

# 2019

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optic broadband network, the community of Maupin became one of the state's most competitive when it comes to internet access.

- In a proposed budget that anticipates new staff, small pay increases, a sizable insurance rate hike and much higher food costs, the regional jail told board members it was seeking a 16 percent increase in funding from its four member counties.

- More than a dozen citizens asked the Wasco County Commission April 3 not to submit a letter of support it wrote for the Summit Ridge wind project east of Dufur. The commission opted to table the matter. The commission had written the letter on behalf of the owner of the Summit Ridge turbine project to Puget Sound Energy, a Washington-based utility whose role as a power-purchaser in the project is key to its development.

- David Griffith retired from the auto dealership business. The papers to sell his Griffith Motors dealership were signed March 25, and the new owner was Mario Hernandez, who also had three dealerships in Idaho and Nevada. The new entity is split into two dealerships, Columbia Gorge Toyota and Columbia Gorge Honda.

## MAY

Final unofficial election results showed two appointed incumbents defeated challengers to keep their seats on the D21 school board, and were joined by four new faces.

Shoppers at The Dalles Fred Meyer learned that the company planned to reconfigure the store to maximize grocery space to meet demand. The remodel was to be completed in December.

A man who tried to put a hit on the district attorney and two others saw his 20-year sentence cut by more than half after a successful appeal of the most serious charges against him. Dustin Kimbrough was sentenced in 2014 for charges including

attempted aggravated murder after he asked a fellow inmate at the regional jail in 2012 to hire a hitman to kill Wasco County District Attorney Eric Nisley and Kimbrough's father-in-law and brother-in-law. The other inmate quickly told authorities about the plot.

John Brookhouse and Jill Durow were named Wasco County Pioneers 2019 Pioneer Man and Woman of the year at the 97th annual meeting of the association, held at the Fort Dalles Readiness Center.

### Also in May:

- Aaron Carter, who first came to The Dalles years ago on a visiting high school football team, moved his family here as he took his new post as managing partner at the new Columbia Gorge Toyota and Columbia Gorge Honda dealerships, formerly Griffith Motors.

- The Dalles City Council on Monday unanimously approved a permit system for RV parking on city streets, and modified on-street parking restrictions for RVs and oversized vehicles to allow violators to be impounded and towed 24 hours after the posting of the first \$20 citation. Previously, vehicles could only be impounded following a sixth citation.

- The new owners of the Recreation Building downtown received a \$200,000 state grant to help restore the façade of the building. The project was to become the focus of attention later in the year when a portion of the building's roof collapsed.

- After two straight years of daily protests against the housing of immigration detainees at the regional jail, the group that began the protest moved to a monthly protest instead, a leader said. Meanwhile, another group, which shared some membership with the protest group, continued its efforts to work with the Northern Oregon Regional Corrections Facility on the same goal of ending immigration detention at the jail.

- The Dalles City Council unanimously adopted changes in police, building department and utility hook-up fees.

## JUNE

The Insitu Corporation notified its employees of impending layoffs resulting from a rapidly evolving marketplace for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Insitu spokesperson Jennifer Belay confirmed to The Enterprise on Monday that "yes, there will be layoffs" coming out of a corporate restructuring being devised by executives of Insitu and its owner, The Boeing Co.

Tokola Properties is no longer interested in redeveloping the former Tony's Town & Country building downtown, but still hopes to do some kind of development in The Dalles, a city official announced.

The principal of Sonrise Academy was arrested on charges of harassment, first-degree attempted criminal mistreatment and third-degree attempted assault. The Dalles Police Detective Sergeant Eric Macnab said the charges stemmed from "an allegation of something that occurred while the kids were in school."

A report on travel and tourism showed Wasco County experienced an average spending growth of \$5.02 million from 2014-17.

The Oregon Tourism Commission, more popularly known as Travel Oregon, received the report, which analyzed the success of travel and tourism industries throughout the state, from Dean Runyan Associates.

Mid-Columbia Medical Center asked the school district for an option to buy 30 acres of school-owned land in Columbia View Heights area for a new hospital.

An unusually cool and windy June made for a later-than-normal start for cherry harvest. Initial cherries were smaller than desired, but hopes were that later cherries would be bigger.

### Also in June:

- A postal carrier truck that was driving from Portland to The Dalles early on Tuesday, May 28, had an open cargo door and lost approximately 20 boxes or containers of mail, according to police logs. A person who answered the phone at the driver's



A Jeep SUV parks on a pile of winter snow at Cascade Square.

Mark B. Gibson photo/file

company said she had no comment. The company, Lapo, Inc., of Portland, is a U.S. postal contractor contracted to haul bulk mail, according to its website.

- A Grass Valley man was arrested June 13 and accused of firing a weapon near a group of men who were working on an adjacent property. Nobody was hurt.

- The new Quenett Creek Substation project was powered up and in operation at the Port of The Dalles, increasing the amount of electrical power available throughout the region.

- The Summit Ridge Wind Farm, an approved but unbuilt wind energy generation facility proposed near the Deschutes River, was in limbo.

- Since facility limitations prevented the reduction of class sizes, School District 21 plans to use new state school funding to add about 30 classroom aides, officials said. Newly approved funding for schools would mean about \$2.5 million per year for D21 starting July 2020,

said Randy Anderson, chief financial officer at North Wasco County School District 21.

- Contractors and tourists in The Dalles were taking any bed they could find as home owners saw an opportunity to capture revenue through renting rooms. In the previous five months, the city had received seven requests—six for bed and breakfast hospitality businesses and one for a vacation rental. And that is just added stock. A search on AirBnB.com listed 54 rentals for The Dalles.

- Many people think it's illegal, a local police officer said, but there is no state or local law that prevents people from living in their cars. An anonymous caller reported to The Dalles Police Department Monday evening that multiple people were parked on Pentland between Second and Third streets and living out of their cars. He was advised that it wasn't against the law to live in a vehicle. The man said he was concerned that people could hang out and party in the

streets all day, according to the log.

- A new graffiti ordinance in The Dalles put a tight timeline on property owners to remove graffiti—just five days, or 14 days in case of hardship—but a free service to have it removed was created. Previously, graffiti was handled under the city's nuisance ordinance. City staff looked at how eight other Oregon cities handled graffiti, and Steve Harris, the city's community development director, told the city council June 24 that some cities put liens on properties or directly billed property owners for the cost of cleanup, and some cities also charged an administrative fee as well.

- The first professional rodeo in The Dalles in four years was a successful event, with full grandstands and plenty of action at the Fort Dalles Riders Club.

A July through December review of 2019 will be published in the weekend edition, Jan. 4-5.

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