



Marion County OREGON

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Marion County Announces 150 Miles for 150 Years Salute to Oregon

2009 marks Oregon's 150th birthday. Marion County is contributing to this statewide celebration by providing families and individuals with the tools to learn more about the history of our county and its cities, to visit and learn more about some of the unique and/or historic sites that exist close to home in our own communities. From the site of the 1846 gristmill in Scotts Mills to the post office in Idanha to the railroad engine in Woodburn to the historic cemeteries in Gates, Hubbard and St. Paul, Marion County offers some important sites vital to the history of Oregon.

Marion County is kicking off *150 Miles for 150 Years* during spring break week (beginning March 23) and the program will run through the end of August 2009, when the statewide Oregon 150 celebration concludes.

150 Miles for 150 Years contains unique sites to visit within each city in the county along with a treasure hunt type "clue" that the answer may only be found by visiting the site. Individuals and families that complete the tour will receive a special acknowledgement from the Marion County Board of Commissioners at a ceremony later this fall.

"Marion County is unique in that it has within its borders 20 incorporated cities. Our biggest challenge was linking all of our cities and communities together for this 150 celebration," explained Amy Vandegrift, executive director of the Marion County Historical Society and co-chair of this effort.

"Marion County's Oregon 150 Committee determined that if starting at the easternmost city and linking all 20 cities together in a loop, ending in Salem, it would be almost 150 miles in length. What a perfect jingle for the occasion: 150 miles for 150 years," explained committee co-chair Bill Penhollow, retired assistant executive director from the Association of Oregon Counties.

The map and tour route brochures are available throughout Marion County at all of the cities, as well as online at <http://www.co.marion.or.us/BOC/Oregon150/>. It is a tour that can be completed in one day or several days, whatever is desired by the participants, and is an excellent activity for families to do together.

“Through these events and opportunities, Marion County residents and visitors will not only learn more about the historical significance and contribution to Oregon’s statehood of Marion County cities, but will also get a chance to travel through many local communities. These tours through Marion County cities will foster a better understanding of the each city’s contributions to the past and opportunities for the future,” explained Vandegrist.

In addition to this historical tour-passport activity, Marion County will also be hosting a *150 Miles for 150 Years* relay event through each of Marion County’s 20 cities and many of the county’s unincorporated communities. The 150-mile relay event will take place over five weekends, starting Saturday, June 13; continuing Saturday, June 20, June 27 and July 4; and concluding July 11. The 150-mile trek will begin at Marion County’s easternmost boundary near Idanha; continue through the Santiam Canyon to the county’s southern boundary at Jefferson; then travel northward through Salem to Keizer and St. Paul; then eastward to Champoeg and Aurora and south to Woodburn and Silverton. The trek will end in Salem at the State Fairgrounds with a birthday celebration at the 2009 Marion County Fair.

If you have any questions, you may call the Marion County Historical Society at **503-364-2128** or Marion County’s Public Information Office at **503-566-3916**.

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