



March/April Edition

The Lehi Ag Journal



Migrant Workers p. 1 o California Trip - World Ag Expo p. 2 o Organic or Conventional p. 5

It is a pleasure to present the Lehi Ag Journal, created by the Agricultural Communications class at Lehi High School. These journals contain information that students find very valuable in the community of agriculture. There are great things taking place in the life of agriculture, and we want to connect you to these great things. One thing we believe is without awareness in the agricultural community, things become non-existent and cannot change.

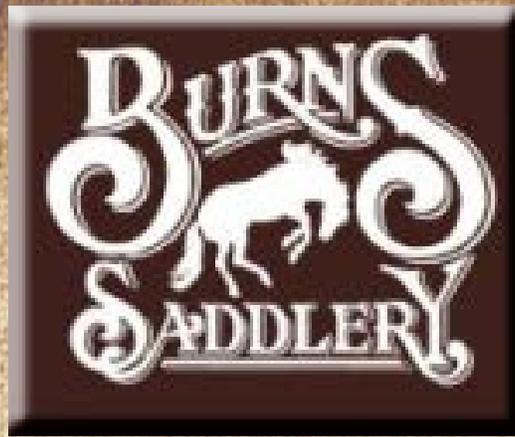
This journal is to bring awareness about the impact and importance agriculture has on our community, state, and nation. There is no better time to be apart of the agriculture community then today, and we hope that you can feel a sense of pride that we have for agriculture, through these readings. This is our second season of the Lehi Ag Journal. You can find past editions on agricultural issues that has had an impact on the agricultural life. All past editions can be found at <http://robertsonclass.weebly.com/lehi-ag-journal-publication.html>.



Lehi
Ag
Journal

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Have you ever noticed a big black horse on top of a building across the street from Lehi High School? You will have to stop there and check it out! It is an amazing western store called Burns Saddlery. They sell everything from belts to boots, and even saddles. The new Lehi location it is bringing in an increase in customers for Burns.

We recently interviewed with the store manager, Deric Bagley and asked him some questions that would catch anyone's attention in hearing the answers. This business has been up and running since 1876. After asking Bagley how Burns Saddlery started, he said,

"The original name of this company was 'Burns Harness and Blacksmith Shop' in Loa, Utah. The founders name was Miles Lamonie Burns. After 12 years it evolved into a horsemen's store. Burns then settled in Salina, Utah. Since then, there was a lot of business from the Salt Lake, Lehi area so Burns then decided to move a store down to this new location. That way we didn't have to ship products from Salina to Lehi. We are really happy with this location because we have had very many custom-

ers and our business is evolving."

This is still a family owned business of 137 years! You don't see very many family owned businesses up and running for that many years very often, must mean they are a great company! Another interesting fact Bagley stated is "100 percent of the products sold at all the store locations are mainly

all custom/handmade. All hats and saddles are made in Salina, Utah. The boots and leather material are made in Park City, Utah and California. It takes no longer than two weeks for your custom product to be made and shipped. You also get to see your finished product before you buy it, so if there is something wrong we can get that fixed for

you without a problem." This is a great opportunity to get your products custom made just the way you want it. Burns will always guarantee you the satisfaction of having the product you want, they way you like it! Burns Saddlery is most popular for their outstanding boot selection. Their boots are very high quality, and you will definitely be wanting a pair!



Written by:
*Madison Thompson &
Kenzee John*

World Ag Expo

Tulare, California



The mission of the FFA is “To make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success.” The Lehi FFA strongly believes in these three areas as their focus for student success. Through their diligence and determination, we hope the students envision the same. The Lehi FFA had an opportunity to direct the students in learning more about personal growth and career success this year, when they attended the IFA Coop Feed Mill, Rosenbruch Wild Life Museum, The World Ag Expo, various agricultural farms, as well as other agricultural careers in Southern Utah and Southern California. The Lehi FFA embarked on their quest this February, traveling through Nephi, St. George, San Diego, Bakersfield, Wasco, Tulare, and Exeter, California.

The Lehi FFA left for California the morning of February 12 and began their career exploration at the IFA Coop Feed Mill in Nephi, Utah. There they were able to see firsthand the importance of a proper feed ration. The tour consisted of learning how they mixed the feed rations for various farmers in the Southern Utah Valley. They showed the students how they rolled corn and barley by heating up the feed to release starches and sugars. The feed mill also showed the students other materials, such as blood meal, soy, and distillers they add in the feed

ration to help balance the pH, aid in digestion, and provide adequate nutrients in ruminant animals. In addition, they also learned the importance of a Coop as Utah Coop states, “To provide quality, healthy food at a substantial savings through cooperative purchasing; building a sense of community by promoting a service that brings people together for a common good.” In learning so much about proper feed rations in ruminant animals and



the important of a solid agricultural foundation, the Lehi FFA headed south to St. George, to discover over 300 species of animals natural habitat on a quarter mile of indoor mountains that provide a pathway into the plains of Africa, North America, and Asia. Upon arriving in the deserts of St George, the students were able to have an experience to be remembered. In traveling over mountains and through dark tunnels through the plains of Africa, North America, and

Asia, the students were able to capture the importance that managed sports hunting provides for governments to help protect critical habitat and manage their wildlife resources. They also learned more about animals, increased awareness of ecological issues, and fostered support for the preservation of threatened and endangered species. After traveling through Nephi, Utah, the plains of Africa, North America, and Asia, the group was tired from their hard, difficult excursion; ending their expedition for the night in Barstow, California. The following day when the sun appeared on the horizon in the morning, the Lehi FFA began to continue their personal growth and career success exhibition at the San Diego Zoo in San Diego, California. Here they were able to see a wide array of species. The San Diego Zoo houses over 3,700 animals and more than 650 species. Students were able to better understand wildlife conservatory. The San Diego Zoo is ranked in the top 10 zoos in the world. Attending the zoo, students were able to learn the importance of “Bringing species back from the brink of extinction.”





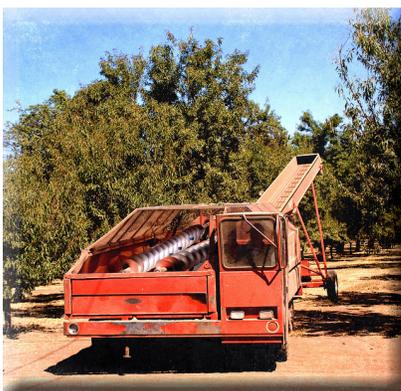
By this time, the students were well impressed with the tours, they were able to take a break and spend the rest of the afternoon at Mission Beach, playing in the sand and seeing for the first time a beautiful ocean sunset. Courtney Bennett said, “Visiting Mission Beach was awesome, I have never been to a beach. The sunset was cool. What an experience to remember.”



After relaxing at the beach and seeing the sun slowly disappear behind the ocean, creating a brilliance of lights, the Lehi FFA headed off to Bakersfield, California. The next day they headed out on a cool crisp morning to Tulare, California to explore the world’s largest agricultural exposition. The exposition is located on 25 acres, focusing on agricultural topics, such as farming, dairy production, horticulture, agri-science, mechanics, and agribusiness. More than 1,400 exhibitors around the world come to display the latest in farm equipment, communications, and technology. Michele Gentry, a sophomore, was very impressed to see how technology has had a major effect on the future of agriculture. Brandon Thomas, a junior, was so amazed how many careers there are in the field of agriculture. Allowing the students to attend the World Ag Expo, they were able to see the importance of being career ready and the importance of education. As the day began to end, the Lehi FFA loaded up and headed back to Bakersfield to rest up for the next quest to personal growth and career success.



The morning of February 15, the Lehi FFA headed out on its quest to learn how Southern California farms. The first stop was at South Valley Farms in Wasco, California, where they farm over 2 million almond and pistachio trees. Upon their arrival, the plant manager took the students out to the farm and showed them how they grow and harvest the almonds. One thing the students found amazing was the almond tree is grafted on a peach tree root stock because they are resistant to diseases and bacteria in the area. In addition, almond trees require on average 240 gallons of water a week, depending on precipitation and growing season. After showing us the farm, the manager took us back to the plant and walked us through the life of an almond. First they are harvested in the field, then left to dry until moisture content is less than four percent. The almonds are then picked up and taken to the plant to be hulled, graded, and processed for shipping. Tommy Smith, a senior, stated, “I never knew it took that much to grow and process almonds.” Touring the plant, the students were able to learn that the hull and the shell are a by-product for dairy producers for feed additives and beading.





selection of specialty roses, such as hybrid teas, grandifloras, floribundas, climbing, shrub, miniature, and tree roses. At the farm, they showed the students their greenhouses, where they propagate their roses from bench grafts and one-year cuttings. After, they walked them through their plant, where they were able to see the workers wash, cut, and prepare the roses for resale. The best part of the tour was when they took the students out to the farm, where they showed them the difference between one-year, and two-year roses. It was amazing to see how they propagate roses in fields. First, they take a six to eight inch cutting from a quality root stock. They then directly stick it in the ground and water the cutting until the rose produces roots and new shoots. After, they transplant the rose in another field, where they take care of it for two years before it is sold. This is where they get the name of two-year old roses. “The rose farm was one of the major highlights of the day,” “It was amazing to see the process and time it takes to produce a quality plant,” said Trevin Lewis. Upon finishing the tour at the rose farm, Juan, the head grower said, “I enjoy giving tours to high school students. I am who I am today because of a tour my Agricultural teacher took me on when I was in high school. That experience made me want to go into agriculture.”

After leaving beautiful Wasco, California, the Lehi FFA headed north to Exeter, where they ended their exhibition at the University of California – Citrus Research Center. At the citrus research center, the students were able to learn a great deal about citrus plants. At the center, they have over 700 different varieties of oranges. They focus on discovering varieties of oranges that will produce a better yield, become more tolerant to pest and diseases, as well as produce a sweeter flavor. At the research center, the students were able to taste over 15 new varieties of oranges grown on the farm. This was where the taste buds and cheek muscles were puckering and singing sweet praises. The best part of the tour was not only the tasting of delicious oranges or being able to pick your own oranges, but the presentation the head researcher shared with the students – the importance of an education.

Upon leaving Southern California and heading back to the bitter cold of Utah, one could not stop and ponder the wonderful experiences and opportunities we had seeing Southern California Agriculture. What a blessing to be in the midst of something so great. Without agriculture, our community and nation would not be sustainable. It is amazing that we can “Make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agriculture.”

- Brett Robertson

Once the tour ended, the Lehi FFA then headed to Weeks Wholesale Rose Grower, which propagates and markets bareroot roses. Weeks is one of the largest commercial rose growers in the United States. They offer a unique wide

Lehi FFA Spaghetti Dinner

Our Biggest Event of the Year!

With the increase in costs of transportation, entry fees, and supplies, programs are in need of support. Winter is here, but just around the corner, spring will appear. With spring, come the daunting tasks of cleaning, repairing, painting, and working in the farm or yard. Do you ever feel that you do not have enough time to complete these tasks? Could you use an extra hand? The Lehi FFA is here to help. We are holding our first annual Labor Auction-Dinner. The Lehi FFA members of our program will be auctioned off for an eight-hour day of service to the highest bidder. The eight-hour service can be used all in one-day or spread across multiple days. The Labor Auction-Dinner will be held on March 6, 2013 from 5:00 – 8:00 pm—the auction will be from 6-7pm--at Lehi High School.

Brett Robertson, and advisor of the Lehi FFA, talked to us about the night of the event. “At this family center event, there will be activities for all ages. In addition, there will be a silent auction, where quality items will go to the highest bid, such as quilts, handcraft goods, a whole beef, and many other great things. Come with your family and have unlimited spaghetti and fun for the whole family. There will be games for the children, blow-up balloons, popcorn, and cotton candy at no additional cost. The cost is a small, affordable price of \$5.00 dollars for an individual or \$20.00 for a family.”

The Lehi FFA's Advisor, Nathan Bushman said, “This is the Lehi FFA's big fundraiser of the year; all proceeds go right back into the chapter and help us buy equipment, t-shirts, and help make competition fees not such a financial burden. Our goal is to raise over \$5,000. This is a great opportunity for us to reach out to our community and try something new.” He went on to say, “I expect only the highly involved members will participate. The Lehi FFA has put a lot of work and effort into this event and we hope we get a great turnout from it!”

At the Labor Auction- Dinner, they will also be having a youth baking contest. This is open to the whole community for anyone's child between the ages of 6 – 12. Each contestants entry will be judged, prizes will be given to the top three winners and they will then get to auction off their prize winning food item. We invite you to come and participate in the event, by attending the auction and bidding on our FFA members, the silent auction, and the other goods.

-Stephanie Bangerter & Kiera Pulham

pg.5

Farm Labor

- Jaedon Savaiinaea & Zac Trapp

Within the last few years, labor laws have been a huge problem in the farming and ranching community. A proposal from the Obama administration to prevent children from doing farm chores has drawn plenty of criticism from rural-district members of Congress. But now it's attracting barbs from farm kids themselves.

The Department of Labor is poised to put the finishing touches on a rule that would apply child labor laws to children working on family farms, prohibiting them from performing a list of jobs on their own families' land. With this rule in place, most children under 18 could no longer work in the storing, marketing and transporting of farm product raw materials. The new regulations, First proposed August 31 by Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, would also revoke the government's approval of safety training and certification taught by independent groups like 4-H and FFA, replacing them instead with a 90-hour federal government-training course.

This could be the death of stalk shows for kids. With the laws that have been suggested kids would not be allowed to even work with animals. They would not be able to watch their parents or anybody even doctor animals. This law would not allow children to watch or help anybody inflict pain to an animal. This meaning they would not even be able to halter a show steer, because it could inflict pain to the animal.

Another part of the laws proposed is that children under the age of 16 could not use any type of tool or machinery that has "power take off". This meaning a kid under 16 would not even be able to use a battery powered screwdriver.

The agriculture community believes this could be the end to family farms and ranches, because the next generations would lose interest in farming. They also wouldn't know what to do, or how to operate a farm or ranch they would have to learn from the ground up. They say "it is much easier getting a 12 year old kid into the farm/ranch lifestyle than it is to get a young adult interested and want to learn the ways of ranching or farming. They fear that traditions as long as the lifestyle will be lost in time.



Immigrant workers on the farm

There is a major conflict regarding the employment of illegal or undocumented immigrants in agriculture. The problem is some people see illegal immigrants as a group of people that are stealing our jobs, while others see them as a group of people that will work hard for very little, where as someone who lives in the US legally might not. Why do we need migrant workers in our economy and should we develop strict laws to keep the illegal immigrants out of our work force.

Congress wants to introduce a new immigration policy that would require all American businesses to run their employees through E-Verify, a program that would make sure those that are employed, are legally entitled to work here in the US. The Agriculture Industry fears that if Congress passes this law, food prices will go up drastically because wages would have to go up from minimum wage, to entice the average American citizen to work in the Field.

“It is extremely difficult, hard, dangerous work,” says Arturo S. Rodriguez, President of the United Farm Workers, “migrant workers are exposed to blistering heat with little or no shade and few water breaks.” “It’s skilled work, requiring produce pickers to be exact and quick. While the best pickers can earn \$35,000 to \$40,000 a year for piece work, there’s little chance for a good living and American workers don’t seem interested in farm jobs.”

Out of 86,000 Anglo American inquires on jobs in agriculture, only 11 workers took the jobs. “If we were to use E-Verify now, we’d shut down, either that or our farmers would go to prison,” said Cunha, a Fresno based citrus farmer, “We’ve admitted that many of our workers are not legal, and if you had to get rid of everybody, where do I get my labor? Nowhere. We have to have a work force that we can put into the system.”

If Congress passes this law, American citizens will have to take the jobs left by the migrant workers. We will have to work long hours in the heat for small wages, and I believe that most Americans are not willing. We like our air conditioned office buildings, starting at eight in the morning, and ending at five, we like being lazy. Migrant workers are willing to do the work that lets us live in comfort. If Congress passes this bill, who will produce our food? Migrant workers are needed in America if we want to continue living in the comfort that we take for granted.



Educating the Youth **One Class** At a Time

Food for America is a great program that the Lehi FFA have pride in. The program has been very successful by placing in the top three at state for three years in a row. Courtney Bennett, a senior at Lehi High School, has been heading the project for two years. The Lehi FFA members had the opportunity, over a course of two days to travel to different elementary schools that feed into Lehi High school, and teach children about agriculture.

This year we had the chance to go to Fox Hollow, Lehi, Meadow, and North Point elementary schools to teach the first, second, and third grade classes. Belva Parr, from Utah Farm Bureau, has helped our FFA order posters, gathered supplies, and gave us many ideas for new lessons. She stated, "I love watching the students grow an understanding of Agriculture. They love what we do, and we enjoy doing this each year."

We taught Animal Science, Plant Science, Nutrition, and Soil Science. The students had the opportunity to rotate from class to class and learn something new. For the animal science rotation we had students dress up in animal costumes, including a pig, chicken, cow, and a lamb. Each "animal" had a different script to follow, and were from a different farm located close to Lehi, which helped give the students a common connection. In the plant science rotation, the students were taught how to make a "living necklace". A "living necklace" is a seed inside a jewelry bag with a wet cotton ball inside, it slowly grows if it is taken care of. The students were very excited about the idea of growing a corn plant in a jewelry bag. A teacher from North Point Elementary said, "We were really excited to see you guys come for the first time to our school. Our students were very happy and learned a lot of new things, as we did, too."

During the nutrition lesson, students made their own "My Plate" based off the Food Pyramid. They enjoyed putting their favorite foods into the correct categories and learning more about how to maintain a healthy life. For the soil science rotation, we taught the students about the water cycle. They got to make a bracelet, with different colored beads, based off the different components of the water cycle. They enjoyed learning the song at the end, and it helped them remember the order in which the cycle happens.

A third grade teacher from Meadow Elementary said, "I love seeing the FFA come every year! They always change the lessons they teach, and it is always organized and well planned out. You guys are simply awesome! My students really look up to and admire you!"

We make changes each year in our lessons to improve quality of the teaching, as this is the most important part. It is a great opportunity and a lot of fun to go with friends and teach younger students about agriculture. They get really excited about us coming every year and look forward to joining FFA in their future. It makes us excited to see them so engaged in the activities. We would like to thank the schools and teachers for allowing us to take time out of their day to teach their students more about FFA and Agriculture.



- Courtney Bennett





Personal Garden Food Vs. Store Bought Food

There are lots of very different ways that you can grow your own food. Whether it be feeding and butchering animals or growing a garden. There are people everywhere that are making the switch to growing their own food for a couple of reasons such as cost, location, family, and taste. Also there farmers that have big crops for stuff are having a hard time feeding America so people are making space now to support themselves.

People are taking their food home in a way because they are growing gardens and raising animals. They will go buy stuff like sheep, pigs and cows for all they big meat groups and also chickens. But the good things about all these animals' is we can use them for all sorts of stuff like milk, fertilizer, clothes, meat and eggs. They also are growing bigger gardens so they can have food all year round and it helps because people are saving money and also getting healthier.

Some of the benefits are people saving money, teaching kids how to work, feeding there families, helping out feed others, and helping grow back our economy. We are slowly taking back America and using our self's as tools. But probably the best part about growing your own food id the taste. Because I always felt better eating something that I grew other than store bought.

The thing is that with the society we live in we think that we don't have time to do this. But if they would just slow their life's down a little bit they could find lots of time to grow their own food and reap the benefits. Also it helps there with work cause then they can get an excuse to leave for a sec or to be late and then they can take stuff to work with them and impress the boss. Then you get promotions and bam your set for life cause you were smart and got your

stuff done and had a good boss and good ideas'.

Also medical people can use this as an outlet to relive anger and sadness and all sorts of stuff. Then it's a way for you to get your family together and gets to talk to them more and more. Then people that can just go out a d dig a whole and can plow a field might as well do something with it so it does not go to waste. Then it will help you just stay more clam and learn how to control your anger and let it out in better ways then fighting or stealing or in many other ways that you could ha.

In conclusion people just need to find ways to grow their own food because it can work for you in a lot of different ways and yah. Also if you do you will not just be only helping yourself out you will be helping a nation that is ruining the world with no farm land to grow crops on. It's hurting America really bad and we need to take back our nation so that the ones coming up will have food for the future. That why we need to learn how to grow our own crops and need to find ways to even if the odds are against doing it.

By Tyler McBride and Wyatt Caldwell



Organic vs Conventional



Going to the grocery store you always see different types of food such as organic and conventional. Then you come to the point where you have to pick between the two. There are a few differences between the two that you would have to choose from like the prices of organic compared to the price of conventional. There are also the health differences between the two that you have to consider because the organic food is better for you than the conventional food is. Organic and conventional foods both have different benefits. Organic doesn't contain any chemicals from fertilizers or pesticides that could eventually affect the humans and our health. Conventional, while many may disagree, is not as good for us because of the toxins that may have been in the plants since it started growing. It may not drastically affect you, but over time it can build up, and why would you want to be eating chemicals in the first place when you can have naturally grown food. People choose the different types of food they eat. Doctors say that you should choose

organic food for your children because it's healthier and safer because it doesn't have the chemicals that conventional food has in it. Other people choose conventional because it is cheaper and it is easier to access. Most foods are made conventionally. Conventional food uses chemicals and pesticides to help them grow but may also be harmful the body.



You can often find organically grown foods in farmers markets and some stores, not commercialized ones, have them as well. Conventional is more common, and you can find those foods almost anywhere that sells produce. The best time to grow is at the peak of the season, conventional is all year, as is organic, but organic

is the best at the peak of spring, which makes it more wanted and desired by consumers due to the lack of all year round timing. After all the facts that we have gathered, we have come to the conclusion that while both may be good choices, organic is better because it is proven to be healthier in the long run. It doesn't have harmful chemicals or pesticides, and should be the choice you make for yourself and your children to help them eat healthier as they grow.

- Chance Ririe, Kennedy McAvoy, Cara Richardson

MIGRATORY BIRD REFUGES



On a crisp winter morning, as the fog settles on the lake, the sun begins to rise above the Wasatch mountain; there is not a cackling goose in the sky, nor ducks flying in a migratory v-formation. You read your local newspaper later that morning and discover that all the wildlife refuges were destroyed and made into homes and commercial property. This could become a reality if we do not protect our wildlife refuges.

There are three waterfowl refuges located throughout the state of Utah. They are the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, Ouray National Wildlife Refuge, and Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge. Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge is located on the northeast arm of the Great Salt Lake, a 12 mile loop that wraps around hundreds of acres of wetlands. At Ouray National Wildlife Refuge, located in the desert of northeast Utah, water is provided from the mountains of Wyoming, and a majority of the land is leased from the Ouray Indian Reservation. Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge, is located at the southern end of the Great Salt Lake desert and was established in 1959.

Wildlife refuges date back to 1903 when Theodore Roosevelt designated Florida's Pelican Island Wildlife Refuge as the first Wildlife Refuge. The refuge system has grown to more than 556 wildlife refuges, plus 38 wetland management refuges. The significant purpose of the refuges is to manage a network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and restoration of fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats. Refuges are home to over 700 species of birds, 220 species of mammals, 250 reptile and amphibian species, and more than 200 species of fish. Endangered species are a priority of national wildlife refuges.

The refuge system has been underfunded since its creation. The National Wildlife Refuge Association advocates on Capitol Hill fund the refuge system and other wildlife conservation programs. From 2008 to 2010, with leadership from the National Wildlife Refuge Association, the refuge system's operations and maintenance accounts grew by \$105 million. The objective of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to get elected officials out to the refuges so they can understand the challenges created through a lack of funding.

- Hunter Smith & Jayden Simpson

Elk at Hardware Ranch



Located East of Hyrum, Utah near the Blacksmith Fork River, Curtis Creek, and Rock Creek is Hardware Ranch, a 19,000 acre ranch that grows 300 tons of hay a year to feed 500-600 head of elk during the winter.

The Ranch was purchased by the State of Utah in 1945 with money from the Wildlife Restoration Act. It was originally purchased because in the 1930s buildings,

towns, and farms had begun to encroach on the Rocky Mountain Elk winter feeding grounds. As a result, the elk had to migrate farther down into the valley to find food and became a nuisance to the farmers. The Ranch is still a part of the Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and serves as a center for elk research. Some of the elk are tagged and weighed so that characteristics of the elk population can be studied. The elk are also tested for brucellosis and tuberculosis. None of the elk on Hardware Ranch are captive; they are all free roaming and migrate down onto the Ranch during the winter when snow becomes too abundant to find food at higher elevations.

Currently, the Ranch's biggest attraction that is offered is the elk feeding and viewing program; in a typical year more than 30,000 visitors come to experience it. From December 14th to February 25th families can visit Hardware Ranch and ride in a horse-drawn sleigh while the elk are being fed. This allows people to observe and come within close proximity of Utah's beautiful wildlife. Sleigh rides are given on Sundays, Mondays, Fridays, and Saturdays. On Fridays and Mondays the rides run from noon to 4:30 p.m. and on Saturdays and Sundays the rides run from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and generally are twenty minutes long. The sleigh rides cost \$5.00 for ages 9 and above, \$3.00 for children ages 4-8, and there is no cost for children age 3 and under.

There is also a visitors center on the Ranch where interactive exhibits and programs teaching about elk and other wildlife are offered.

Other activities that are available at Hardware Ranch include hunting, fishing, and camping; wildlife such as chukar, deer, elk, moose, ruffed grouse, and cottontail rabbit can all be hunted on the Ranch during the appropriate seasons. Elk can be hunted during season because Hardware Ranch is not a sanctuary or a reserve, it is an operating ranch that the elk use as a feeding ground during the winter.

If you were not able to make it to Hardware Ranch this winter, we recommend scheduling it as an outing for next winter. Remember to dress warm for the sleigh rides and drive cautiously if the Blacksmith Canyon roads are icy.

-Mason Downs & Micala Downs

COMBATING PHRAGMITES

Phragmites, the name itself may not ring any bells but chances are if you live by any body of water in central Utah you would know one when you saw one. Phragmites is a tall reed, usually with a soft grassy top, and is an extremely invasive species. Phragmites, when introduced to an eco-system, can choke out the native species in that area. Recently, Phragmites has become a major concern for the Utah Lake Commission and the Utah Division of Natural Resources (DNR). The reason they have become the center of attention is they are choking out native species such as Cattail and Bulrush.

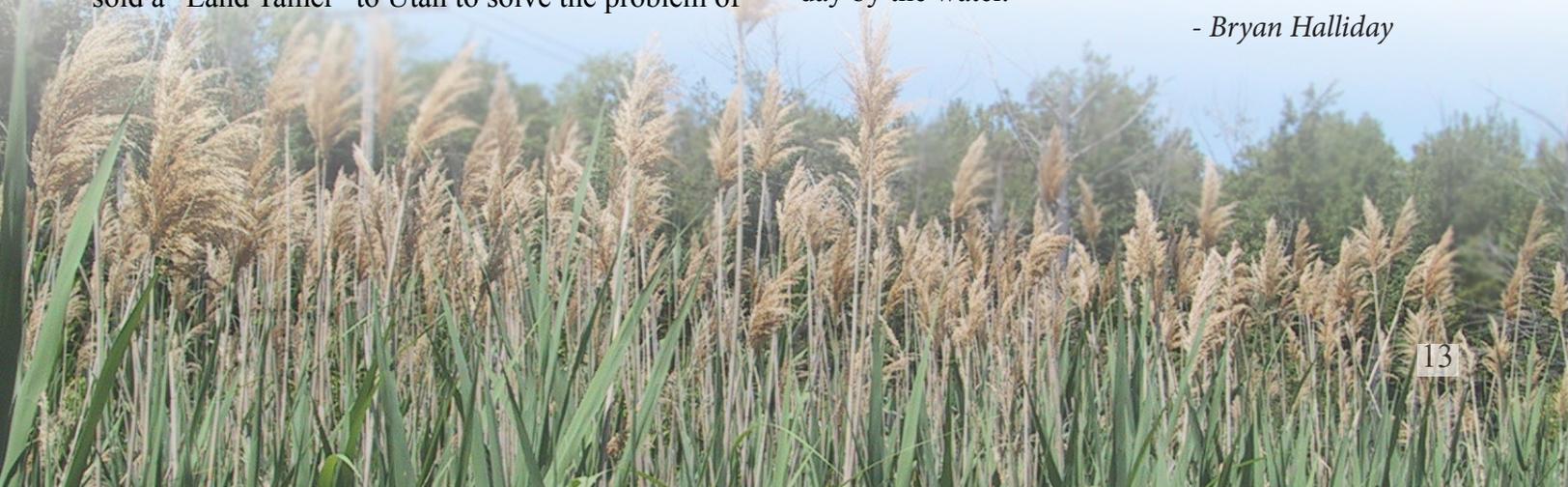
The DNR and the Utah Lake Commission have tried to combat the Phragmites by using herbicides, burning, and cutting. They decided that burning would be the most effective way to rid Utah Lake of the invasive species. However after they surveyed the land around Utah Lake, they came to the conclusion that even though burning was the most effective way to rid the lake of the invasive species, it would do too much harm to the delicate ecosystem of the lake. Aaron Eagar, Utah County Weed Supervisor confirmed this decision. The divisions then decided to look into other options such as cutting them down or using herbicides. After looking into cutting they came to the conclusion it would be too difficult because of the marshy conditions. So they moved onto herbicides, being the only other viable option they perused it and began spreading aerial herbicides over the affected areas with the help of crop dusters. After using herbicides for a time with less than satisfactory results they decided that it was not working and decided to stop. With no other options to try they needed a solution that would work. The answer to their problem came from a company in Montana, PF manufacturing; the company recently sold a “Land Tamer” to Utah to solve the problem of

the invasive species around the lake.

The “Land Tamer” is basically a mini amphibious tank that can smash the reeds around the lake to open up a path way to the root of the plant so that aerial herbicides have a vastly greater chance of success. The “Land Tamer” coupled with aerial herbicides spread from a crop duster had great results when it came to removing the invasive species, it became the leading way of taking care of the Phragmites around Utah Lake. Eagar says, “Phragmites removal is a three year process, “In the first year, we spray herbicide on the infected area in August and September, before the first hard freeze. Then we smash the Phragmites several times over instead of burning.” The second year Eagar and his team evaluated the progress of the herbicide and the “Land Tamer” and also start to remove other invasive species such as the Tamarisk. The 3rd year is spent finishing up shoreline restoration. Most of the 3 year process takes place during the winter months, the summer is spent monitoring progress and planning the next wave of spraying, smashing, and replanting of native species.

The removal of the Phragmites won’t just have a positive effect in helping native species replenish their natural environment but will have a positive effect toward the aquatic wildlife as well by providing better water and more food by allowing native species to return. The entire project will take over a decade to complete. Everything has been surveyed and evaluated over and over to make sure that no wildlife or any native plants will be hurt during the process and to ensure that when the project is complete it will provide Utah Lake with a great shoreline for outdoor activities such as: hunting, fishing, boating, or just enjoying a day by the water.

- Bryan Halliday



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