump from the water source to his small, Kicking Donkey brand high-banker, so a nice man - Ron Rhodes, the Idaho State Director and from the Idaho group, brought Bob a small high-banker called a Gold Duster that could circulate water in a tub. I went to get some material off of the pile designated for the outing attendees, and Bob and his brother were able to run some material, while sitting in camp. We only saw a few colors, but then we only ran about 3 buckets of material. Those who were running their equipment for most of the 3-day outing, found some nice, little pickers, fine

gold and some people who had just come to the camp to prospect, showed me some of the famous, Burnt River gold they had found. (: You know me... I had to get some pictures of it. (:

Dan Shelton and his son were the only other members from our SW Washington Chapter, who attended the outing. Bob's brother and wife, who are from Utah, met us there, so it was good to see them. My cousin also visited us while at the Burnt River Camp. We both grew up in Baker and she and her husband still live there.

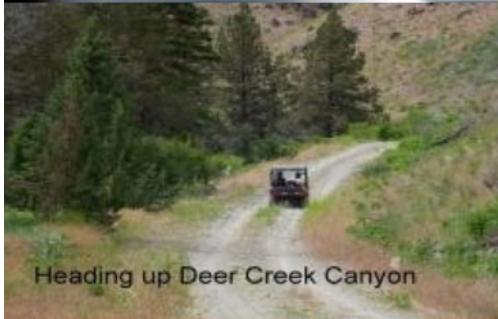
The bathrooms were clean and nice, with hot showers and they are handicap-accessible as well. The Club House was nice and I could use the electricity there to download photos to my laptop and it had a swamp cooler in it, that made it nice and cool, while I was working on my photos. There is an RV waste dump there as well, for a small fee. It is a good place to get away from technology, as there is no cell phone service at the camp nor any Internet.

We got to know some nice people while we were there – especially Eric Whitmore – President of the Snake River Chapter and who is also the Idaho State Co-Director along with Ron Rhodes, who loaned us the mining equipment. Eric's wife, Jenny, did a great job of organizing the outing, and their two daughters kept us all entertained, especially the youngest one. (: We called her "Mom's little Hamburger Helper," since she ended up wearing her dinner at the potluck. We made some four-footed friends, as well. We also got to meet the new State Director for Northern Nevada - Dave Terwilliger and his wife, Nancy, along with Bob and Linda, who help the Caretakers – Jim and Pam Haney, and their calico kitty, Sage, so it was a nice trip. The Haney's had a vendor booth up and they sell polished rocks and very unique, handmade jewelry. The Idaho group had games for the kids and a potluck and prize drawing on Saturday evening, and we all won some nice prizes, donated by White's Mining Equipment. Thank you, Whites and the Snake River Region GPAA Chapter!

This was Bob's first prospecting trip since his accident, and I think he over-estimated how much he would be able to do, and though we didn't come home with a lot of gold, we came home with some great memories. (: I think he just loved being out of the house and enjoying nature and the beautiful scenery, there. We had a good time and would definitely go back. (: We would recommend the Burnt River LDMA Camp to others.

Submitted by Carol Brown, Vancouver, WA

Pics on following page...



Heading up Deer Creek Canyon



Dan