

Finish Summer with a good ole' fashion Barn Dance!

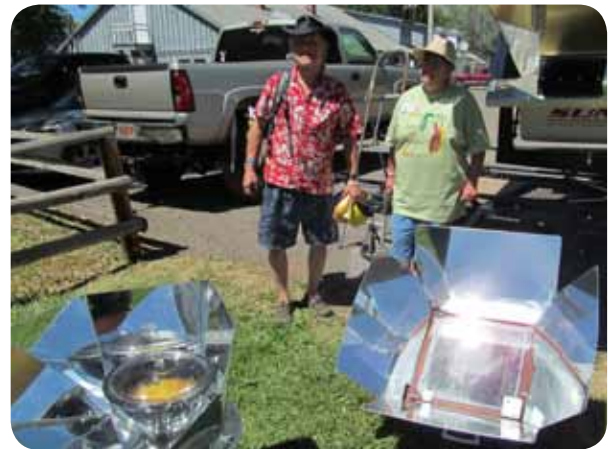


Sound like fun? Well you are in luck! Oregon Rural Action is hosting the Third Annual Barn Dance Fundraiser September 21st from 5:30pm to 10pm! We have a three band line-up that will be sure to get your tail feathers shaken!

There is guaranteed to be great people and plenty of live music, so join us! You can purchase your tickets for only \$15 at the Oregon Rural Action office. Food and non-alcoholic beverages are included, please bring cash for the beer, wine and dessert auction!

by Thomas Stratton

Continue to Page 2 to read more about the bands!



Solar Oven at SolWest 2013 by Dave Felley

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“ORA is a voice for everybody in Eastern Oregon. It is a voice for local, sustainable food and energy. Together it is our voice for viable, strong rural communities!”

-Mabel Dobbs, rancher and ORA Board of Directors Treasurer

The Furrow is published four times a year by Oregon Rural Action. Oregon Rural Action supports and encourages community organizing around locally identified issues. Our members work together to promote healthy and sustainable rural communities and to ensure that all people have a choice in the decisions, policies, and systems that affect their lives.

Music at Last Chance Barn Dance

On September 21st, the night starts off with the assorted string sounds of the Bottlecap Boys! These guys are rocking 31 shows this season with high energy Renegade Bluegrass toons. Their latest album East to West highlights upbeat composition with modern themes.

We are proud to bring Bitterroot to the stage! Colt Haney and Foster Haney, Jay Colton Hughes, Talen Couey and Lauren Bihr will showcase their musical talents for us. Their newly released album The Valley of Peace pays homage to the bands roots here in Eastern Oregon. The Valley of Peace is the name given to the Grande Ronde Valley (GRV) by the Native Americans. Native tribes would come to this here during times of turmoil and peace to exchange goods in peace.



The Barn Near Summerville, Credit Jeff Clark

Bitterroot is spreading their good-hearted and down to earth message of love, honesty, compassion and justice. Their music will bring your hearts and minds to the wide open spaces where their souls will forever roam.

The night will be polished off by an extra special set from local band Bag of Hammers! Luke McKern and Holly Sorensen have been paired off for the last year sending their funk and eclectic tones from mountain top to mountain top!

by Thomas Stratton



La Grand Community Garden
Credit Tova Woyciechowicz

Oregon Rural Action Annual Gathering

Oregon Rural Action's Annual Gathering will be held Saturday, Oct. 19 on the Eastern Oregon University campus in La Grande from 3:00 - 7:30 with a film screening to follow. Join us for the full gathering, for dinner and speaker, or just the film at the end. Tickets and a full agenda will be available soon online and at the ORA office.

In preparation for that meeting, there are two things members can do:

- 1) Apply to be on our board, a committee or action team
- 2) Take our member survey to give us input and ideas for consideration

Elections will be held at the annual meeting, and your survey answers will be used to shape the meeting and our future.

Members' Survey – we will be seeking your input regarding campaigns and future activities via an electronic survey.

Oregon Rural Action Welcomes New Staff



Tova Woyciechowicz

is a Community Organizer focused on energy issues. She came to Oregon Rural Action with a unique combination of higher education, bachelors' degrees in Environmental Studies and Advertising from

the University of Montana and the Art Institute of Portland respectively.

Her professional experience includes work with the Gifford Pinchot Task Force, Defend Oregon, and Bark. At Wyoming Outdoor Council her rural organizing experience was crucial in a campaign protecting parts of Wyoming's Red Desert and the Great Divide from irresponsible oil and gas development. Tova coordinated a Good Neighbor Agreement for another Western Organization of Resource Councils affiliate, Northern Plains Resource Council.

As a Montana native, from a young age Tova has had a strong passion for conservation, running recycling program for 2,000 students at her high school, speaking at rallies, painting murals and more. She has traveled internationally, creating promotional material as a volunteer for indigenous run programs.

At Oregon Rural Action Tova will focus on solution oriented sustainable energy projects and address "dirty" energy problems.

Jeff and Tova are interested in hearing what's important to you and working together! Please call, email or stop by the office when You get a chance! 541-975-2411 tova@oregonrural.org and jeff@oregonrural.org



Jeff Mathias

is a Community Organizer with a food and sustainable agriculture focus. He became an Oregon Rural Action member in 2008, just after moving to Wallowa County.

Jeff brings with him a degree in Human Resources Management from George Fox University and Environmental Studies from Whitman College. Working for the National Park Service for 15 years not only provided Jeff an understanding of how government works, but also experience with the struggle to balance human use of our world with conservation of the natural world. For the last 10 years, Jeff has gained hands on experience in sustainable living; from the voluntary simplicity of living in a yurt with his family to owning and managing a 30 member year round CSA.

Jeff currently lives in Lostine and is the Board Chair of the Wallowa Local Food Project and Manager of the Lower Valley Farmers' Market in Wallowa (Saturdays 10-2). Jeff is also developing his own breed of meat chicken that is acclimatized to the pastures in NE Oregon.

We believe in the goals of organizing set forth by the Western Organization of Resource Councils, "Individuals are important, but groups get things done. Individuals working together in groups are powerful agents for social change."

Democracy · Participation · Leadership · Diversity · Cooperation · Justice · Stewardship

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MAKING THE SHIFT TO HOMEGROWN PROSPERITY

You've heard this mantra before, of "making the shift to homegrown prosperity", and perhaps wondered what it meant. It cropped up in 2006 as the slogan for a bio-diesel fuel campaign. Over time the concept has lent itself to more of our work and issues - renewable energy, local food and farming activities and issue campaigns like healthcare. What else might be included in a holistic view of 'homegrown prosperity'?

Homegrown prosperity has taken on a much broader meaning. It means growing our own, buying and selling locally and regionally. It means creating and conserving energy, and supporting local businesses. We retain control of our basic necessities, become more self-reliant, more resilient, and improve our quality of life and make prosperous rural communities!

Taking a strategic look at past and future activities ORA staff and Board see this shift as more than an issue or project, it looks like a groundswell, a movement! A movement toward a world we'd like to live in - well cared for, fair, diverse, responsive, thriving and connected to itself and its resources. We're happy to see that not just our members are doing something about it, but others around the region are joining the effort.

It doesn't take a focus on sustainability to see that when we bolster the strength of our rural economies the community benefits. La Grande Main Street is an effort by La Grande's Economic Improvement District to invite, "sustainable downtown rooted in La Grande's history and culture, providing a vital center for commercial and community activities." Similar efforts around Oregon all see the value of revitalizing the local. We find that folks who are opposed to many of our issues can agree that prosperity is better when the solution is found close to home.

Now - can we define 'homegrown prosperity' well enough to take action and inspire our friends to join us on this journey?

In our recent Local Food & Farm Guide, an ORA member Diane Lunsford captured homegrown prosperity as "a switch from an unsustainable, distant Wall Street economy to a more self-sustaining one". One that local people have more control and say in. To be clear, by "local" we simply mean 'as close to home as possible'. 'Wall Street', is a place home to the world's largest, most profitable corporations, and epitomizes the opposite mentality.

To be fair, we know our world needs businesses and economies in a variety of sizes that fit different settings and purposes. Our goal is to see more choice in local

economic activities, benefits, drivers and growth. At the core are more opportunities for local folks to own, buy, produce and sell the food, services and goods that people here and anywhere need and buy, as often and as sustainably as possible from their own 'Main Streets' - and - to retain and circulate as much profit as possible in the community.

In other words, creating rural communities that rock! The Center for Rural Affairs (in

the Midwest plains states), raves that rural towns have so much, so many assets and opportunities to build on - eastern Oregon could echo their statistics:

- Community infrastructures are intact - rural communities have existing schools, churches, town governments, housing, and water/sanitary systems.
- Rural areas are full of entrepreneurs - there are twice as many sole proprietorships in the plains rural counties compared to urban counties, and 70% of net job growth in the [Midwest plains] counties in the past has been in non-farm self-employment.
- Farms generate commerce - on average a single-family farm contributes \$720,000 to the local economy, or the equivalent of eight \$40,000 "town jobs". On average, 7 farms support 1 town business.

Could homegrown prosperity be jump-started with a full-blown "Buy Local" campaign in eastern Oregon?



Community Marketplace, Credit Tova Woyciechowicz

One example of support for “Main Street not Wall Street” comes from ORA member, Jenny Bartell, owner of Community Marketplace, a retail business in LaGrande that procures and sells all forms of high quality regionally created food and goods. Jenny sees and supports an incred-

Homegrown prosperity is “a switch from an unsustainable, distant Wall Street economy to a more self-sustaining one,” said Diane Lunsford

ible amount of talent and skill – entrepreneurs who just “needed a nudge and a place to market their goods – I’m here to make it easier to sell and shop local, all year long.” We say, “good on ya, Jenny - more power to you and your suppliers. The rest of you – shop Main Street” and stay tuned for “next big thing” in local investment, coming soon!

And proof that locals get it? In a recent regional (Baker, Union and Wallowa) economic development survey conducted by NE Oregon Economic Development District “homegrown prosperity” (with a Buy Local marketing campaign) was ranked the #1 choice of action in Union County, and 3rd in the region. You can find this report (and others related to food and farming at <http://neoedd.org/reports>).

This Shift we’re talking about won’t happen easily. Industry is strong with unprecedented corporate rights. ORA members (and many around the world) will work to find solutions like renewable energy and local foods and to fight against the dirty coal trains and mines, toxic ‘super weeds’ and GM wheat, ‘Big Gulps’ and sickening health insurance, and the corporate interests that promote them. We’re fighting for the resilient roots that rural communities

were born of - local people creating things, solutions and opportunities for a more sustainable, vibrant, healthy-for-all community, economy (and world).

It’s a big job - but that has never stopped us, right? We will make the

shift one step at a time! With our members and partners we will create healthy communities that build a healthier world. As we make positive solutions locally we will bring resolution to some of the biggest challenges of our time like: climate change, income disparity, disease and political or social disenfranchisement. With foresight and commitment,

rural communities with their great natural amenities, family-friendly atmospheres, small businesses and opportunities for sustainable growth will lead the way to a prosperous 21st century. Our new mantra - SHIFT HAPPENS!

Please read on! In this edition of The Furrow you’ll learn about our current projects; We invite you to join us in these initiatives for home-grown prosperity:

- Shifting the Dominant Narrative – dispelling the myth and message that only big corporations can efficiently or effectively take care of our needs
 - Bringing SolWest Renewable Energy Fair to eastern Oregon
 - Advocating for a reformed universal healthcare system in Oregon
- By Karen Wagner



Jenny Bartell at Community Marketplace, Credit Tova Woyciechowicz

Solwest 2013 – the Last Year In John Day



Keynote Speaker Paul Scheckel, Credit Tova Woyciechowicz

Last month the board of Oregon Rural Action attended the final Solwest Fair in John Day, July 26-28. In case you've missed it, this is eastern Oregon's premier alternative, off-the-grid, better living event. This event has attracted folks from across the West every year for the past fifteen years, holding lectures and workshops for kids and adults and a vendor fair with products from renewable energy to gardening and more. This year was no different and there were some great presentations, hands-on workshops and interesting products.

Unfortunately, this is the last year for EORENEW, the non-profit formed to host the Solwest. Hard working Jennifer Barker has decided to retire from putting on this huge show. Because it's so important and a very good fit with our organization's mission, ORA's Board has decided to take over from EORENEW. We will be running Solwest in 2014, right here in La Grande!

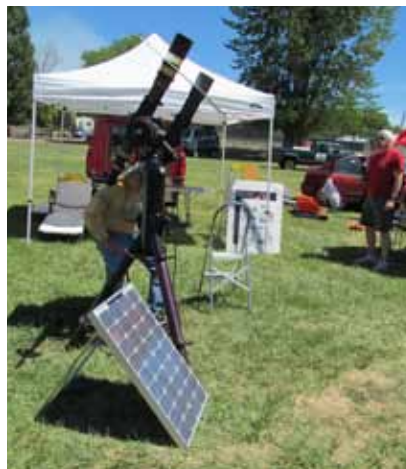
This is a great opportunity to showcase our ongoing efforts in renewable energy, local food networks, health care, and whatever else we think is important. It will also be a great summer event for La Grande and Union County, attracting interesting folks from all over. This will be a really exciting and fun event but it will also be a very big job. We will all need to pull together to make Solwest 2014 a huge success.

If you have an idea for a workshop or presentation on a new technology, an old technology, some aspect of sustainable living, or just something kookie and fun, or you know someone that would be good, call Karen at 541-975-2411 to get it on the program. If you have other ideas and would like to be involved, there will be plenty of opportunity. Remember, many hands make work light.

by Dave Felley



Described as a force of nature, Jennifer Barker has been coordinating SolWest for 15 years
Credit Tova Woyciechowicz



Starring at the sun! Literally you can see it's craters! Credit Dave Felley



Prize winning biodiesel motorcycle
Credit Tova Woyciechowicz



Contractors come for continuing education credits about solar hotwater from Mr. Sun Solar and attendees get to try out the resulting showers! Credit Dave Felley

Kickstart Your Solar Energy Project

Please join Solar Oregon, Energy Trust of Oregon, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and Oregon Department of Energy at our 4th annual Solar Now! University conference on September 26-28th in Coos Bay. This three day event provides community solar champions, industry members, government and nonprofit leaders the technical education, network of support, and background needed to manage and coordinate solar programs in their communities. The program will focus on the objectives of the US Department of Energy Rooftop Solar Challenge II aimed at innovative, local-government-level solutions for eliminating market barriers and lowering the costs of grid-tied photovoltaics.



Solar Now! University topics:

- Solar Applications for Homes, Businesses, and Public Buildings
- Tax Credits, Incentives & Grants
- Solar Energy Policy
- Financing Options
- Permitting & Codes
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
- Regional Case Studies
- And more!

\$100 Registration fee includes two days of presentations, a conference “Meet and Greet” at Coos Bay’s new solar brewery, Friday dinner in downtown Coos Bay, and all conference meals.

To register, please visit: <http://solaroregon.org/solar-now>

For more information please contact: Emily Krafft, Emily@solaroregon.org



Coal Terminal, Credit Paul K Anderson

Coal in this Millennium

The exponential increase of coal exports has been on many members' minds over the last year. October 1st scoping hearing begins the conversation on the largest proposed export terminal in the United States. Millennium Bulk Terminal is part of a larger network of proposals that could result in problems for human health, rural economies, and the environment.

Ambre Energy was compelled to withdraw its application for Millennium 2 years ago because it lied to public agencies about the size of its, 44 million tons of coal, proposal. This is the same company proposing the Morrow Pacific Coal Terminal in Boardman. Millennium Bulk Terminal is in Longview, Washington and it will have wide ranging impacts for eastern Oregon due to the 8 full and 8 empty coal trains that might go through Oregon on their way from Montana and Wyoming.

Dust, Delay, Disease, and Derailments

The railroad company BNSF has said that more than 500 pounds of coal come off each train car on its trip. This dust causes disease problems like asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and pulmonary fibrosis. The impacts aren't limited to the train tracks because of an inversion in the Columbia Basin that picks up the fine particles and deposits them in our watersheds. Delay is a concern, not just for those of us whose patience is short; emergency vehicles may not have the time to wait for trains to pass. Delay for trains is also a problem too because other economic drivers depend on using the same tracks that would be clogged with coal cars. Another risk is train derailments; coal trains had 18 in the summer of 2012. Perhaps the biggest cloud of dust is climate

change. Millennium Bulk Terminal is a part of selling cheap dirty coal to be burned in Asia and harm our environment.

This is our first chance to express concerns and shape the scope of what the government will consider as the impacts of the Millennium Bulk Terminal. There is a larger government audience than with Morrow Pacific. The Army Corp of Engineers, which is the lead for all these coal export proposals, is joined by the Washington Department of Ecology, and Cowlitz County. Good news is that a precedent has been set to consider broader impacts than have thus far been looked at in Oregon. Near Bellingham, WA the proposed Gateway Pacific Coal Export Terminal will consider rail traffic on the way to the site, public health implications, cargo impacts for shipping beyond Washington, and greenhouse gas emissions for end-use coal combustion. What that means is that concerns, which have thus far been ignored by the Department of Environmental Quality for the Morrow Pacific Project in Boardman, OR, will be heard in the scoping process for Millennium.

Please join us on October 1st at 1:45pm to call for a broad, rigorous scope of review and to demonstrate enormous public opposition to coal exports. A bus will leave the Oregon Rural Action office and travel to Pasco, returning in the evening. You are encouraged to wear red; some t-shirts will be provided.

In preparation for giving testimony, retired Department of Environmental Quality expert Mitch Wolgomott will be leading a training about how to be most effective in giving comments on September 23rd at 6:30pm.

Please contact Tova, tova@oregonrural.org or 541-975-2411 to RSVP for either event.



Coal Train Derailment, Credit Tony Eveland

Board of Directors Invites You to Join

ORA's Board of Directors is recruiting individuals to join us in supporting and building the capacity of this great organization. There are several seats on the board as well as various committees and action teams. With our long-term focus on "Making the Shift to Homegrown Prosperity" there is a lot of exciting work and planning to do and your involvement will help us succeed.

The mission of Oregon Rural Action is to educate, engage and inspire people to get involved in creating healthy sustainable communities in eastern Oregon. If you believe in our mission and can volunteer a few hours a month, consider applying to serve on ORA's Board of Directors, or volunteering for other activities. Applications

for both 1-year and 2-year terms are being accepted through Monday, September 30, 2013. A wide range of skills sets and interests are optimal, but no previous Board or committee experience is required.

Elections will take place on Oct. 19th at our Annual Gathering, when new terms begin. You are encouraged to contact us, come to the office for a visit, or attend a meeting to learn about our issues, our needs and activities.

To find out more and complete an application, please visit our website or contact Karen Wagner, Staff Director (541-975-2411), or Peter Maille, Chair of the Board (541-963-4948).



Board Member Mabel Dobbs

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 21st

Last Chance Barn Dance
5:30pm-10pm
Summerville, OR

September 23th

Public Comment Training
6:30pm-8pm
Community Room, Public Library
La Grande, OR

September 24th

Health Care Reform Action Team
Meeting from 6pm-8pm
ORA office
La Grande, OR

September 25th

Board Meeting
La Grande, OR

September 26th

Snake River Chapter Meeting
6pm-8pm
St Matthew's Episcopal Church
Four Rivers Community Garden
Ontario, OR

September 29th

Dominant Narrative Meeting
1pm-6pm
La Grande, OR

October 1st

Longview Coal Terminal Hearing
1:45-9:30pm
Pick-up at ORA Office
Pasco, WA

For details and up-to-date information about events, sign up for our alerts network:
info@oregonrural.org or go to
<http://oregonrural.org/events/upcoming/>

Success! HB 3260 signed into law by Gov. Kitzhaber!

On August 1 Governor Kitzhaber signed into law HB 3260 marking the success of the campaign by Health Care for All Oregon in support of a study of health care financing options for Oregon.

Members of the ORA Health Care Reform Action Team (HCR-AT) played major roles in passing this important bill. We met with our legislators, made phone calls and sent many emails and letters to them. We attended and testified at legislative hearings. We secured endorsements of the bill from 30 Union County small businesses—endorsements important for the bill’s passage. Both Sen. Bill Haskell and Rep. Bob Jensen voted aye and deserve our thanks.

HB 3260 stipulates the ideal health care system will:

- Provide universal access to comprehensive care at the appropriate time.
- Allow choice of provider.
- Reduce administrative costs.
- Use sufficient, fair, and sustainable financing.
- Ensure adequate compensation of providers.
- Include physical, dental, vision, and mental health care.
- Be affordable for individuals, families, businesses, and state and local governments.

HB 3260 authorizes the Oregon Health Authority to

select a third party to study Oregon’s health care financing options. The privately funded study will consider four options:

1. Implementing the Affordable Care Act (“Obama Care”) without modification, including all aspects of Oregon’s Health Care Transformation process including Cover Oregon and Coordinated Care Organizations.
2. Adding a public option to the state insurance exchange and including the “Basic Health” provision of the Affordable Care Act.
3. Universal statewide single payer health care, publicly financed and privately provided.
4. Another option at the discretion of the Oregon Health Authority to provide only essential health benefits to every Oregonian using private insurance.

The findings of the study will be presented to the interim House Health Care Committee by November of 2014 and to the full legislature for the 2015 session.



The next regular meeting of the ORA Health Care Reform Action Team will be held on Tuesday, September 24 from 6-8 PM at the ORA office, You are invited to come to learn how you can be involved in the Oregon campaign for universal health care. For information: Bill@oregonrural.org or call 541-663-1358. We are looking forward to seeing you.

by Bill Whitaker and Cheryl Simpson



Ramon Lara at SolWest Workshop, Credit Tova Woyciechowicz

The “Dominant Narrative” in Agriculture

Oregon Rural Action is teaming up with grassroots family farm groups in ten neighboring states to explore how we can build our power to take on Big Ag. Grassroots, family farm groups have had some wins here and there through strong campaigns, but we’re losing ground to corporate agriculture. Big Ag is running roughshod on our politics, our food system, our health and our communities.

In part, that’s because the dominant narrative (or common belief) about agriculture reinforces the idea that industrial food production is the only way we can feed a hungry world. And we pay a heavy price for that narrative: GMOs, super weeds, diet-related diseases, factory farming, land grabs and global hunger. Meanwhile the local food movement, family farms, CSAs, etc., are dismissed as impractical or even “elitist”.

With the guidance of Dave Mann of the Grassroots Policy Project, an expert on building grassroots movements, 150 leaders from ten states will collectively participate in a process to help us begin to see the dominant narrative in agriculture, understand its impact on us, and develop a new narrative based on our values.

As part of that process, ORA will bring 15-25 of our leaders together for a pair of meetings in La Grande. Liz Moran (WORC Ag Team Organizer) and Jeff Mathias (ORA organizer) have trained in the facilitation of dialogue about the narrative and will help us shape a new narrative based on our values. The aim of this effort is to energize members across our ten states to build the power it takes to win major change in agriculture.

The first meeting in Oregon is the last weekend in September. Seating at the meetings is limited. If you’d like more information about the shifting the dominant narrative, contact Jeff Mathias at 541-975-2411 or email at jeff@oregonrural.org.

List of Current Board members:

Peter Maille, La Grande, Chair
Juanita Lassiter, Ontario, Vice-Chair & Snake River Chapter Rep
Mabel Dobbs, Weiser, Treasurer
Cori Brewster, La Grande, Secretary
Dave Felley, Blue Mountain Chapter Rep
Norm Cimon, La Grande, At-Large
Steve Bartell, Imbler, At-Large
Bob Hanson, Ontario, At-Large
Rob Cordtz, Richland, At-Large
Ramon Lara, Baker City, At-Large
Bill Whitaker, La Grande, At-Large

List of Current Staff:

Jeff Mathias, Organizer
Tova Woyciechowicz, Organizer
Gabriela Camacho, Membership Coordinator
Nancy Gledhill, Organizer
Karen Wagner, Staff Director

ORA Territory:

Baker, Malheur, Umatilla, Union and Wallowa Counties

Support Oregon Rural Action by becoming a member or by making a donation online at:

<http://oregonrural.org/join-give>

ORA Membership:

Anyone can join online, on the phone, at our office or through the mail! Annual membership dues: \$60 Business/Organization, \$40 Family, \$30 Individual.

Democracy · Participation · Leadership · Diversity · Cooperation · Justice · Stewardship

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Please let us know your
email address:
info@oregonrural.org

Oregon Rural Action
PO Box 1231
La Grande, OR 97850



Oregon Rural Action is a community-based organization. Our mission is to bring people together to build strong communities. We do this by providing information and tools for local people to use in addressing the issues affecting our communities and by helping community members develop and implement solutions that work. Oregon Rural Action is working to promote social justice, agricultural and economic sustainability, and the stewardship of the region's land, air, and water.

The Furrow

The Newsletter of Oregon Rural Action

The Furrow is published quarterly by Oregon Rural Action with generous assistance from organizations including the McKenzie River Gathering Foundation, The Meyer Memorial Trust, Penstemon Fund, Wildhorse Foundation, and members like YOU.

To learn more about the work we do, visit our website at:
www.oregonrural.org.

Contact Tova Woyciechowicz : tova@oregonrural.org

Support Oregon Rural Action by becoming a member or by making a donation online at:

<http://oregonrural.org/join-give>

Be Part of Oregon Rural Action's Sustainer's Circle!

You now have the opportunity to provide ongoing support to Oregon Rural Action with an automatic, recurring contribution from your credit or debit account. As a Sustainer's Circle member you will be a backbone of support and will always have a current membership to ORA.