

## EO Media Group wins bid for two newspapers

BEND (AP) — EO Media Group, a newspaper publishing company based in Oregon, bought the largest newspaper in Central Oregon and its sister weekly, outbidding a competitive offer at an auction Monday, July 29.

The winning \$3.65 million bid puts *The Bulletin*, which had declared bankruptcy, and its sister weekly *The Redmond Spokesman*, into the hands of a family-owned company that has been publishing newspapers since 1908.

“The vibrant economy of Central Oregon, coupled with a fresh start for *The Bulletin* and *Redmond Spokesman*, bodes well for the future of these newspapers,” Heidi Wright, EO Media Group’s chief operating officer, was quoted as saying in the *East Oregonian*. The newspaper, based in Pendleton, is owned by EO Media Group.

The company outbid Adams Publishing Group at the auction at the offices of Tonkon Torp LLP in Portland. Adams owns more than a hundred small dailies, weeklies and shoppers, including the *Herald & News* in Klamath Falls and the *Lake County Examiner* in Lakeview.

Michael Fletcher, attorney for *The Bulletin*’s parent company, Western Communications, said a previous bidder, Rhode Island Suburban Newspapers Inc., did not participate in the auction, *The Bulletin* reported.

U.S. Bankruptcy Court Judge Trish Brown approved the sale, which is expected to close at the end of August.

With about \$30 million in debt, Western Communications filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in January. It was the company’s second trip to bankruptcy court since 2012, driven by debt from its headquarters building that was built in 2000. EO Media is not acquiring the real estate, which is being marketed separately. Terms of a lease for space inside the

building require the press to be relocated within 90 days of the building’s sale, Wright said.

Steve Forrester, EO Media Group’s president and CEO, said the acquisition of *The Bulletin* carries emotional and historical meaning.

“Our essential challenge is to bring new life to Bend’s storied daily newspaper,” he said.

Kathryn Brown, vice president of EO Media, said the company will look at how to fold the Central Oregon papers into the organization and soon will reach out to the employees at *The Bulletin* and *Spokesman*.

Robert Chandler bought *The Bulletin* in 1953 from Robert Sawyer with a down payment of \$6,000, and was chairman of the company until his death in 1996. He was succeeded by his daughter, Betsy McCool. McCool said she was rooting for EO Media to come out ahead at the auction, noting that she has known the family owners since she was a child.

“They seem like compassionate people that care about Oregon,” she said.

EO Media will be the majority owner of a new holding company, Central Oregon Media Group, for *The Bulletin* and *The Redmond Spokesman*, Wright said.

A group of Bend investors who contributed capital will have a minority stake. Terms of their agreement with EO Media prevent the local investors from exercising editorial control, Wright said.

Among those who provided financial backing was The Bend Foundation, *The East Oregonian* reported. The Bend Foundation was established and funded by Brooks Scanlon lumber company, Brooks Resources — a real estate development company, and its shareholders.

Bend Foundation trustee Mike Hollern said “a really important part of the whole American dream [is] to have an unbiased local press.”

## Sisters to celebrate trail system

The Peterson Ridge trail system (PRT), built and maintained through volunteer effort, has been providing recreational opportunity for equestrians, hikers, dog-walkers, mountain-bikers and most recently snowshoers for over 10 years. Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) is hosting a celebration of local trails on Saturday, September 21 at Village Green Park. The event features organized hikes and mountain-bike rides on the trail system, activities in the park for everyone, a little history of the PRT, a free lunch and the just released “Peterson Ridge Pale Ale” crafted by Three Creeks Brewing Company.

Three Creeks is now pouring the Peterson Ridge Pale Ale at their pub in Sisters in celebration of the PRT and to recognize the efforts of Sisters Trails Alliance. The single hop pale ale features four separate additions of El Dorado hops, a “fruit-forward” hop, featuring bold notes of citrus and tropical fruit, plus a faint hint of vanilla. This is a light, easy-drinking pale ale, perfect for capping off your trail experience.

Organized hikes and mountain-bike rides at the event will feature some of the best parts of the trail and will be led by STA volunteers knowledgeable about the trail system, design, building and maintenance. It’s a great opportunity to explore some new territory or experience trails you know with

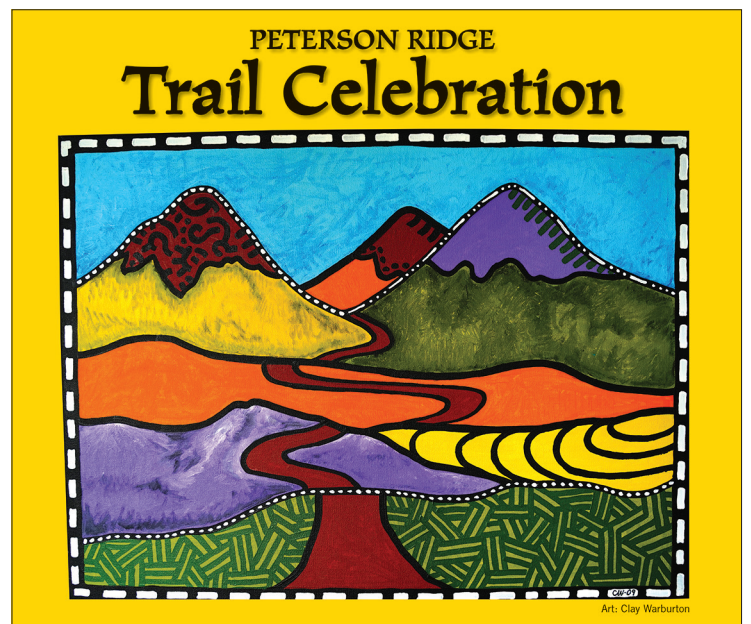


PHOTO PROVIDED

Clay Warburton created the image for the STA celebration of Peterson Ridge Trail.

a new perspective. Sign-up information for the organized activities will be available by September 1.

A complimentary vegan and gluten-free lunch will be provided along with interactive and informative displays and activities for trail lovers, families and kids. Advance registration for lunch is required by September 10 to know how much food to provide. The link to register can be found on the homepage at [www.sisterstrails.org](http://www.sisterstrails.org).

The day will also feature a drawing for three fantastic raffle packages thanks to the generosity of our local businesses and donations from members. There will be a duffel of items that any equestrian would love to have, a backpack of hiking supplies

and a package to appeal to any kind of cyclist. Raffle tickets will be available after August 15 at Sisters Feed & Supply (equestrian package), Hike n Peaks (hiking package), Blazin Saddles (cycling package) or Your Store (all three packages). Anyone interested in providing raffle items or a donation to purchase raffle items should contact [info@sisterstrails.org](mailto:info@sisterstrails.org) as soon as possible.

“Special thanks to Your Store for underwriting the event and to Clay Warburton for creating and donating the beautiful trail image promoting this event,” said STA member Ann Richardson.

For more info about STA, the PRT celebration event, to volunteer or donate, visit [www.sisterstrails.org](http://www.sisterstrails.org).

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