



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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“Trailing of the Sheep Festival offers *Sheep Go to School* Educational Cultural Program Aimed at Third, Fourth and Fifth Grade Students”

The Trailing of the Sheep Festival has relaunched their free *Sheep Go to School* program to provide education about ranch life and the culture of the Idaho sheep industry by offering a lesson plan and curriculum aimed at 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students. The lesson plan includes resources and projects for educators, parents and anyone working with students at these grade levels, to implement at a time of their choosing.

According to Laura Musbach Drake, Trailing of the Sheep Festival’s Executive Director, the Festival is excited to relaunch this program because, “We believe that sharing the history of sheep in this region and the stories that follow is relevant to many elements of curriculum including science, geography, geology and history.”

The free *Sheep Go to School* lesson plans can be accessed via the Festival’s website at <https://trailingofthesheep.org/sheep-go-to-school>.

Drake also noted that the Festival team plans to create and expand curriculum for kindergarten through second-grade students, as well as suggested projects for middle school and high school students. In time, these additional lesson plans will also be available on the Festival’s website so homeschooling parents and educators in any geographic area can access them.

In previous years, a Festival Board Member, Kathi Kimball, who also worked at the University of Idaho Extension office in Blaine County, would set up times with Blaine County, Idaho, area schools for in person education about Idaho sheep ranching history as part of the students’ Idaho history program. The late Festival co-founder and local sheep rancher, John Peavey,

would happily spend time in fourth grade classrooms with his beloved border collie to share stories with the students about the work and culture of sheep ranching. Due to the retirement of Kathi, the Covid-19 pandemic and the loss of John, the program had been on hold until being relaunched this year.

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TRAILING OF THE SHEEP FESTIVAL HISTORY – 30 YEARS IN 2026

In the early 1990s, Diane and John Peavey invited people to meet for coffee at a local café and then help ‘trail’ (walk) with the sheep through the Valley to learn about the historic tradition of trailing the sheep in an effort minimize conflicts between users of the newly installed recreational bike path and the sheep. Along the way, they shared stories of the rich history, heritage, and cultures of the Wood River Valley. It was small, informal, educational and people loved it.

After a few years of these informal gatherings, the Peaveys met with the local Sun Valley/Ketchum Chamber & Visitor Bureau to discuss the idea of creating an event based on the sheep trailing. Seeing the potential to turn a conflict into a celebration of cultural heritage and a unique fall event to attract visitors, the Chamber quickly jumped on board with support and the Trailing of the Sheep Festival was born.

Celebrating its 30th year in 2026, the Festival has expanded greatly from its humble beginnings, yet the goals and objectives of the Festival remain the same - preserving the stories and history of sheep ranchers and herders, celebrating the rich cultures of the past and present, and entertaining and educating children and adults about the production of local food and fiber that have sustained local economies for generations.

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