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WOMEN

Renee Holtmann - 8

"Many of the jobs I've done don't exist in today's banking . . ."



Lori Fortune - 27

"I was ready for some new challenge . . ."



Los Amigos - 35

"We're family and we're able to communicate . . ."



Carol Thayer - 12

"I love visiting with people who come from all over the world. I grow from it . . ."

Business

July 2012

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION OF THE HOOD RIVER NEWS AND THE WHITE SALMON ENTERPRISE

Women in Business 2012

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Elizabeth Turner

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Judy Streich

JUDY STREICH – STREICH'S ORCHARDS

Judy Streich lives a life worth loving

By ADAM LAPIERRE
Hood River News

With harvest season at hand, bright red Rainier, Skeena, Sweetheart and Bings symbolize a dream come true for Judy Streich.

Judy and Hup, her husband of almost 40 years, planted the first cherry tree on their Woodworth Drive property in 1993. With the goal of turning an old alfalfa field into a work-

ing fruit farm, the two worked double-time; coming home from full-time jobs in Hood River to develop the farm on evenings and weekends. They have since retired — Judy from Sprint and Hup from Hood River County — and can now focus their energy on the 80 acres of cherries and pears.

Having grown up on her father's dairy farm, Judy says she felt des-

tined to have a farm of her own someday. When Judy and Hup's children — Hup Jr. and Hauna — were old enough, they quickly became part of the fledgling family farm.

"It's a great life," Judy said. "It's a lot of hard work, but it's work I really enjoy. You have to enjoy it; you have to love and want to do it if you're going to be happy."

Although the orchard is on the Fruit Loop and does a small amount of online sales, most of their product goes to packing houses after harvest.

For Streich's Orchards, cherry harvest comes in mid-July and is one of the more stressful times of the year. This year, for example, untimely weather

Please see JUDY, Page 4



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Hood River Bagel

Judy

Continued from Page 3

er brought rain at a time when nearly ripe cherries are vulnerable to splitting. As was the case for orchards throughout the county, however, luck was on the Streichs' side.

"With cherries, it's a worry until you get them in the box," Judy said earlier this month, after thunderstorms dropped heavy rain around the valley. "You do everything you can and just hope it's a great year. Fortunately this year we're still in great shape."

FRUIT FESTIVAL SET FOR AUG. 4

New this year, Streich's Orchards has partnered with Mount Hood Railroad to host "Fruit Festival."

The Aug. 4 event will include art and craft vendors, food and wine, music and orchard tours based from the nearby Mt. Hood View Park, which the family also owns and rents out for special events.

For more information about "Fruit Festival" and Streich's Orchards, check out their website: www.streichscherries.com.



From left:
Rachel, Nora,
Cindy, Fanny
& Kris
Not Pictured:
Diane

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TAMMY HALL – TAMMY'S FLORAL

Tammy Hall finds business fun, satisfying

By HALLIE CURTIS
Hood River News intern

After being in the floral business for more than 20 years with the same desire to help people with whatever the occasion, Tammy Hall now has two floral shops: One located on the Heights in Hood

River and the other in The Dalles.

"The original Heights Floral was created in 1932 and then bought by my parents in 1976. I took up the business 12 years ago which I expanded from The Dalles," Hall said.

Tammy's Floral sells

everything from plants, roses and flower baskets to special arrangements for events like funerals and weddings. The busiest days of the year are Mother's Day and Valentine's Day.

In her time in the business, Hall has often been faced with

changes.

"Summer weddings are the new thing; sometimes we have two to three weddings a weekend," she said. This is new for the business, which has had more indoor wed-

Please see TAMMY, Page 6

Tammy Hall in front of her 12th Street shop in Hood River.



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Tammy

Continued from Page 4

dings in past years. "Times are changing and so is the work; we have to keep up with new designs, ideas, bridal changes, and techniques," she explained.

Starting off in high school, Hall started working with her mother, Lindamay Woosley, which she enjoyed a lot. She had other jobs before her floral business but knew it was the career for her in the end.

"I once had a desire to train horses, but that was very short-lived," she laughed.

Hall decided to take

on the floral business out of the simple enjoyment of people.

"I've grown up here and love it! I have customers come in that I used to baby-sit and have babysat me," she said. She only wants to satisfy and help the customer with whatever their need.

"I hold no regrets. This type of business is fun, emotional; but very satisfying to help the people."

Hall, who has already accomplished a lot, has small wishes for the future.

"I don't see a lot of changes in the future; I have two shops, one here in Hood River and the other in The Dalles. Just more growth in my business."

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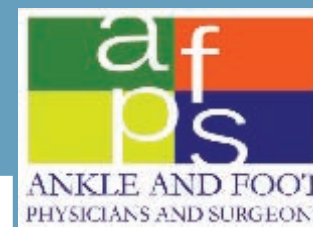
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RACHEL HARVEY – RACHELHARVEYART.COM

Art keeps Harvey busy

This is a busy summer for Mt. Hood artist Rachel Harvey, with showings at fairs and events both locally and out of state.

Harvey is noted for accepting title suggestions for her paintings. "Secret Stillness" and "River Walk" are two she recently adopted from viewers.

Harvey participated in the July 3-29 Art-A-Day exhibit at Columbia Art Gallery in which 30 of her paintings were on display.



"Side Trip," oil on panel, by Rachel Harvey

Harvey also presented July 14 and 15 at the Trout Lake Festival of the Arts, and July 7 and 8 at the Choochokam Arts Festival, Langley, Whidbey Island, Wash.

She went July 20-22 to: Salem Art Fair and Festival, and to the Bellevue Festival of the Arts, Bellevue, Wash.,

July 27-29.

Her studio is on KLM Drive in Mt. Hood and her website is rachelharveyart.com.

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Renee Holtmann has seen many changes during her banking career.

White Salmon Enterprise

RENEE HOLTMANN – COLUMBIA STATE BANK Service rep Renee Holtmann provides a steady presence

A lot of changes have occurred at Columbia Bank over the last three plus decades, but one thing has stayed steadfast — Customer Service Representative Renee Holtmann.

Renee started working for Klickitat Valley Bank on a work study program while she was a junior in high school.

“That was 35 years ago and I have been with the bank in White Salmon ever since.”

Renee has been through a lot of changes during that time, includ-

ing the merger of Klickitat Valley Bank with Columbia River Bank and then the recent acquisition by Columbia State Bank.

“When I started at KVB, it was in the newly constructed building on the site of the old dance hall The Leakee Teepee. We still get comments from people who remember the old dance hall.”

During her banking career, Renee has had many different jobs. She started out filing checks and preparing bank statements. From there

she went to being a teller, vault teller, loan clerk, new accounts, consumer loan officer and now customer service representative.

“It’s funny that many of the jobs I’ve done do not even exist in today’s banking world,” she said.

In her current job, Renee performs a number of tasks including opening new accounts, processing fraud and customer disputes, sending wire transfers, or-

Please see RENEE, Page 9



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Renee

Continued from Page 8

dering checks and debit cards, serving as a notary, taking consumer loan applications and various other tasks.

Throughout the years, Renee has taken many classes through her work including classes on loans, regulations, bank procedures, security and fraud and customer relations. She takes classes annually, with some being refresher courses and some being new.

"Most of the things I do is done on a computer, so a lot of my day is spent working on the keyboard helping customers," she said, adding that involves both phone and in-person contacts.

"Through the years, I have met and worked with many wonderful



White Salmon Enterprise

Hiking and other outdoor pleasures refresh Renee Holtmann in her time off.

people in the bank, from my co-workers and bosses to may many customers," she said.

Renee was born and raised in White Salmon, graduating from Columbia High School in 1978. Her parents (Lloyd

"Buzz" and Maxine Portner) are both deceased, as are two of her siblings (Dale and Terry). She still has one brother, Dennis, and a sister, Cindy Yarnell, living.

Please see RENEe, Page 10

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Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

BLUEBERRIES FOR ALL

Blueberry season has been a successful one for Karen Knoll of Knoll Farms in Hood River, shown here assisting her daughter, Harleigh, at Gorge Grown Farmers Market. "It's a beautiful crop this year," she said, "What the berries really like is that cool weather; they start growing and then with the sunshine they have time to get large and sweet and then as soon as the sun shines they just ripen. No sprays, just air," she said. "They love our climate, they love our soil, and they love our weather." The Knolls purchased the farm in 1999, meaning Harleigh has grown up with it. This year they are not doing u-pick, focusing instead on retail at markets. Gorge Grown markets are Thursdays in Hood River, Wednesdays in White Salmon, Tuesdays in Carson, and Saturdays in Stevenson and Trout Lake.



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Renee

Continued from Page 9

She and her husband, Larry, will be celebrating their 29th anniversary this September. They have been living in

Trout Lake their entire married life and love it there. They have two grown children: Shanna, who lives in Washougal and who will soon marry her fiancé, Bass; and Justin, who lives in White Salmon.

In her spare time, Renee likes hiking, read-

ing, fishing, riding her bicycle, snowmobiling and watching NASCAR races. She and Larry are avid racing fans and have been to seven live races. About two years ago, they bought a travel trailer and took up "RVing" and enjoy visiting many campgrounds.



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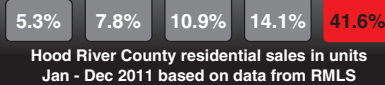


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CAROL THAYER – ENCHANTED ALPACA

From Oak Street, owner Carol Thayer enjoys an 'enchanted' life on all sides of the alpaca business

By BEN MCCARTY
News staff writer

Ask Carol Thayer what her favorite part of the alpaca business is and she has a hard time coming up with an answer.

Understandably so.

In the 17 years since she and husband Rick bought their first alpaca while living in Vancouver, Wash., Thayer has been involved in raising alpacas, selling alpaca fiber wares, and then most recently, designing alpaca fiber clothes.

Over the last 17 years they have seen alpacas take off in the U.S., particularly in Portland and surrounding areas.

"We are one of the original dinosaurs," she laughs.

For the past seven years they have been raising alpacas in a farm near Glenwood. At a small store on the farm they would sell alpaca clothing, much of it created from Peruvian alpaca wool.

When they opened The En-

chanted Alpaca a couple of years ago in downtown Hood River Thayer says new gateways have opened for them.

"Alpaca sells itself ... once people feel how warm it is they seek it out," she said.

Thayer said the store has given them a chance to engage more of the public in educating them about alpacas.

During some of the monthly First Friday festivals, Rick will bring a baby alpaca down from the farm to show people where the alpaca wool comes from.

"I love visiting with people who come from all over the world to Hood River," Thayer said. "I grow from it."

Since it opened the store has offered numerous alpaca products, including luxurious coats from Peru.

The alpaca industry in the U.S. has not grown to the point where large amounts of clothing can be produced from U.S. wool, but Thayer

said she does support U.S. mills when she can.

Pendleton Mills, for instance, produces a blanket run made out of all U.S. alpaca wool.

The run sold out in 24 hours.

Last year, Thayer began designing a few clothes.

"It's not that I think I'm a designer ... these are simple things which meet a need in the store," she said.

She worked with Bolder

Please see CAROL, Page 14

Salon Don'Ya

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After she and her husband purchased their first alpaca 17 years ago, Carol Thayer has found many roles to play in the Alpaca biz, from raiser, to merchant to clothing designer. Offspring from her alpacas at Blonde Velvet & Me Alpaca farm in Glenwood have even helped start other alpaca farms.

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Carol

Continued from Page 12

Path designs in The Dalles on the clothes, which she now carries in her store.

Her most recent creation is a line of Alpaca wool active wear, which is created out of 70 percent alpaca wool and 30 percent bamboo fiber.

The design portion was just the latest twist on life which has seen careers ranging from the legal and medical professions to an alpaca store in downtown Hood River.

"I think if you do anything for more than 10 years you can get burned out," she said.

The alpaca part was a natural extension for Thayer.

"I grew up around cows, so the country was kind of in me" Thayer said. "Cows are kind of big and you have to kill them...(Alpacas) you don't have to kill and their little and they

don't hurt when they step on you. They just seemed like a good fit."

When their kids were growing up, the Thayers had goats and other small livestock around, but nothing on the scale of alpacas.

When they bought their first alpaca 17 years ago they had to go on a waiting list.

"Today, alpacas are more affordable than ever," Thayer said.

She doesn't see the demand for Alpaca fleece slowing down anytime in the near future either.

"Many people recognize it as superior to wool," she said, noting that once she has a customer come in and buy an Alpaca brought, they typically turn into repeat customers.

Now the challenge becomes increasing supply to meet demand.

"We can keep improving the breed to be great fleece barers," she said.

With the growth of numerous alpaca operations on both sides

of the Columbia, Thayer has been glad to see the cooperation of all the local alpaca raisers.

She said that when one does not offer a product that is offered by another (Thayer does not offer yarn, for instance) they refer customers to one another.

"There is so much room to grow," she said. "I don't see any of it as competition."

In addition to working with other local alpaca operations, Thayer carries products designed by local artists, including hats made by 91-year-old Margaret Boytz, and locally made coats and scarves.

With a focus on local outreach and production, Thayer is excited to see the growth in alpacas for years to come — and to find out where it might take her next.

"I do very much support my friends and fellow alpaca breeders in their endeavors," she said. "We are all really pulling together to get alpaca out into the public hands, so people wear it ... because once you do — you cannot go back!"



Carol Thayer shows off some of the many alpaca fleece clothes she carries at Enchanted Alpaca on Oak Street in Hood River.

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Photo by Julie Raefield-Gobbo
Cecily Diffen, Ruddy Duck

CECILY DIFFEN – RUDDY DUCK

Community and business naturally go together

By JULIE RAEFIELD-GOBBO
Hood River News

It is no accident that the Ruddy Duck clothing store and Mike's Ice Cream are a pair of successful, well-patronized businesses. Both family-owned and operated establishments are rooted in a deep philosophy of wise, long-term investment.

That investment, according to co-owner Cecily Diffen, is about people and community.

"We are very proud of the number of jobs we have created in this community," said Diffen. "Our goal is to create a business where employees feel it is pleasure to come to work. That is good for our customers and for our town as well as our employees."

Becoming a partner with her mother, Tassie Mack, and brother Josh Kitts in 2007, Diffen works in staff management and operations, in addition to her fashion-buying responsibilities.

"My mom and I are a good complement of skills," Diffen said. "The store is a great

platform to feature what we collect on our travels. Also, we are modeled on a traditional department store, with clothing and accessories for every age and affordability level."

Coming from a family of entrepreneurs, Diffen did not pursue college for a business or marketing degree, but instead relies on a deep sense of investment and belief in her community, her customers and her employees to keep her business successful.

"We are selling the human experience," said Diffen succinctly, who, like her mother, observes that people are "investing so much in their own loneliness" when they buy and attend to video screens over people.

"People come and wait in line up to an hour sometimes at Mike's because it is a chance to have a community experience," Diffen said. "In a way, this corner represents human interaction."

Not planning an online sales presence is a second

part of the commitment Diffen is making to building those business-smart, human relationships.

Another example of choosing relationship-based investment may be found in the family's decision to start a high school scholarship fund. Each year, two students receive awards based on suc-

cessful commitments to learning English (after starting as a Spanish speaker) and Spanish (after starting as an English speaker).


"We need to be able to speak to each other. How else can we find happiness and peace as a country without knowing how to communi-

Please see CECILY, Page 16

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Cecily

Continued from Page 15

cate?" asks Diffen.

While the concepts are lofty ones, the results are concrete and long-lasting.

"Our local customers keep us hopping all winter," said Diffen, who also includes the seasonal tourist in mind in her product selections. "And really, downtown is a place for everybody."

Developing employees from within and encouraging bilingual skills is another way of ensuring successful customer loyalty and community-strengthening results.

Diffen is about to add to the community on a very personal level. She and her husband, Jason, will welcome a new baby in early August, to join brother Tucker, 8, and sister Zarra, 5.

In keeping with the warmer weather and that same welcoming spirit, Ruddy Duck will be staying open later than usual Wednesdays through Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Diffen hopes the community joins in the experience.

Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

THE COURTYARD in front of The Ruddy Duck and Mike's Ice Cream feels like town square at times. The family-run operations have proven to be popular downtown draws. As a historical note, the Ruddy Duck building had a similar role in the 1990s and early 2000s, when it was Windwear clothing. Before that, the building had another, different function: for years it was home to Tum-A-Lum Lumber.



What is the MWESB?

Minority, Women, and Emerging Small Business (MWESB) is a program of the state office of Economic and Business Equity.

The office is established as part of the Office of the Governor. The position of the Director is created in statute and is a cabinet-level position within the Office of the Governor. The director is appointed by the governor and serves as a policy advisor to the governor on issues related to minority, women and emerging small business. The director's most important job is to create access to contracting opportunities for certified firms. — To learn more, go to www.oregon.gov.gov/MWESB



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TERRI VEATCH – APPLE CITY AUTO

Apple City Auto Terri Veatch thrives, and surprises, in a 'man's world'

By NINA BARONE
Hood River News intern

As you first get out of your car at Apple City Auto Body, the first things you notice are the grinding noises of machinery, the men calling loudly to each other from one side of the garage to the other, and the cars waiting in the parking lot to be fixed.

On the left side of the garage, though, there's a door leading into a small room marked "Office," and as you walk in, you're greeted by the woman at the front desk, Terri Veatch. To each customer who walks through the door, she makes a point of recalling their name in a warm greeting, and asking them how their day has been.

Veatch works as an estimator at Apple City, taking pictures and documenting the damage done to a car, finding the right parts, and then letting the customer know how much the repair should cost. She started out doing insurance claims for people who got hurt at their job.

However, about seven years ago, after she moved back to Hood River and worked for Farmers Insurance for a while, she finally took the job at Apple City.

"I studied political science in college, so it has nothing to do with the work I do now," Veatch said. "I got my training (to work at Apple City) by working with insurance claims, and learned how it all worked."

At an auto body shop, seeing a woman in the mix is often unexpected. "Less than 20 per cent of 'estimators' and people in the auto claim industry as well, are women," Veatch explained. "You're definitely a minority here."

Veatch bantered back and forth with her male coworkers effortlessly, and while watching her work efficiently, answering calls, dealing with orders and welcoming in customers, you would find it hard to understand why more women don't do the same job.

"It's overwhelmingly male-dominated, but in terms of being around my coworkers, it's fine," she said. "It's when customers come in that you can really see the difference. They aren't used to seeing a woman here."

One customer, an elderly woman, came through the door, and Veatch greeted her

and quickly pulled up her appointment on the computer. Although the woman expected to sit in the office and wait while her bumper was fixed, Veatch offered to have her driven to Good News Gardening Café down the road so she could read her book more comfortably while they did the repair.

Call after call, and customer after customer, Veatch accommodates every customer with her next-door-neighbor feel and friendly smile.

The customer service Veatch instills at Apple City isn't the only thing she brought from her first job out of college doing insurance claims. By working in



Photo by Nina Barone

"The auto body shop can be a place for a woman," says Terri Veatch.

Please see TERRI, Page 20

Shirley Cox





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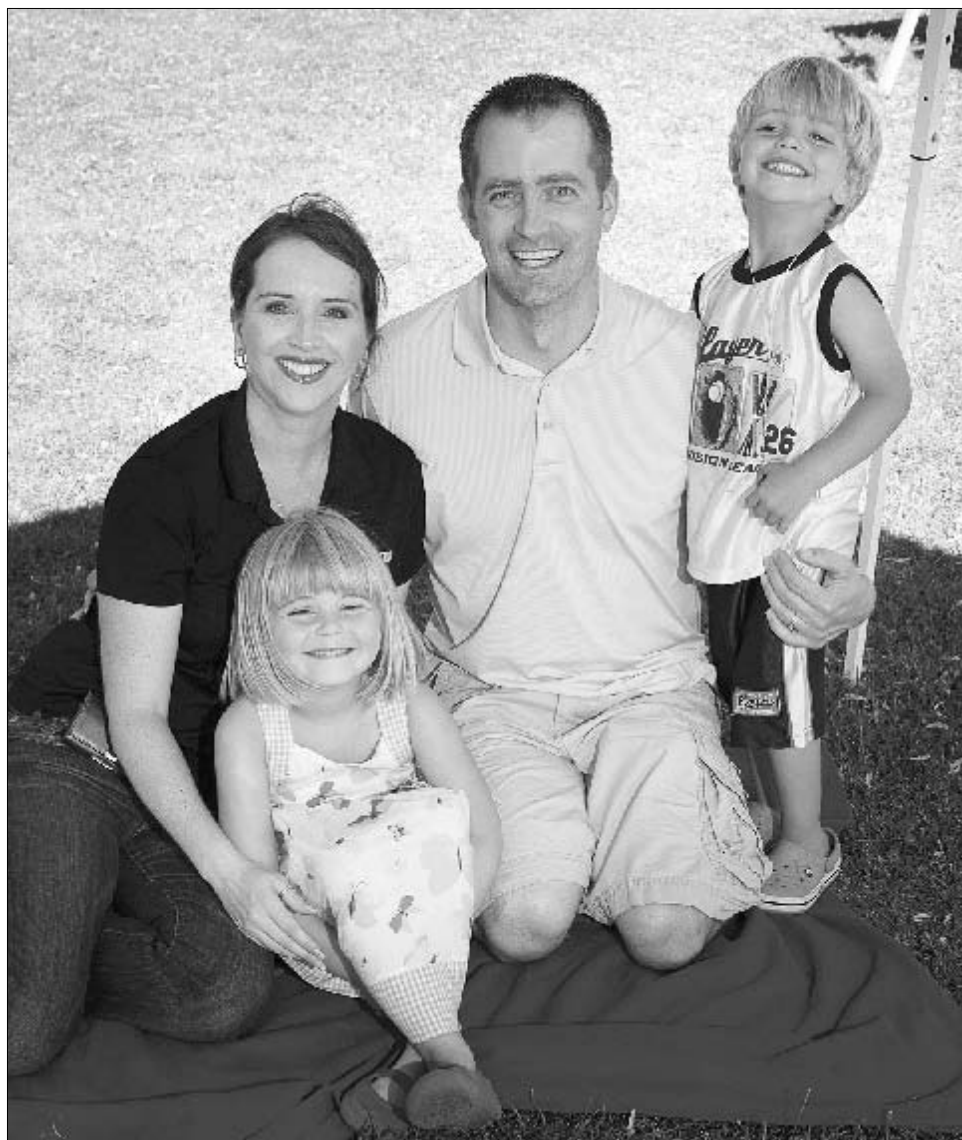


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Cori Collins, Director



Submitted photo

Dana Robinson-Miller (CHS, Class of 1991) and her husband, Zack, live in Trout Lake with their children, Emma, 4, and Noah, 3.

DANA ROBINSON-MILLER – INSITU

Dana Robinson-Miller loves to mentor in her life-long backyard

Mentoring youth, specifically encouraging young women to pursue their dreams, is one of the most enjoyable aspects of Dana Robinson-Miller's job at Insitu.

As a human resources business partner for the Bingen-based company, Dana's job includes recruiting, handling employee relations, chairing corporate events and managing Insitu's intern program (with approximately 55 students per year).

"As part of the intern program, I travel to universities around the U.S. to recruit students into the program, as well as speak to students and minority clubs regarding a career at Insitu," Dana said.

She also visits local high schools and universities, providing education on Unmanned Air Vehicles (UAVs).

"I also mentor the students in the HR department to help them gain more experience and hopefully to fol-

low a career in human resources," she said.

Human resources is a department Dana is well acquainted with, having worked in all areas of the field, including serving as a HR manager, for the past 11 years.

After graduating from Columbia High School in the Class of 1991, Dana attended Washington State University where she earned her degree in international business. From Pullman, she moved to the Portland/Vancouver area where she worked for Nike and PacifiCorp before taking on the job at Insitu.

Dana was hired by Insitu in January 2008 and her husband, Zack, was hired by the company in July 2008 as the supplier manager. The couple moved then back to the Gorge and are currently building a home for their family, including children Emma, 4, and Noah, 3, in Trout Lake.

Being close to family is im-

portant to Dana, who moved with her family to White Salmon, where they have been active for the past 38 years, when she was 9 months old.

In her spare time, Dana's personal hobbies are horseback riding and playing outdoors. She also enjoys reading novels, taking pictures and laughing with friends and extended family.



Submitted photo

Dana Robinson-Miller

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L to R, front row: Nikol Clark, LAc, Carola Stepper, LAc, Rebecca Herrin, LAc



NEW BAKERY

Megan Davis got into other Heights mix in June with the long-awaited Pine Street Bakery, at 1103 12th St. "It's been a really nice reception," said Davis, who is a partner in an LLC that owns the new building at Pine and 12th Street. She grew up in the bakery business; her mother founded The Bakery on Pioneer Square in Seattle 40 years ago, and the Davis family owns the Grand Central bakeries in Portland and Seattle. Pine Street is an independent business. Pine Street specializes in rustic pan breads, buns and muffins, along with sweet muffins, fruit pies, non-fussy cakes. "I'm a big fan of savory pastries," Davis said. One specialty is strata, a kind of savory bread pudding with custard and layers of seasonable vegetables. Hours are 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily with seating inside and out.

Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

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of topics in many languages to help them start and grow their own businesses.

For details, go to www.sba.gov.

Terri

Continued from Page 17

insurance claims for every type of car part damaged in a wreck or a fender-bender, Veatch already knew specific details about parts to inform her as an estimator at Apple City.

After switching from doing insurance claims for on-the-job injuries to claims for car insurance, she gained background knowledge most estimators wouldn't know until actually filling that position.

have chosen to provide an evening of healthy, active family fun, locally grown food and family-friendly musical entertainment. This will become Hood River's premier drug-, alcohol- and tobacco-free event.

Helping organize is Lynne Frost, HAHRC and Happy Wheels Foundation at lynnefrost@hotmail.com.

Block Party events start in Hood River in August

This August a collaboration of companies has decided to come together and turn three big events into a monster event, known as Families in the Park Block Party.

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MICHELE JASPERSON – FARMERS INSURANCE

Family and community count most for Michele Jasperson

Hanging out with mom at her office are Jasperson's children, Brady and Carlee. Jasperson, a Lyle High School alumna, and her husband, Bryan Trullinger, chose to return to her roots and the slower pace of life. A drive through her hometown en route to a hoops tournament in Spokane helped spur the decision.

Submitted photo



Family. It's all about family.

That's what caused Michele Jasperson to exit the hectic corporate world and return to her roots and her family in Klickitat County, where she is now the owner of Michele L. Jasperson Insurance Services, an agent of Farmers Insurance and Farmers Financial Solutions.

Michele was born and raised in Lyle, where she attended high school and was a standout athlete, particularly in basketball. Following graduation from Lyle

High School, Michele attended Portland State University and graduated from Central Washington University's campus in Seattle with a degree in marketing management.

She began her career in corporate marketing with Airborne Express, a logistics provider in Seattle. She worked for them for three years before moving on to The Sports Authority, also in Seattle.

With Sports Authority, she was part of the team responsible for getting the first store in the Northwest estab-

lished. Airborne then recruited her back to start the small sales regional division. Once the division was started, she was promoted by Airborne to be the sales and operation executive for the Dell Computer account in Austin, Texas.

It was during her three years in Austin that Michele and her husband of 21 years, Bryan Trullinger, had their two children, Brady and Carlee.

"We both had very demanding jobs, full-time

Please see MICHELE, Page 22

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Rachel Marteen, Office
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Michele

Continued from Page 21

jobs which required us to have a nanny for the kids," Michele said, noting she and Bryan both worked long hours and were often gone from home.

The couple's jobs were so time consuming that they finally concluded it was not a satisfactory life for their kids. "We preferred to give the kids a lower-stress life," she said.

According to Michele, the Trullinger family had flown home to play in the Hoops Fest Basketball Tournament in Spokane. Following the tournament, they were

driving home to see her family in Lyle when "we just decided to change everything. It was a decision made in four and a half hours."

And although it took the Trullinger/Jasperson family a year to put everything together, to close everything in Austin, they managed to find their way back to Klickitat County. During that year, Michele stayed on as a consultant for Airborne, while Bryan simply moved his base of operation — at the time he was the director of online operations for AT&T Wireless. He currently is the chief operating officer at Sling-shot Sports in Hood River.

"The move was a huge change of pace for me," said Michele, adding after being on the run for all those years couldn't find enough to do to keep her busy. When she moved back home, she really didn't have any job aspirations. But as time wore on, she knew she had to do something.

One day while chatting with her Farmers Insurance agent Ron Logan (who had been Michele's agent since she was a kid, except when she was in Texas, where she was still a Farmers client), "he offered to sell me his business when he retired in a couple years. I remember thinking it was absurd, but Bryan

thought it was the perfect job for me. He told me, 'You're a crisis manager.'"

Michele agreed to buy Ron's business upon his retirement and immediately got her education and licenses completed to sell insurance and securities. That included studies in property insurance, casualty and life insurance and variables (as related to securities, such as mutual funds and investments).

While it may take some people longer to finish, the process was relatively easy for Michele, due to her background.

In addition to her studies, Michele also worked with Farmers' headquarters, as they would be the ones con-

tracting the business to her.

Her only real concern at the time was in order to make her operation the most efficient it could be that she really needed to operate both the White Salmon and Goldendale Farmers agencies.

"They (Farmers) knew I wanted the Goldendale office, so when the agent there decided to retire unexpectedly, they contacted me and asked if I wanted to take over the Goldendale office immediately," she said.

Michele took over the Goldendale Farmers office in December 2003 and the White Salmon office in June 2006.

As an agent of Farmers Insurance and

Farmers Financial Solutions, Michele provides insurance coverage and investment solutions to assist in the protection and financial growth of her clients. And although her offices are located in White Salmon and Goldendale, Michele provides coverage to clients all over Washington and Oregon. She has clients in the Gorge, Spokane, Seattle, Bend and Portland.

"I really care about people in the community. That's why I came back," she said. "Now, I want to be the most reliable insurance provider in the community."

And, even though she

Please see MICHELE, Page 23

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Michele

Continued from Page 22

wants to be the best, Michele doesn't want to put work before family and only works four days a week.

"I have a great staff which enables me to pick up the kids or do what I want without

Submitted photo

"I really care about people in the community. That's why I came back," said Michele Jaspersen, sailing on the Columbia with her children.

worrying," she said. "I think it's cool that I can come back here and provide employment for myself and three other people." She has a staff of two full-time employees and one part-time employee.

Doing what she wants in her spare time includes coaching community youth boys and girls basketball and running the Hoops Academy. Michele and partner Nancy Rinella created the Hoops Academy to promote winning basketball

teams. The academy operates November through March each year. "Youth and kids sports are important to me," she said.

When she's not working with kids and basketball programs, Michele enjoys playing basketball herself, wakeboarding, mountain biking or doing anything else that's intense and fun.

"I really care a lot about my family and my community. And, that comes into play about how I do my job. People matter to me."

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RHONDA MARLNEE – GORGE RIVER 'When they leave, they leave the mess with me'



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Rhonda Marlnee works with Louie, 7, an adopted pooch. She gives a 15 percent discount for services to documented adopted dogs.

The concept behind Gorge River, a Self-Service Dog Wash, is simple: Just bring in your dog, and owner Rhonda Marlnee provides the rest.

The tubs are waist-high to eliminate back and knee pain, with steps for the dogs to walk up (although, Marlnee pointed out, some dogs just prefer to jump in). She provides aprons for the humans and towels for the dogs, as well as shampoo, conditioner, combs and a selection of colognes. She stocks specialty shampoos and conditioners to treat itchy skin or to deodorize skunk spray. She even has a special room with professional dog-grooming dryers. And, of course, there are treats for afterwards.

"A lot of people refer to my dog wash as a doggy spa," said Marlnee.

The idea for the dog wash came when she moved to Hood River two years ago after 30 years in Portland, working in finance. With her came her 93-pound Bernese

Please see RHONDA, Page 26



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Photos by Kirby Neumann-Rea

10TH ANNIVERSARY

July 6, 2012, marked the 10th anniversary of the dedication of the Brick Stratton Garden, on the bluff overlooking Second and State streets in Hood River. Bob Twilley, left, Paula Runyan and Paul Lestock practiced music one early July day. Marion McNew of Mount Hood Gardens designed the park, which has won awards from the Association of Professional Garden Landscapers and Professional Plant Association.

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Rhonda

Continued from Page 24

mountain dog, Anastasia. They had been in town a month before Marlene realized there wasn't a place in town to wash her dog.

"We had become accustomed to going to our local self-service dog wash for a good cleaning," said Marlene. And the small, stand-up shower in their new home wasn't quite up to the task.

Anastasia has since passed away, but Marlene never lost the idea of opening a dog wash.

"My passion was always my dog," she said. Her graduate degree is in management with a financial focus, which enabled her to build a viable business plan.

And business is booming. "It's going very well. I'm very excited. My customers tell me, 'I'm so glad you're here, thank you so much.'"

"I want people to know that washing the dog can be fun and that it's very convenient," said Marlene. "When they leave, they leave the mess with me."



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Louie, a retriever mix, gets clean with a special shampoo for dark-coated dogs. Above right, canine-oriented books (for the humans).



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LORI FORTUNE – BIG GENE'S EQUIPMENT & REPAIR



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

There's a lady in charge of fixing small engines

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
Hood River News

ODELL — What's new is familiar in the old Neal Creek neighborhood.

One of those things that comes back around is Lori Arthur Fortune fixing things.

Fortune gets her hands dirty every day, and loves it, doing what used to be called "man's work," at the shop she owns in the building next to the service station her parents, Nate and

Berniece, owned dating to the 1960s.

The shop is Big Gene's Equipment & Repair, located the same building that was MK Motors business until she and her husband, Gene, bought it nearly five years ago. Lori worked in credit recovery for Walmart for 10 years, and when Mike Kroeger asked Nate if he wanted to buy the shop, Nate suggested selling it to Lori and Gene.

Please see LORI, Page 31

Neal Creek Road is familiar ground for Lori Fortune.

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DEBRA REED-SHARP – CASCADE LOCKS POST OFFICE

Debra Reed-Sharp modestly accepts state honor



Photo by Ben McCarty

Debra Reed-Sharp has served as Oregon's president of the National League of Postmasters for the past five years.

By **TRISHA WALKER**
Hood River News

Debra Reed-Sharp, postmaster of Cascade Locks, recently won the Postmaster of the Year Award from the National League of Postmasters for the state of Oregon. Reed-Sharp celebrated her 26th year with the U.S. Postal Service May 25.

"The post office has been good to me and my family," said Reed-Sharp, who has also worked in Iowa and Arizona. "It's an honor to work for the Postal Service."

She has been the postmaster of the Cascade Locks post office for the past seven years.

"I took a downgrade to come back to Oregon from Iowa," she said. "I was a postmaster there, too, but at a higher level."

She came to Oregon because of her mother's health, and had her choice of Pilot Rock and Cascade Locks.

Reed-Sharp has served as Oregon's president of the National League of Postmasters for the past five years, and said it's her work for the League that won her the award nomination. She travels all over the district, helping offices get back on track financially or filling in where someone else cannot.

She holds district training meetings for the League on her own time, traveling as far as Medford or as close as Portland. She plans to hold more meetings soon because of the many changes the Postal Service has undergone recently.

She's also worked at the district retail office, been chairman of the Stamp Destruction Office, and has worked from Baker City to Astoria.

"I was in Astoria for eight months as acting supervisor," said Reed-Sharp. "I kind of go where they want me to go."

The awards banquet was held during a Postmasters Convention in Kennewick, Wash., where members from Oregon, Washington and Idaho gathered.

"They surprised me and had my family there," she said.

As for the award, Reed-Sharp was hoping no one would find out.

"There are a lot of people who do the same thing," she said. "I just do my job."



Back Row L to R: Laura Pederson PTA, Laurie VanCott MPT, Janet Uvalle Receptionist, Denise Love Aide, Laurel Roof MPT, Heather Mason LMT, Sandy Licea Billing
Front Row L to R: Senay Burton Office Manager, Cindy Stephens PT & Owner



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GALLERY AT 301

Gallery at 301 opened in early July in downtown Hood River as a place for local art, food, beer and wine. Claudia Lane and her husband, Steffen Lunding, who do business as Red Tail Holdings, are the owners of the 1927 Butler Bank Building, which until December 2011 served as the Hood River City Administration building. It has been fully remodeled as gallery and café, and is open each evening, with hours subject to change later in the summer. The menu specializes in tapas and other Spanish fare.

Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea



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LIZ WHITMORE – PORT OF HOOD RIVER

Liz Whitmore covers the waterfront

Two new employees have joined the Port of Hood River staff this summer. Elizabeth Whitmore has become the port's new waterfront coordinator and Stephen Burdick has accepted the position of development manager.

"To find the right people for these positions has been a two-month process, and I'm thrilled with the caliber of these new additions to Port of Hood River staff," conveyed Port Executive Director Michael McElwee. "The port is currently in a very important period



Liz Whitmore

of development activity, and I welcome Steve and Liz as members of the team that will manage some of the port's key assets and also help us look to the future."

Whitmore has worked at New Buildings Institute of Vancouver, Wash., since 2008 as manager of a new construction energy efficiency program for utility sponsors. With a bachelor's degree in architecture from University of California-Berkeley, her prior work experience was in design and construction management, most notably

managing the construction of over 50 Gap and Banana Republic stores for Gap Inc. for more than 10 years.

As a part-time waterfront coordinator for the port, Whitmore will be responsible for a wide variety of projects and tasks related to the port's recreation facilities and some industrial properties, including the management and implementation of waterfront-area programs, policies and planning efforts.

Although the job of waterfront coordinator is a departure from her recent work experience, Whitmore says she was very interested in working with the Port of Hood River.

"The waterfront is a

dynamic environment with so much going on. It's important to keep it fun and safe for everybody," Whitmore said. "I look forward to working with its many users and supporting

recreation. I also hope my architectural background can help guide quality and thoughtful development opportunities along the waterfront in the future."

Whitmore has been a

member of the Hood River County School Board since 2006, and board chair since 2010. She is married to Dave Whitmore, with two children, ages 10 and 12.

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Lori

Continued from Page 27

"I'd been with Walmart for 10 years and I was ready for a new challenge," she said.

"We bought it, and when it came to naming it ... it was hard to choose ... I wanted to be atop, either A or a B, and my Gene is huge, 6-4, close to 300, so we thought, 'Let's call it Big Gene's.'"

Lori's work is repairing and maintaining weed-eaters, pruners and blowers, and doing the ordering and keeping the books. She'll fix a lot of things, and is learning to do more, but just don't ask her to fix a chain saw. She leaves those to Gene or her trusted right-handman, Bill Maddox. Gene spends a few hours in the shop, but he is also employed in construction, so most of the work is by Bill and Lori.

"I'm not afraid to get my hands dirty," Fortune said. "Some guys used to bring something in and see Bill wasn't there and they'd say they'd come back, and I'd say, 'No, I can do it right now.'"

"I think a lot of people are a little shocked a woman can do this kind of stuff," she said. "They often think they need to wait for Bill to make a chain."

She recalled men coming to look for Bill and "at first I kind of felt like they might

not trust I'd get it together right, but then I thought, 'I own this place; I'm gonna do it.' I'd tell them to come back after lunch, and then tell them Bill did it when they came to pick it up.

"I don't know that anymore. Some want

"We bought it, and when it came to naming it ... it was hard to choose ... I wanted to be atop, either A or a B, and my Gene is huge, 6-4, close to 300, so we thought, 'Let's call it Big Gene's.'"

me to sharpen their chain 'cause they think I might be more meticulous at it," she said, but noted that Bill "can get anything back together."

"He's now teaching me four-wheelers, so I can take care of it when he's on vacation.

My mind is like a sponge, and I want to know not just how to fix it but why it broke. And Bill's the guy to tell me.

"I do repairs; anything except chain saws. I sell them but to run them, I don't want to. Bill's the chain saw guy."

Big Gene's does generators, weed-eaters, pressure washers, pull pruners, "anything with a small engine," Fortune said, adding that the shop started doing four-wheelers this spring. In the front is "a grader with carburetor issues," and a boat motor or two.

"We never say no, and we pick up and deliver; \$10 in the area, like up to Parkdale. I charge maybe \$20 across the river where we have a lot of customers." Repeat customers she does not charge.

That connection with people she knows is important. Fortune was "born and raised right here in Neal Creek.

"I used to come over here and steal pop. Well, we'd hang out until Mike Kroeger would go 'You guys want a pop?' He

had that old kind of Coca-Cola cooler and we'd take off running — and come back the next day.

"I was raised over there in my dad's shop doing engine repair. I guess it's in my blood."

Nowadays, "it's kind of neat that people bring things in here broken and then we'll fix them and they're happy. We can make people happy.

"I also like it I'm my own boss; I can come and go when I want, take the day off and do something, and I try to let Bill do the same thing, if he wants to go fishing. I like that I get to see my mom and dad every day, right over

here," she says, pointing next door.


Her two daughters, Becky and Michelle, both work a mile down the road at Cardinal Glass. Lori and Gene have four grandkids; Big Gene's customers know that "Thursday is Grandma Day," Fortune said.

"I take Thursdays off,

leave Bill in charge, and babysit my grandkids. It's good just to get away from the grease and smell babies instead of bar oil."

Fortune, who drives school bus mornings from September to June, also used to own

Please see LORI, Page 38



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DR. ELLEN WENZEL — SKYLINE HOSPITAL

Dr. Ellen Wenzel follows feet to White Salmon

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The good news is you don't have to hoof it to Vancouver anymore to figure out your foot issues. Last month, Dr. Ellen Wenzel (and her hus-

band, Dr. Zarko Kajgana) of Ankle and Foot Physicians and Surgeons in Vancouver,

“So many patients were making the long trek to Vancouver, we decided to move ourselves closer to them.”

opened a podiatric clinic at Skyline in White Salmon.

“We noticed a number of our patients were from White Salmon, Stevenson and Carson. So many patients were making the long trek to Vancouver, we decided to move ourselves closer to them.” Wenzel and Kajgana take turns, alternating weeks in White Salmon every Thursday.

Wenzel grew up in Phoenix, Ariz. She was often in the doctor's office, usually for some foot-related issue.

Please see ELLEN, Page 33



Submitted photo

Dr. Ellen Wenzel examines a patient. Wenzel specializes in pediatric foot conditions, trauma (ankle and foot fractures and injuries) and sports medicine issues.

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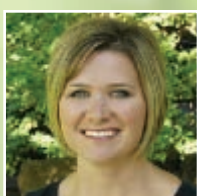


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Ellen

Continued from Page 32

She had such a positive experience with her podiatrist that she wanted to be a doctor, but got cold feet (metaphorically speaking) about going to medical school and residency. Instead she worked in a lab. But friends kept encouraging her in the direction of medicine, and eventually, she came back to realizing that podiatry was her destiny.

Podiatry seemed to allow her the independence and flexibility she wanted for her lifestyle. It combined clinic work, surgery, and the opportunities to work for herself the way she wanted.

Wenzel specializes in pediatric foot conditions, trauma (ankle and foot fractures and injuries) and sports medicine issues. In addition, she addresses deformities of the toes, feet and ankles, ingrown, fungal or deformed toenails, skin conditions of the foot and ankle, and diabetic foot exams. Wenzel treats patients the way she'd treat her family — with care and respect. At Skyline she will be

working closely with both the surgery team and the physical therapists.

Wenzel attended Arizona State University, obtaining a bachelor's degree in clinical laboratory sciences. After working in the laboratory of Scottsdale Healthcare as a generalist, she matriculated at the School College of Podiatric Medicine at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science and earned her D.P.M.

In 2007, she completed a two-year medical and surgical residency at Forum Health/WRCS in Youngstown, Ohio; as a third-year resident, Wenzel served as chief resident.

On July 1, 2010, Wenzel and her husband moved to Vancouver, Wash. (to be closer to family), and started the Ankle and Foot Clinic in Vancouver on a shoestring budget. In two years, her business's success has allowed her to expand into a second market, the Columbia River Gorge. Gorge residents can visit the podiatrist at Skyline on Thursdays. Just call the office and ask to be seen in White Salmon.

For more information about Dr. Wenzel and her podiatry practice call 306-977-7815 or visit www.ankleandfootphysicians.com.



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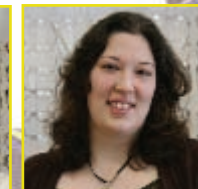
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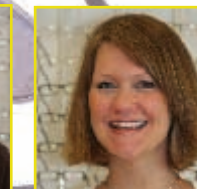
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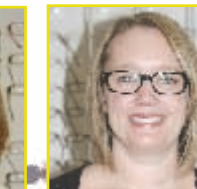
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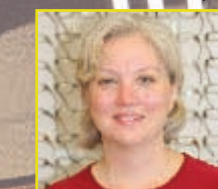
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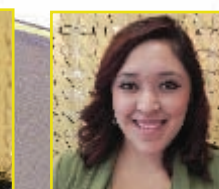
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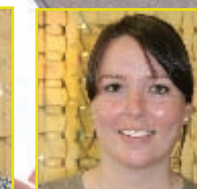
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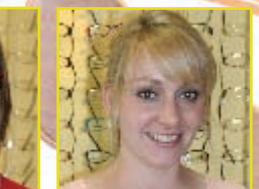
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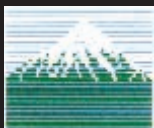
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Support group organizes next month for breastfeeding moms

Beginning on Wednesday, Aug. 8, the Columbia Gorge Breastfeeding Coalition will begin a newly formed mother-to-mother support group that offers guidance during

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The group is conducted by a trained facilitator who listens and guides the discussion.

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fourth Wednesdays, noon to 1 p.m., at Riverside Church, Fourth and State streets, Hood River.

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LUZ AND ESTELA BAÑUELOS – TAQUERIA LOS AMIGOS

Bañuelos sisters of Odell thrive on communication and family

'All the time growing up we were working together, sisters and brothers and/or parents, working together. We have had that picture of working as a family.

It's nice.'

— **Estela Bañuelos**

By **KIRBY NEUMANN-REA**
Hood River News

ODELL — Sisters, with plenty of family help, have created a successful storefront and roadside restaurant business serving the middle valley but attracting customers from all over.

"We started with the truck and it was a good hit, so we decided to open the restaurant," said Luz Bañuelos, who with her sister Estela owns Taqueria Los Amigos, based in Odell but on the road during summers in the "truck" — the lunchera — well-known at five orchards

from Pine Grove to Parkdale.

People travel from The Dalles and Portland to Los Amigos, and there is a large and loyal customer base in the vicinity.

"We have a lot of friends we've made," Luz said. "First they're our customers and now they're our friends, and still with us since day one."

Restaurant hours are 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day but Wednesday (9-3) and Sunday.

Estela said she enjoys the business because, "you can do whatever you want to do; you don't have a boss. Thank God we agree on everything."

"The best thing is working with family," Estela said.

"We don't have a boss, and both of us can make decisions together."

Asked how they cooperate so well, together, the sisters said it is the family tradition.

"It's a good thing because we're family and we're able to communicate," Estela said.

"It's a real nice relationship" Estela said. "Our parents (the late Consuelo Escalera and Pablo Bañuelos) did a good job."

Please see *AMIGOS*, Page 36



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Family makes Los Amigos tick. With Estela, left, and Luz Bañuelos, far right, are their children, Claudio Gutierrez, 6, Jose Camarillo, 12, Juan Camarillo, 14, and Vanessa Bañuelos, 20.

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Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Loco burrito: The local favorite, lovingly prepared at Taqueria Los Amigos by Estela and Luz.

Amigos

Continued from Page 35

"All the time growing up we were working together, sisters and brothers and/or parents, working together," she said. "We have that picture of working as family. It's nice."

Vanessa and other family members help out regularly in the restaurant as well as in the lunchera.

At the downtown Odell restaurant, often "all the tables are full and sometimes we try to pull out more chairs from the back for more customers," said Es-

tela's daughter, Vanessa, 21, who grew up with the business and now studies business at Western Oregon University.

She said, "There are customers that have known me since I was 12 and now they see me all grown up and they can't believe it because time goes so fast."

"I love the customers. A lot of my tips are fruit, and I love fruit."

Los Amigos serves tacos, tamales, burritos, shrimp dishes, burgers and fries and, on Sundays, menudo and handmade tortillas.

"The restaurant's biggest day is Sunday because we sell menudo, made of honeycomb tripe," said Luz.



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One of the most popular items is the hefty burrito loco.

"There is more variety in the restaurant, but faster service in the lunchera," Vanessa said. "The lunchera is also nice because you can quickly serve your customers if they're in a rush."

"Here in the restaurant you have more communication with the customers," she said.

Lunchera service takes at least three people: one taking

orders, a second on the grill and someone else filling the orders.

"It's pretty fun. We like it," Luz said. "Once I needed some help and I invited a friend to help for the day, and she said, 'I liked it; I want to do it again,' and she often does."

"Fast-paced is what makes it fun," said Vanessa.

The Banuelos family also does catering, locally and

Please see AMIGOS, Page 37

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Amigos

Continued from Page 36

does catering, locally and farther afield. Recently, they catered an anniversary party at a Portland business — another Mexican restaurant.

Clients include Mexican nationals, who swear by the food's authenticity, said Estela, as well as snowboarders and windsurfers.

The secret to cooking is timing, according to Luz.

"We grew up making tortillas," she said. "Since we were children we know how to cook them right. You don't want them too burned on one side or not enough on the other.

"We don't go by recipes. We go by, 'My Mom used to do this, or that.' And it tastes good."

Adds Vanessa, "No measurements; you go by the touch."

A Lunchera Confidential

Estela Bañuelos and two helpers make the rounds to five orchards in summer in the upper valley, serving lunches to workers in a well-received tortilla circuit.

"It's real nice because they work with me on my schedule," she said. "I start at 10 a.m. and by 12:30 I'm done with the orchards." The lunchera stops first in Pine Grove, then Odell and three more in Parkdale.

"The ones in Odell and Pine Grove are easy because they're close," she said.

At the first stop, she normally feeds 50 people.

"We need to be real fast, and be done in 20-25 minutes; then we move on to the next (stop) and feed 15-

20, close and go straight to Parkdale. We have 30-40 in the first two and the (third) is smaller. If I run out of time I call ahead and they can come from the other orchard to where I am."

All the meats are prepared ahead of time; the tortillas get a quick warm-up, and "I know they like tortas, so I warm them up ahead."

The sisters' sense of humor comes out when they talk of their mutual love of cooking.

"We both love everything," Estela said. "There is nothing we say, 'I don't like to cook this,' and when I do, she cooks it," she says, pointing to Luz, and both laugh heartily.

— Kirby Neumann-Rea

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Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

"I like to get my hands dirty," said Lori Fortune, who balances the books and the tools in the daily routine at Big Gene's in Odell.

Lori

Continued from Page 31

Pine Grove store, which has helped matters at Big Gene's.

"A lot of farmers know me; they trust me," she said.

Maddox said Fortune is an "awesome" boss and that he has not seen all that much surprise in people who come in not knowing that the shop is run by a woman.

"Once in a while you

get someone who's a little funny about it.

"It was a good transition, everyone knows her. One thing is you'll always get a friendly face in here," Maddox said.

The measure of Lori's status is firmer all the time. She noted that "Gene comes in every once in awhile, and he'll probably be here more after a few years, once we get established. One day, he was here and I was out, and someone, asked, "Where's your wife at?"

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STACIE CREASY – SIXTH STREET BISTRO

Pub owners Stacie and Chris Creasy pursue sustainability



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Sixth Street owners Chris and Stacie Creasy relax on the north-facing deck of the restaurant.

By JENNIFER SUTTON
and BECKY BRUN

Since purchasing Sixth Street Bistro in 2009, Stacie and Chris Creasy have been committed to continuing a legacy of environmental stewardship and community involvement at one of Hood River's favorite local pubs.

From rewarding its local customers with Two-For-Tuesday deals in the wintertime to dousing its menu with rotating seasonal specials, Stacie and Chris

incorporate many sustainable business practices that are not only good for the environment, but also good for their bottom line.

Sixth Street purchases local produce and naturally raised meat as it is seasonably available. The restaurant also purchases post-recycled paper products, including take-out containers, and composts with Dirt Hugger, a commercial composting company based in The Dalles that accepts meat

scraps and bones, napkins, paper and other items from restaurants for its composting program.

As a result, Sixth Street's food waste has significantly declined over the last year.

"Sixth Street Bistro is a prime example of a local business embodying the environmental awareness and community focus that many are working towards in the Gorge," said Becky Brun, director of the

Please see CINDY, Page 40



Sheryl Graves & Joyce Willis

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L to R: Charlott Jones, Jen Sutton, JoAnn Harris, Camille Hukari (owner)

Wine, Women & Flowers

Stacie

Continued from Page 39

Gorge Owned Business Network.

Stacie and Chris recently participated in "Sustainable Systems at Work," a discussion series designed by the Northwest Earth Institute and spearheaded by the Gorge Owned Business Network.

"It was a great opportunity for a group of like-minded business owners with similar business models to get together and talk about some of the challenges we face and solutions we have found in trying to be as sustainable as possible in our business practices," Stacie said.

"After the discussion course, we took a good look at some of the things we were doing and implemented small changes."

One of the challenges facing restaurant owners is the seasonal availability of local produce, which can partially be addressed by offering rotating menu items reflecting the seasonal availability of foods.

"We do a lot of business with Mountain Shadow Natural Meats, Hood River Organics and Zion Farm, as well as several other smaller, more specific sources for produce and naturally raised meats," Stacie said.

Looking toward the future, Sixth Street Bistro plans to continue to find more ways to reduce its overall environmental footprint. Compostable take-out products are at the top of its list — as it is for many other restaurant owners in the Gorge.

Sixth Street Bistro, 509 Cascade Ave., is open 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. daily.



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Server **Kimberly Pence** only seems to be hiding among the forest of tall beer tap handles at Sixth Street bistro. The ale selection is just part of the success that has helped foster the Creasys' dedication to sustainability.



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RUTH MALETZ – DANIEL'S HEALTH & NUTRITION

Longtime residents buy, and grow, established Heights health food store



Ruth and Jonathan Maletz.

Submitted photo

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
Hood River News

While not a typical scene in front of a business, the garden at Daniel's Nutrition fits right in.

Jonathan and Ruth Maletz have planted tomatoes, herbs, flowers in a wide, sunny planting area along 12th Street in front of the business, which they purchased in May. Daniel's is located at 918 12th St., one block south of the hospital.

Tammi McVeigh started Daniel's Health and Nutrition in a tiny shop on June Street 10 years ago. The Maletzes approached McVeigh in January about purchasing the store and discovered that now was a season of change for everyone.

One thing that won't

change is the store name. Quipped Ruth, "Old Daniel lived back in Old Testament days and had an eye for nutrition!"

Ruth has been doing office nursing for years and has been steadily pursuing her life-long passion for natural healing and nutrition.

Jonathan, a family counselor, will be busy running the "books" side of the business, but he will also continue doing some counseling at Daniel's.

"Jonathan is the numbers guy," said Ruth. "I couldn't do this without him. I get to do the fun stuff of helping customers and providing nutritional consultations. I love guiding people to natural treatments and remedies that help the body to heal itself and to restore healthy balance."

They joke that Ruth had to convince "the numbers guy" to devote time and energy to the frontage garden, but it is Jonathan who points out that growing fresh produce and flowers is in keeping with the mission and message of their business.

This is a time of transition for Ruth and Jonathan, whose youngest of four children, Abraham, just graduated from Hood River Valley High School. Sophie, Tasha and Elijah are also HRVHS graduates now enrolled in college.

Ruth said the garden is an exciting development for her because their home a few blocks away is heavily shaded and now she has an open, sun-filled spot to

polish her green thumb.

"I just love coming out and tending to the garden. When there's not a lot going on inside I can come out here."

In the middle of the garden is a grape arbor built by Ruth's brother, Adam Rand. "I've always wanted a grape arbor," Ruth said. It spans an existing stairway that bisects the garden, directly across the business' wide parking lot.

Growing things is its own motivation, but Ruth said planning and tending it has had an extra reward: It's been an attention-grabber for the business.

"Lots of people have noticed it," Ruth said. "They tell me it's really nice to see a garden in this space."

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LIBBY ROSSKNECHT – MT. HOOD GUEST HOUSE



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Mt. Hood Guest House, the view from Cooper Spur Road, en route to Parkdale.

Libby Rossknecht follows her fully restored home's footprints

By **KIRBY NEUMAN-REA**
Hood River News

Footprints from 1935 are among the historical details lovingly retained in an early-20th century home that Libby Rossknecht of Mt. Hood fully remodeled over the past six years.

Mt. Hood Guest House, as it is now called, has seen many occupants over the years. Known as the Gribble/Shaw House, it is located just across Highway 35 from

Mount Hood Town Hall.

Rossknecht, a retired engineer, completely revamped the house, with new flooring, insulation, plumbing, paint, siding and more. New lawns and plantings grace the grounds, which have ample room for croquet, volleyball and horseshoes, and a picnic — all at once.

The Guest House opened July 1 for guests.

"I've never done a business before, so this is kind of

a new experience for me," Rossknecht said. She has bought properties over the years and devoted as much time as she could to remodeling projects.

She has bought and sold rental properties, but the guest house went beyond anything she had done before.

Rossknecht transformed the two-story home into a

Please see LIBBY, Page 43

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Libby

Continued from Page 42

bright and welcoming destination at the intersection of Highway 35 and Cooper Spur Road.

The home was moved to the site in 1932, and was later added onto.

One of the pieces of history she would like to confirm is which child, probably a 2-year-old in 1935, left that footprint by the east door. Rossknecht needed to revamp the entrance and moved the concrete stoop, to the south door.

The transformed kitchen features counters made from a downed maple that fell on neighboring property and Rossknecht had milled on-site.

Among the interior touches done by Rossknecht with help from workers and designers: she winched a 400-pound clawfoot bathtub up the narrow stairway, and lined bedroom walls with knotty pine taken from former church, now a private home, on nearby Woodworth Road.

Fir flooring in the kitchen and several indoor fixtures are other examples of reused materials Rossknecht has employed throughout the home.

Distinctive features also include the walking paths made of pieces of concrete from an old milking barn on property Rossknecht owns near Dee.

"As an engineer I did mostly project management and I love it, but this is definitely a huge thing. And it grew; I'd do something and go, 'There really needs to be a porch there.' So things would come off my list and then other things would go on," she said.

As an example, she originally planned to provide parking on the former "Loop Road" and driveway surrounding the building, but the county required her to install a parking lot, accessible from Highway 35.

"So, I thought it needed a fence to give a little visual block from the road," she said. "That's how the projects went on and on. I'll be glad when it's finished, with money coming in instead of just going out."



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

Libby Rossknecht knocked out part of a wall to create this visual tie between the living room and kitchen. Works by local artists, including her friend Charlene Rivers, can be found throughout the common areas and bedrooms.

On the Way to the Mountain ...

Mt. Hood Guest House can be booked via VRBO.com. It has six bedrooms and two baths. The whole house can be rented by groups, or the rooms can be booked separately, as the bedrooms are individually keyed. Rossknecht sees it as a draw for reunions and wedding parties, but will in the future accept impromptu reservations in addition to advance ones through VRBO.com.

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Hood River Care Center's McCleary advocates for elderly

Jenelle McCleary has been the admissions and marketing director at the Hood River Care Center since October 2009. Previously she

was the admissions and marketing director at Hawks Ridge Assisted Living, also in Hood River. "I came to the Hood River Care

Center because it is the only nursing/rehabilitation facility in the Hood River area and I believe that it has a lot of potential to be a great asset to the elder population in our community," she said.

Jenelle was born and raised just outside of Dufur, Ore. and currently resides in Parkdale, Ore. She is on the board of directors for the Mt. Hood Town Hall, volunteers at Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital. She is active in the Hood River County Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the Hood River Care Center and is even an Ambassador for the Chamber, and she holds numerous marketing and educational events for healthcare professionals here in the Gorge in hopes of bringing doctors, nurses, administrators and all of the geriatric professionals closer together to benefit those in our community. Those events include the Community Care Forum, Senior Marketing Group and Lunch 'n Learn events as well as sponsorships and community events



like Senior Day at the Harvest Fest and the Antique Golfers Championship.

The Hood River Care Center recently completed a \$1 million renovation which has revamped the entire building, including a portion of the building that had been closed for almost 10 years.

There has not been a single portion of the building that was not renovated. The Hood River Care Center was built in 1948 and currently can accommodate 76 residents, but once renovated will be able to help up to 82 patrons which includes short-term and long-term rehabilitation, long-term care, Expressions (secured memory care) as well as a geriatric psych unit that is run with the help of the Center for Living.

"One of our proudest changes is the new state-of-the-art rehab gym which is now five times the size of the previous gym and will allow our physical, occupational and speech therapists to boost their six-day-a-week rehab program," said McCleary.

"I love my job! I see myself not only as a representative of the Hood River Care Center but as an advocate for the elderly in the Gorge and as a resource for families, friends and other healthcare professionals and organizations."

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