



## Steens Mountain resort boasts new owners

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### **Mountain was an annual destination for new owners**

By *Debbie Raney*  
*Burns Times-Herald*

Mark Webb began making memories at Steens Mountain Resort 35 years ago on yearly vacations to the resort with his mom and dad. He can now relive all of those memories on a daily basis since he and his wife, Debbie, purchased the resort last fall.

Webb said that when he was a boy, his dad, Bruce, was looking through "Steens Mountain: In Oregon's High Desert County," the coffee table book by Charles Conkling. Looking at the picture on page 38 of a man frying fish fresh-caught out of the Little Blitzen, Webb said his dad commented that he, too, wanted to eat fresh trout cooked over an open fire. That began their yearly trip to the Steens Mountain area.

Once his parents retired, Webb said they began to spend every summer camping at Steens Mountain Resort, which lies at the base of the mountain just south of Frenchglen.

In the meantime, Mark and Debbie had purchased the Monroe Creek Campground and RV Park in Weiser, Idaho. He said the park was "a fixer-upper," and they rebuilt not only the park, but the business itself. The trips to Harney County continued, and Debbie saw the area for the first time in 2002. "The first time I came I thought, 'I could live here,'" she said.

When the Steens Mountain Resort was first offered for sale, Mark said they looked, but knew it was priced too high for them to make a go of it. But last summer when he brought his mom over for her annual trip (his dad had passed away and he "inherited" the honor of taking her to the resort) the price of the resort had been "drastically reduced."

"Buying it made sense," said Mark.

In October 2010, the Webbs became the proud owners of the Steens Mountain Wilderness Resort.

Originally built by Stan Bennett in the 1960s, the resort was called "Camper Corral." Most of the original fixtures still remain, and are showing their age. Having experienced their first "fixer-upper" in Weiser, the Webbs knew the amount of work they would be putting into their newly purchased resort. Mark said they plan to upgrade everything as time and money allows. Immediately, the Webbs are remodeling and improving several of the existing cabins so they will be ready for use this season. They are also upgrading the men's shower area in the main building and fixing several of the R.V. hookup sites.

Mark said their goal is to have the resort up to "Good Sam Club" standards as soon as possible. To be rated a Good Sam Park, the resort will have to meet criteria in three categories: completeness of the facility; cleanliness and physical characteristics of restrooms and showers; and visual appeal and environmental quality.

The long-term goals the Webbs have include building new log cabins, developing "community" areas both indoors and outdoors for large groups, and having a cabin available with numerous cots for groups such as the Boy Scouts or school groups to use for educational trips.

The plans for the future also include developing picnic areas and improving the playground. "The swing set was here when I first started coming," said Mark.

The Webbs see a lot of work ahead of them, but both Mark and Debbie agree that they are in it for the long haul. The last of their six children will be entering the sixth grade next fall at Frenchglen Elementary, and Debbie said she "wants to retire" in Frenchglen.

According to Mark, patrons will "see a lot of improvements over the next few years. We're here to see that people have a good time — families, birders and fishermen."

For more information or to make reservations at Steens Mountain Wilderness Resort, call 800-542-3765 or 541-493-2415, or go to the website at: [www.steensmountainresort.com](http://www.steensmountainresort.com)



Mark and Debbie Webb pose for a photo with son, Christian, and dog, Reese, at Steens Mountain Resort. (Photo by DEBBIE RANEY)