

Scouting America Troop 7 enhances Steamboat Cemetery with a new sign

BY DIANA COOGLE

On October 26, Scouting America Troop 7, from Medford, erected a new sign at Steamboat Cemetery on Carberry Creek Road. The sign reads “Steamboat ‘Cemetery,’” keeping the misspelling of the original sign in quotation marks to make it clear that the spelling error was not made by the sign-makers. It provides information about Steamboat, a small community of miners and ranchers, and, presumably, their families, along Carberry Creek Road from 1880 through World War I.

Thanks to the work of the Scouts—building the sign frame and roof, digging postholes, pouring concrete, and pushing

the sign in place—travelers along Carberry Creek Road can now read the brief history of the mine on Steamboat Mountain and the small community it once generated. The name “steamboat” itself refers to a mine that has played out, so even the name indicates the brevity of the community.

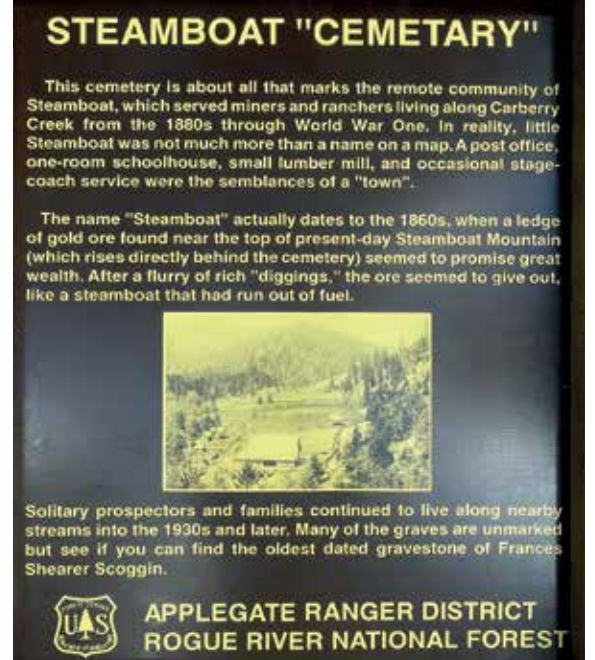
It lasted long enough, though, to warrant a graveyard. The oldest gravestone at Steamboat Cemetery records the burial in 1890. Vivian Garnett was buried there in 2006, next to her husband, Charles Garnett, who had died 34 years earlier. Another stone and a small US flag mark the grave of a World War I veteran.

Another notes the birth date of a woman (1927), with a space for the death date when the time comes. Many stones are too old and worn to be read accurately.

Staff at the Star Ranger Station of the US Forest Service have been cleaning up the cemetery since last spring. They removed fallen trees, erected a fence, and cleaned fallen debris to expose as many graves as possible. Only a handful of the 18 grave sites are still visible.

The historic wrought-iron gate that lay neglected for decades is being overhauled by Melinda Freeborn of Williams. The reinstallation of that gate will complete the renovation of this historic spot in the Applegate.

By volunteering for this work at Steamboat Cemetery, the



New sign at Steamboat Cemetery keeps the misspelling of “Cemetery” as it appeared on the original sign.

Photo: Whit Whitney.



Troop 7 Scouts and advisers (from left to right) Terry Ashcraft (adviser), Gabriel Ashcraft, Sam Post (adviser), Dalton Post, Braedan Eddy, and Caden Porch, built the frame and roof and installed the new Steamboat Cemetery sign. Not pictured are Dylan Harris-Taylor and Bryce Donica. Photo: Whit Whitney.



Scouts Lex Caldwell and Logan Conner painted the pumphouse at Flumet Flat Campground on the same weekend the Steamboat Cemetery sign was installed. Photo: Liz Hamblin.

Scouts in Troop 7 earned credit for badges and rank advancement in the Scouting system. Caden Porch, who has been with the troop for six months, aspires to the rank of Eagle Scout. Working on this project, he said, will help him get there.

Other Scouts helping erect the sign included Braedan Eddy, a Second Class

Scout; Gabriel Ashcraft, a Star Scout; and Dalton Post, a Life Scout. Troop advisers Terry Ashcraft and Sam Post were also present, along with John-Erik Mraz, from Star Ranger Station of the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

While these Scouts were working on Carberry Creek Road, Logan Conner and Lex Caldwell from Troop 7 (see photo) were working at Flumet Flat Campground, painting the pumphouse and earning points toward rank advancement.

Scouting America Troop 7 received its charter from the United Methodist Church in Medford in 1926 and is still affiliated with the church under the same charter.

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Grow Youth grows roots at Provolt Recreation Site

BY CHARLOTTE HYDE

If you were a frequent visitor to Provolt Recreation Site (PRS) this fall, there is a good chance you encountered a group of students pulling weeds in the meadow, examining plants along a trail, or measuring rocks in the river. Short or tall, in large groups or small, they could have been sporting field guides, trowels, butterfly nets, or other scientific instruments. If these descriptions sound familiar, you witnessed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council’s (APWC) environmental education program, Grow Youth, in action.

Currently in its second year at PRS, Grow Youth is a hands-on, place-based program that combines scientific field study and service learning to nurture critical thinking, practical skill-building, and environmental stewardship in its participants. Running for 12 weeks from mid-September through December, Grow Youth will host approximately 450 students from third to 12th grades in 29 field trips. Students will come from returning schools, such as The Valley School, Woodland Charter School, and Grants Pass High School, and from new participating entities like Applegate School, TRAILS Outdoor School, Walker Elementary School, Rogue River Elementary School, Baker Web Academy, and two homeschool groups. Given the distribution of schools across four school districts in Josephine and Jackson counties, we hope that the knowledge, skills, and themes imparted through the program will forge a cohort of

environmentally engaged youth across southern Oregon.

In last year’s Grow Youth curriculum, students studied the site through the lens of environmental stakeholders, such as foresters, wildlife biologists, and ranchers. Since many students attend Grow Youth for multiple years, the curriculum is updated annually. This year, it centers around earth systems, with an emphasis on the interactions between the atmosphere, biosphere, geosphere, and hydrosphere. This theme translates into six standards-aligned field studies: stream mapping, stream geology, phenology, entomology, soil science, and salmon biology.

In stream mapping, students map the Applegate River’s currents and streamflow to explore how water moves through a river. In stream geology, students measure stream sediments along a transect and relate their findings to the interplay between water and rocks. In phenology (seasonal cycles), students identify the stages of plants and animals within their annual cycles and discuss the impacts of climate change on phenological processes. In entomology, students sort and identify insects, then consider how these “creepy crawlies” are essential to other life forms. In soil science, students model how soil contains all four “spheres,” then study characteristics of PRS’s soils. Finally, in salmon biology, students follow a salmon dissection and play a game to demonstrate a salmon’s journey through its life cycle. Together, these field studies incorporate different learning styles, data collection techniques, and features of PRS to cultivate

an understanding of the world’s interconnectedness and of students’ roles within it.

The counterpart to field study at Grow Youth is service learning. Where field studies expose students to scientific concepts and methods, service learning applies those ideas to building practical skills while making a positive ecological impact. By the end of this season, students will have removed several acres of invasive yellow star thistle from the site and will help maintain and expand the network of trails at PRS, providing more recreational opportunities for visitors. Students will also rehabilitate PRS’s pollinator garden by collecting, cleaning, and sowing native pollinator seeds, removing dead grass, planting seedlings, and laying protective straw. This project is supplemented by pollinator kits from the Xerces Society and seeds from Pollinator Project Rogue Valley.

Aside from the knowledge and skills that Grow Youth aims to seed in students, the program’s deepest significance lies in its capacity to let them connect with the outside world. When we witness third graders shrieking with excitement when they see salmon, a sixth grader contentedly labeling a bag of wildflower seeds, or an eighth grader waving aloft the longest star thistle taproot of the day, the program’s value needs no further explanation.



Students from TRAILS Outdoor School show off their pile of invasive star thistle. Photo: Charlotte Hyde.



Students from The Valley School prepare to conduct a stream geology survey. Photo: Molly Allen.

Because of our generous funders, Grow Youth is of no cost to schools or students. This year, Grow Youth is funded by the Carpenter Foundation, the Coquille Tribal Community Fund, the National Environmental Education Foundation, and Rogue Credit Union.

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