



In brief

Alumni award honors Larry, Bonnie Smith

The Utah State University Alumni Association presented Larry and Bonnie Smith with a 2009 USU Alumni Merit Citation for their work in promoting the arts and inspiring others through music.

The award was presented at the final concert of the summer season presented by the USU Alumni Band, where the Smiths were featured performers.

At USU, Larry was a founding member of the Scotsmen Big Band, which he led for two years. After graduating in 1959, he married Bonnie Baird, a 1984 USU alumna.

Larry then taught music in Star Valley, Wyo., for two years before becoming band director at Ben Lomond High School in Ogden for four years. In 1966, he was invited to return to USU to join the music department faculty. After retirement in 2003, Larry founded the Jazz Kicks Big Band.

Bonnie started the program "An Afternoon of Jazz" at the Sunshine Terrace Adult Day Center, where Larry played weekly for years.

"The Smiths have always loved all music and were an active force in sharing that love with all who surrounded them," said Patty Halafia, executive director of alumni relations at USU.

USU: 2 species of garter snake adapt to toxin

Utah State University researchers have found that two species of garter snake have also developed resistance to the toxin in a newt that they eat.

The scientists had already discovered one type of garter snake with the adaptation.

"The three species are achieving the same adaptation but doing it differently at the molecular level," said Edmund Brodie Jr., a USU biologist. "Observing this adaptation in one species was exciting but now we've taken it to a whole new level."

Brodie worked on the research with his son, Edmund Brodie III, of the University of Virginia; USU alum Chris Feldman, now a research scientist at the University of Nevada, Reno, and Mike Pfrender, USU associate professor of biology.

Pfrender and Brodie note that environments change rapidly. Their research findings may provide clues to how humans and other species adapt to pollution and climate change, how insects develop resistance to powerful pesticides and how agricultural plants adapt to less water.

The study appears in the July 20 issue of Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.

Wildfires cause smoky skies in Cache Valley

Wildfires in Northern Utah contributed to smoky skies in Cache Valley on Thursday.

Several fires burned in Box Elder County, including one near Hansel Valley, and winds brought smoke and haze eastward to Cache Valley. At one time Thursday, media outlets in Salt Lake reported there were 24 fires burning in Tooele, with flames in some spots more than 60 feet high.

"With the high winds, they're blowing (smoke) further than normal," Cache Fire District Chief Rod Hammer said Thursday evening. "We've had reports of ash falling on the north end of the valley. It's unusual, but it's happening."

A fire was reported in Clarkston on Thursday afternoon but turned out to be a false alarm, Hammer said.

USU professor promotes agritourism

By Kim Burgess
staff writer

With the majority of Americans residing in urban areas, many city dwellers are hankering for a taste of rural life. That urge can translate into a lucrative business opportunity for farmers and ranchers.

According to Steve Burr, director of Utah State University's Institute for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism, travelers have a growing interest in trips that involve learning.

"When we're tourists, we are going around collecting experiences," he said Wednesday during a presentation on agritourism and ecotourism that was held at the Cache Valley Visitors Bureau. "You'd be amazed what people will pay to do these days."

From driving cattle to picking produce, tourists are interested in most anything that gives them a first-hand look at a working agricultural operation, Burr said.

Other popular activities include wildlife watching, outdoor recreation and "heritage tours" to explore the area's history.

Cache Valley is in a good position to offer these types of vacations, Burr said, citing the area's beautiful scenery and interesting past, which includes American Indians, mountain men and Mormon pioneers.

Agritourism operations across the country

• La Mota Ranch: Hebbronville, Texas

Founded in the 1890s, this cattle ranch is still ran by the descendants of the original owners. After the Texas Legislature recognized the historic significance of their area along the south Texas border, the owners decided to offer tours of their ranch. The property includes birding spots, old-fashioned farm tools, buggies and Texas longhorn steers. In recent years, the ranch has received busloads of tourists with each visitor paying around \$60. www.lamotaranch.com

• Doepkens Farm: Gambriels, Md.

This property began as a tobacco farm. In 1992, owner Bill Doepkens made the transition to ornamental flowers, gourds and fresh eggs. Today he is famous for creating a half-acre mural made of flowering mums.

Around Halloween, thousands of tourists come to see the mural. Other agritourism activities include make-your-own flower arrangement and pumpkin picking. In addition, the Doepkens produces jam, jellies, squash, grains and flowers. www.somarylandsgood.com/pd/ttc.pdf

• Schuster's Playtime Farm: Deerfield, Wis.

For the past 15 years, customers from all over the region come to Schuster's to pick pumpkins on seven acres of land. They also have a corn maze, hay rides, a petting zoo and a large barn that is available for rent. They have hosted private parties, children's groups and church gatherings. www.schustersplaytimefarm.com
Source: Agricultural Marketing Resource Center

"In Utah, people are aware of heritage," Burr added.

He offered a number of tips for agriculturists or property owners who are interested in getting into tourism:

• Create a business plan and explore regulations and insurance issues for the type of

business you'd like to offer.

• Make sure you have the funds to put in any infrastructure you will need, like restrooms.

• Offer enough experiences to attract

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Cache County Rodeo

Sound of Thunder



Alan Murray/Herald Journal

Jason Goodman and his wife, Rose Goodman, drive their team of horses, Texas Thunder, during the Cache County Rodeo on Thursday evening in Logan.

Percheron hitch team performs for rodeo fans

By Charles Geraci
staff writer

Shaq lifts his head above the tie stall and looks out at the rodeo arena.

At 19 hands and 1 inch, the Percheron is the tallest of the six-horse hitch that is entertaining crowds at this year's Cache County Rodeo.

Known as Texas Thunder, these workhorses are ready to run.

"We will take all six of them ... at a wide open run — just as fast as they can go," said Jason Goodman, hitch manager and head driver of the Priefert Percherons. "The driving demonstration that we do with the

On the Web

www.priefertpercherons.com

wagon is the fastest hitch demonstration on the road today."

Priefert Ranch Equipment, based in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, owns the attraction, which travels all across North America.

The Priefert Percherons are noted as the tallest hitch on the continent, according to Goodman, and Shaq was named the tallest Percheron in North America at the 2008 World Percheron Congress in Canada.

LaMont Poulsen, chairman of the Cache County Rodeo, said

he had to book Texas Thunder two years ago for the 2009 rodeo.

"They'll come in and perform maneuvers with the team and the wagon," Poulsen said.

"Many of the movements are "really tight, really sharp," according to Goodman. "And a lot of it is going to be very fast."

Goodman said the show is a step back in time for those watching the Percherons perform.

For example, workhorses once pulled the plows through the farms or hauled in bricks for building.

"These big hitches used to

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Arts group seeks top Utah artist nominations

Herald Journal staff report

SALT LAKE CITY

—A new community organization, Salt Lake Broadway: Music and the Arts is accepting nominations for Utah's top artists, musicians and performers in preparation for its Sept. 11 kick-off event.

Salt Lake's Broadway district (along 300 South) will be the focal point of the performance, which will celebrate Utah's artistic talents.

"Salt Lake Broadway and its community partners are creating a greater opportunity for participants of all ages to experience the arts," said Executive Director Ned Maxfield. "Our goal is to make this area of Salt Lake City a premiere destination, to contribute to the current resurgence of downtown Salt Lake, and to contribute to education in support of the arts."

Salt Lake Broadway is inviting the community to nominate Utah artists in the following categories through Aug. 28:

- Culinary arts: appetizer, entree and dessert categories.
- Music: vocal artist(s), instrumentalist(s) and ensemble or group (vocal and instrumental) categories.
- Visual arts: painting & sculpture and photography & film categories.
- Graphic arts
- Design
- Performing arts
- Literary arts

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Herbert received unauthorized protection

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Lt. Gov. Gary Herbert has been under the watchful eye of a state security detail since May, but The Associated Press has learned that for more than two months that protection wasn't authorized under state law.

A security detail was first dispatched to protect Herbert on May 16, when President Barack Obama announced he was nominating Gov. Jon Huntsman as ambassador to China.

The Office of Executive Protection, which consists primarily of the Utah Highway Patrol, is only authorized to provide protection for the governor and his immediate family. Herbert's inauguration isn't expected to occur until Aug. 11, and that's only if Huntsman is confirmed by the U.S. Senate before its August recess Friday.

The commissioner of the Department of Public Safety can order protection for other public officials, but only for 15 days.

To continue providing protection for Herbert, authorization by majority vote from the commissioner, House Speaker and Senate President would have been needed on May 31, June 15, June 30, July 15 and July 30.

That authorization never occurred. "This is kind of an interesting situation where you have an outgoing governor and an incoming governor," said Sgt. Jeff Nigbur. "That's how we interpreted that statute. We felt Lt. Gov. Herbert was the incoming governor."

Only after inquiries were made by The Associated Press on Thursday



AP photo

In photo taken May 20, members from the Utah Senate and House of Representatives "Call Upon the Governor" and meet with Gov. Jon Huntsman, center left, and Lt. Gov. Gary Herbert, center right, to formally start the Special Session of the Legislature. Sens. Dan Liljenquist at far left and Sen. Dennis Stowell at far right talk with Lt. Gov. Herbert.

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