

At the conclusion of a recent workshop, the leader suggested a gratitude circle. One participant share their belief in God—and how wrong they believe atheists are. Something like this had never happened at a workshop of ours, and at that moment, I wasn't sure how to react, or whether I should. On reflection, I think I should have, and here's what I might have said:

There may be atheists in this circle who, like all of us, just spent the last three hours marveling at the wonders of nature. We shared that experience, and were connected by it. But when we declare at the end that those marvels prove others are wrong for what they believe, we broke bond we just built.

School of Ranch's mission is to bring people together across differences in politics, age, background and beliefs. Participation affirms, in a way, the right of others to think differently and still be a part of the same community. This is what makes School of Ranch special, and, ultimately, is also what truly makes America great: the recognition that the price of our own freedom is that we must let others be free too—even when we think they're wrong. Thank you all for participating in School of Ranch and giving life to this essential truth.

Speaking of truth...we have some awesome new stuff for you, and that's a fact! The most exciting thing to me, being a geek, is the introduction of AI-based planning tools I developed into our workshops, starting with our Solar Systems, Weed Management, and Irrigation workshops. Participants will go home with a custom plan that addresses their specific needs. All this and the kickoff of our *'Tis in Season* series with Locavore, pelvic health, trailer towing...omg, Mark, let the people get to the good stuff! 😊

Mark Gross  
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PS - Unsubscribe link at the bottom.

PSS - Go Birds! (For non-NFL fans, The Philadelphia Eagles...E-A-G-L-E-S, Eagles!)

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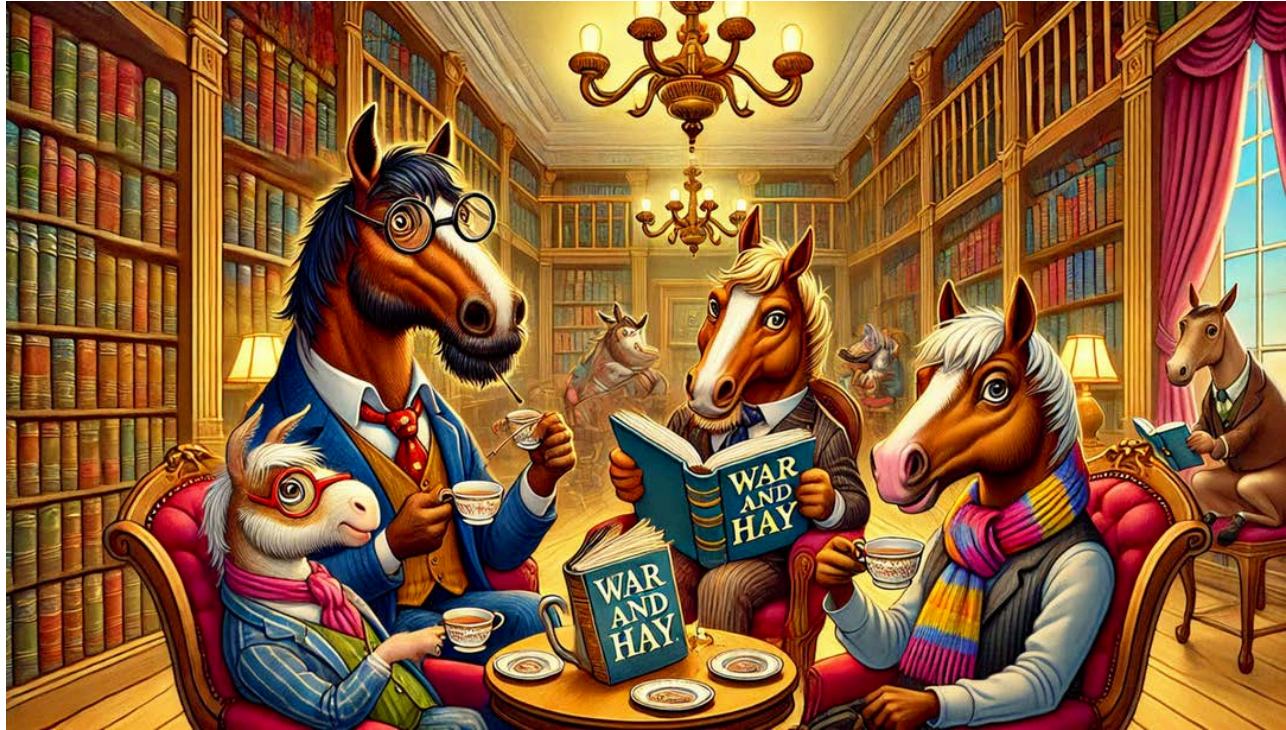
## School of Ranch News

**Custom Planners for Solar, Weed Management and More.** Ever go to a workshop and someone asks a question like, "I grow hay and tomatoes on a narrow strip of land and need to water every other square yard differently. How do I do that?" Great for that person, not so much for you, perhaps. We are rolling out a set of AI-based tools that address specific needs in a general workshop. For instance, our Solar System workshop includes the use of a planner. The workshop itself teaches the general idea of the system and how to put it together, and the planner lets you generate a custom plan and shopping list for your particular needs. [Here's a quick demo!](#) We'll be rolling these out at many of our workshops. Stay tuned for more!

**Own Your Own School of Ranch!** Join School of Ranch as a Facilitation Manager and earn 20%+ of all revenue from the workshops you manage. You'll take on existing workshops and have a chance to build your own School of Ranch business in Central Oregon and beyond by starting and running new workshops. We're a fast-growing nonprofit but that doesn't mean you can't make a few bucks on the side while helping your community and becoming part of a thriving start-up. [Here's a post](#) about the role. We're interviewing now. Through your hat in the ring!

**Introducing "The Curious Equestrian's Book & Video Club."** A member suggested our horse program include a horse focused book & video club. We love the idea, so we launched one. We'll meet

in person monthly - next meetings are Feb 8 & Mar 29. Participate in books only or both, attend one time or ongoing. The club is free to join, but registration is required. Call Cathy Springman at 206-910-6410 for more information.



**Matching Grant Madness.** Thanks to all of you who contributed to help us win a matching grant for our intern program. We raised a few thousand dollars toward this program and earned a matching grant as a result. Two of our interns, Cohen Herbert and Caleb Kitchens, have been promoted to leadership roles, and are working on expanding the range of tasks we can assign to the intern network. This is all super cool, making it possible to run School of Ranch, and a great learning experience for all.

## School of Ranch Workshops

**February 8th. "Traditional Soap Making."** Once You Make Soap, You'll Never Go Back. There's nothing like handmade soap. In this workshop, you'll make eight bars gentle enough for your face, to strong enough for your hands, to fierce enough for your dishes (if yours are anything like mine, you need fierce!). Better, you'll make bars that seem to last forever. Workshop includes a take-home soap making kit! You'll become a soap-making machine, cranking out bars for new friends everywhere. And they'll love you for it!

**Price:** \$90 + \$30 for take-home kit

**Time:** 10:00am to 1:00pm

**Where:** Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-soap-making>

**NEW! February 8th. "The Essentials of Raising Chickens in Central Oregon."** This beginner-friendly workshop is your guide to raising happy, healthy chickens in Central Oregon's unique climate. Learn how to choose the best breeds, create a cozy coop, and keep your flock thriving year-round. Whether you're aiming for fresh eggs or charming backyard company, you'll leave ready to start your poultry adventure. This workshop is brought to you by the Deschutes Public Library. Registration opens 30 days before the workshop on their site. **Sign up for registration alert!**

**Price:** Free!

**Time:** 11:00am to 12:30pm



**Where:** Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-chickens>

**February 13th. "OSU Extension's Soils and Pasture Management."** Dirt has never been so fascinating! Discover the building blocks of healthy pastures and thriving soil in this beginner-friendly workshop tailored for Central Oregon. From understanding soil textures to tackling local challenges, you'll gain practical skills to boost your pasture's health. Plus, enjoy hands-on activities, community building, and a potluck! Bring a dish to share, and we'll provide the main course.

**Price:** Contribute-What-You-Can

**Time:** 5:30pm to 8:30pm

**Location:** Prineville

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-osu-soil-pasture>



**February 16th. "Power Saws for Fearless Women."** Take a cut at self-reliance! In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn the basics of six essential power saws: The Chainsaw, Table saw, Compound miter saw, Jigsaw, Sawzall, and the Skill saw. With a focus on safety, technique, and practical applications, you'll leave hankering to take on cool projects at home. Make room at the workbench! This beginner-friendly session emphasizes skill-building in a supportive, fun environment.

**Price:** \$125 - Only two tickets left!

**Time:** 1:00pm to 4:00pm

**Where:** Terrebonne

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-power-saws-fearless>

**February 20th. "Carving Curious: Intro to Wood Carving."** Carve out time to carve! Join us for a beginner-friendly workshop designed to help you discover the joy of creating with your hands. Learn the essentials of woodcarving, from choosing the right wood to mastering tool safety and technique. You'll walk away with foundational skills, project ideas, and maybe even a new favorite pastime.

**Price:** \$110 plus \$10 for supplies - Only two tickets left!

**Time:** 10:00am to 1:00pm

**Where:** Sisters

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-carving-curious>

**New! February 20th. "Saddle Strong: Pelvic Health for Equestrians."** Horseback riding isn't just about your horse—it's about you! This unique workshop combines pelvic health and riding to improve

balance, comfort, and connection with your horse. With expert guidance from Jennifer Miles, you'll learn exercises to strengthen your core, align your pelvis, and prevent injuries. Perfect for equestrians of all levels, this hands-on session includes practical movement techniques and a potluck! Bring a dish to share and we'll supply the main course.

**Price:** Contribute-What-You-Can

**Time:** 6:00pm to 9:00pm

**Location:** Sisters

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-pelvic>

**NEW! February 22nd. "Tis in Season: How to Cook Fab Dishes with Farm Fresh Food."** Want your family to say, "I Can't Believe That's a Parsnip!"? Winter, spring, summer and fall, we'll show you how to transform the freshest local foods into delicious, nutritious dishes your friends and family will love! Participants will learn why these seasonal ingredients are important for your health, how to select the best of what's in season, and how to combine them into three fabulous dishes. Even parsnips!

**Price:** \$40 + \$8 for supplies!

**Time:** 10:00am to 1:00pm

**Where:** Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-tis-in-season-cooking>

**NEW! March 22nd. "Trailer Towing Basics."** Take the wheel and learn to tow with confidence! This hands-on workshop is perfect for beginners who want to master trailer safety and driving. From understanding your rig to handling tight turns and smooth backups, you'll practice with your own equipment under expert guidance. Whether you're hauling hay or heading to the trailhead, you'll leave ready to hit the road safely. **Only 2 tickets left!**

**Price:** \$95

**Time:** 11:00am to 2:00pm

**Location:** Redmond, OR

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-trailer>



**April 5th. "Motor Madness for Fearless Women."** Put another notch in your tool belt! Cast steely glances at your mechanic! Get that old thing working again, and we're not talking about your partner! Build the skills to tackle maintenance and repairs with confidence. From lawnmowers to chainsaws, learn to diagnose, perform tune-ups, and troubleshoot common problems. Enjoy a welcoming space for women to embrace their mechanical prowess! Sign up now!



**Price:** \$75

**Time:** 10:00am to 1:00pm

**Where:** Terrebonne

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-engine>

**NEW! April 22nd. "Weed Management: The War is On."** Tired of weeds running the show? Let's fight back! In this hands-on, interactive workshop, you'll learn to identify invasive weeds with free apps, explore effective strategies to combat them, and design a sustainable, long-term management plan to reclaim your property.

**Price:** Contribute-what-you-can

**Time:** 5:30pm to 8:30pm

**Location:** Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-weed>

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## School of Ranch On Demand Food Preservation Workshop

When five people pre-register, we'll schedule any of these workshops!

- Master the Art of Canning Fresh Produce - 2 tix to go!
- The Perfect Pickle and More - 2 tix to go!
- Fermentation Fizz, Fun, and Facts - 3 tix to go!
- Dehydration Demystified - 2 tix to go!

We're ready to go! [Click here to check it out!](#)

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## School of Ranch Workshop On Demand

We run only the workshop you want, as often as you want. Welcome to *Workshops On Demand*. As soon as enough of you pre-register for the workshops below, we'll schedule them with you and the workshop leader. Pre-registration is free. We save your credit card info but don't charge you until we set a date and you agree to it. If you can't make it, we don't charge you.

**"The Art and Science of Canning."** Can-Do Canning For Busy People!

Ever wondered how to preserve your garden's bounty but didn't know where to start? Join us for a fun, hands-on workshop perfect for beginners! We'll guide you step-by-step through the essentials of water bath and pressure canning so you can fill your pantry with pride. From safety tips to simple recipes, you'll leave ready to can like a pro—and with a free 3-piece beginner tool set to boot!

**Price:** \$40

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **four** to go!

**Where:** TBD

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-art-of-canning>

**NEW! "DIY Irrigation Basics: Dead Spots and Dry Beds Be Gone!"** Is your lawn patchy, your veggie garden thirsty, or your flower beds a hot mess? This hands-on, two-session workshop will transform you into an irrigation wizard! Learn to troubleshoot uneven watering, expand or improve your system, and create a custom irrigation plan tailored to your outdoor space. With expert guidance and AI planning tools, you'll leave confident in your ability to optimize water usage and keep your landscape thriving. Taught by Trevor Varcoe of Complete Irrigation Services, this workshop is your key to water-wise gardening in Central Oregon.

**Price:** \$180 + \$15 for supplies - two sessions!

**Tickets to Schedule:** We'll set a date once 4 people pre-register!

**Location:** Redmond/Bend

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-irrigation>



**New! "Tractor Time: Intro to Safe and Skilled Driving."** Saddle Up! Tractor Driving School!

Join us for a full-day driving program designed to learn how to safely operate one of the most important machines on the farm and ranch...the tractor. We're talking hands-on obstacle course stuff, not a stuffy classroom session. Small session - only six people. You'll be paired with a learning partner and trained by experts. Super cool, useful and fun. Sign up today and get to work!

**Price:** \$295 (full day session!)

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **three** to go!

**Where:** Tumalo

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-tractor-basics>

**"Practical Welding for Ranch and Farm."** You always wanted to weld, right? This workshop teaches the basics - prep, setup, safety, and MIG welding. After this three-session program, you will be able to do farmer welding, fix stuff around your property, make some simple, practical things and more. Only six spots available!

**Price:** \$375 for the three session program + \$60 materials fee!

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **three** to go!

**Where:** Powell Butte

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-welding-long>

**New! "How to Make The Best Wall Storage: French Cleats."** In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn how to build and install French cleats, the ultimate customizable wall storage system. Perfect for hanging tools, shelves, and more, French cleats make organizing your workspace a breeze.

**Price:** \$120 +\$25 for supplies (Two-session workshop)

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **two** to go!

**Where:** Bend/Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-french-cleats>

**New! "Mystery Meat Magic - From Not Again to Never Enough."** Discover how to turn mystery meat into three distinct, mouthwatering dishes with the magic of flavor-building techniques. Join Suzanne Landry for a hands-on workshop where you'll learn, laugh, and leave inspired to cook creatively with what you already have. This interactive class includes cooking demos, a collaborative brainstorming



game, and a potluck for extra flavor inspiration.

**Price:** \$40 + \$10 for supplies

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **five** to go!

**Where:** Bend/Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-mystery-meat>

**New! "How to Make a Solar System for Trailers and RVs."** Light Up Your Adventures with Solar Power! Ready to harness the sun for off-grid adventure? This workshop will guide you through building a 12v solar system for your trailer or RV. Over two engaging sessions, you'll learn to how to make solar panels, controllers, batteries, and more in a working system. By the end, you'll have the know-how to design and assemble your own 12V solar system with confidence.

**Price:** \$190 +\$20 for supplies (Two-session workshop)

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **three** to go!

**Where:** Bend/Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-solar-power-trailer-rvs>



**"Practical Carpentry for Ranch and Farm."** In this hands-on, three-part workshop series you'll be guided step-by-step through the process of building a structure from wood. Gain lifelong skills in typical homestead projects, starting with the key tools.

**Price:** \$375 for a three-session workshop (plus \$60 for materials)

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **two** to go!

**Where:** Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-carpentry>

**"How to Make Potpourri: From Homegrown Blooms to Fragrant Blends."** Join us for a hands-on workshop and discover the art of crafting beautiful, fragrant potpourri! Using dried flowers, leaves, and other natural items, you'll learn to create unique, homegrown blends perfect for your home or as thoughtful gifts. Walk away with a handmade bag of potpourri, a clay scent absorber, a bottle of essential oil, and a handcrafted grapevine tag—all made by you!

**Price:** \$40 + \$10 for supplies

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only five to go!

**Where:** Redmond/Bend

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-potpourri>

**New! "Intro to Self-Care for the Ranch-Worn Body."** Feeling the burn from all that hard work? Learn how to soothe muscle fatigue and promote healing using the science and art of essential oils. In this hands-on workshop, you'll create customized bath salts, mix your own roller blend, and master the Vita Flex Technique—a practical way to target reflex points for relaxation and recovery. Walk away with personalized products, and a new skillset.

**Price:** \$40 + \$15 for supplies

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **three** to go!

**Where:** Redmond/Bend

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-aromatherapy>.

**New! "Handyman Basics: Electric, Plumbing, Painting and More."** Fixin' Can Be Fun!

Build the skills to tackle essential homestead maintenance projects with confidence. This two-session, beginner-friendly workshop covers painting, plumbing, basic electrical fixes, and more. Whether you're sprucing up your space or repairing minor damage, you'll leave with the know-how to handle it all.

**Price:** \$225 + \$25 for supplies (two sessions!)

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **one** to go!

**Where:** Redmond/Bend

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-handyman>

**New! "Prune Like a Pro: Fundamentals of Fruit Tree Care."** Prune Your Way to Perfection!

Join us for a lively, hands-on workshop where you'll learn to prune fruit trees with confidence. From selecting the right tools to making the right cuts, this session equips you with the know-how to boost tree health and productivity. Beginners and experienced gardeners alike will benefit from expert demonstrations and collaborative practice in a supportive group setting.

**Price:** \$60

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **five** to go!

**Where:** Redmond/Bend

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-fruit-tree-pruning>



**"Intro to Goat Cheese Making."** Become a Goat Cheese Whiz! Unlock the secrets of homemade goat cheese with our upcoming workshop at School of Ranch! Join us and learn to transform fresh goat milk into delicious chèvre, a creamy and flavorful cheese that's surprisingly easy to make. This workshop is perfect for anyone interested in artisanal food crafts and using locally sourced foods.



**Price:** \$40

**Tickets to Schedule:** Only **three** to go!

**Where:** Redmond

**More:** <https://schoolofranch.org/w-goat>

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## News and Events from Friends

**Feb 8th. The High Desert Food and Farm Alliance presents, "Souper Bowl 2025."** Join HDEFFA for the second annual SOUPer Bowl on Saturday, February 8, 2025, with admission times at noon and 1:30 pm. Sample delicious soups from 12 participating restaurants, including 10 Barrel, Anthony's, Spork, and more, and help crown the 2025 SOUPer Bowl Champion! Tickets go on sale Friday, January 3, 2025. All proceeds support HDEFFA's agricultural and food access programs, and sponsorship opportunities are available to help make the event a success.

**Price:** Check on Jan 3!

**Time:** Admission at Noon and 1:30pm

**Where:** Check on Jan 3!

**More:** <https://hdeffa.org/events-calendar/hdeffas-souper-bowl-2025/>

**February 12. Citizens4Community (C4C) presents "Let's Learn: The Science of Managing Transitions."** Led by Scott Crabtree, Chief Happiness Officer at Happy Brain Science, this workshop will teach you how to use science to guide yourself and others through difficult personal, professional, and societal transitions, so that you can make the most of change.

**Price:** Free, but registration required. Complimentary appetizers and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided; alcohol will be available for purchase.

**Time:** 5:30-7 PM

**Location:** High Camp Taphouse, 523 US-20, Sisters, OR 97759

**Get details:** <https://citizens4community.com/events/lets-learn-feb-25>

**February 22-23. Children's Museum of Central Oregon's "Mobile Museum."** Hey kids and families, get ready – the Children's Museum is coming to Sisters! Join CMCO for a weekend of creative fun, sponsored by C4C, SPRD, Circle of Friends, and the Sisters Parent Teacher Community (SPTC). CMCO's interactive, STEAM-based exhibits are designed for kids ages 0-11 and their caregivers to explore & play together.

**Price:** Admission is FREE, with snacks and beverages for sale by Fika Sisters Coffeehouse

**Time:** 10 AM - 2 PM each day.

**Location:** Sisters Elementary School commons, 2155 McKinney Butte Rd, Sisters, OR 97759

**Get details:** <https://citizens4community.com/events/lets-play-25>

**February 25. Central Oregon Hay Growers Association Presents, "The Central Oregon Forage Seminar."** Great speakers are lined up, and we will have ODA Pesticide Credits available as well. Coffee, donuts, and lunch will be served. Come get the latest news! The workshop is free to attend and is a great time to renew your membership to COHGA. It is still \$100 for 2025.

**Price:** Free!

**Time:** 8:00am through early afternoon

**Location:** 498 SE Lynn Blvd, Prineville

**Get Details:** <https://centraloregonhaygrowers.org/>

**February 28. Citizens4Community and SFF Presents – "Let's Dance!"** Get out your fancy duds, it's time for an ol' fashioned community social dance! Hosted at The Belfry, this family-friendly, all ages event will feature live fiddling and dance calling by Scandalous Chutney, your favorite local youth strings dance band. We'll start with 15 minutes of instruction before the tunes start ripping and the feet start flying.

**Price:** Suggested donation of \$10/adult, \$5/child. 100% of donations will benefit the Sisters Middle School's Outlaw Strings Club, supporting the musical education of local youth.

**Time:** Doors @ 6 PM, dance instruction @ 6:15, live music and dancing 6:30-8:30.

**Location:** The Belfry, 302 E Main Ave., Sisters, OR 97759

**Get details:** <https://citizens4community.com/events/lets-d>



**All Feb. OSU Extension Presents, "Seed Sewing and Transplanting."** Learn to grow vegetables successfully in Central Oregon's shorter growing season with guidance from an experienced gardener. This free class covers seed selection, planting, using grow lights, transplanting, and hardening off young plants for outdoor growth. Participants receive the Growing Vegetables in Central Oregon guide and learn to access additional OSU Extension resources. Optional tools like soil thermometers and row covers will be available for purchase.

**Price:** Free

**Time:** Many dates and times

**Where:** All around Deschutes County

**More:** <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/county/deschutes/events>

**All Feb. OSU Extension Presents, "Growing Vegetables in Central Oregon."** Learn how to grow a thriving vegetable garden in Central Oregon with guidance from OSU Master Gardeners. This free two-hour class covers climate, soil amendments, site selection, season extenders, and recommended vegetable varieties. Participants will receive the Growing Vegetables in Central Oregon guide and learn to access additional OSU Extension resources. Optional gardening tools like soil thermometers and row covers will be available for purchase.

**Price:** Free

**Time:** Many dates and times

**Where:** All around Deschutes County

**More:** <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/county/deschutes/events>

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