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CREEKSIDE CHAT

Trees fundamental to town character

JUSTIN MUCH
APPEAL TRIBUNE
AND **MICHAEL DAVIS**
STATESMAN JOURNAL



Gene Pfeifer

Trees and their adorning importance were foremost on Gene's mind Wednesday, just as they were on Homer Davenport's well over a century ago.

Quoting **Homer Davenport**, Gene shared: "The old oak...was a stately giant, and the early settlers of Silverton looked a fitting people to group themselves under it and around it, and, as I have said, it was the superb character of both men and women that made Silverton, the old town, so distinctly different."



Silver Creek Coffee House

JUSTIN MUCH / APPEAL TRIBUNE

Gene pulled Homer's words from "The country boy: the story of his own early life," which was published around 1910, but a few years before his death.

Gene said Homer regretta-

bly continued some pages later: "...yet I am certain that the pioneers, the men and women who belong to the old oak tree, have seen in every word I have ever written or line I have ever

drawn pertaining to Silverton and the farmers around it, nothing but love...My only regret is that we couldn't have remained always the same as we were before the old oak tree was chopped down, as that tree seemed to fit our landscape better than open or paved streets do. The tree seemed to be a center of dignity..."

More than a century later Gene shares that sentiment. As a designer, he ponders why concrete, such as sidewalks, often win out politically over a venerable tree: the latter takes decades to grow and reach out into

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SWEET SUCCESS



Workers at Willamette Valley Pie Company make turnovers.

CHRISTENA BROOKS / SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

Willamette Valley Pie settles into renovated warehouse

CHRISTENA BROOKS
SPECIAL TO THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

The air smells mighty sweet around Silverton Industrial Park these days, as Willamette Valley Pie Company brought its entire pie making and baking operation to town four months ago.

Production is rolling on frozen and baked pies, cobblers and other treats, with bakery employees working in a retrofitted 67,000-square-foot building in Silverton. The whole operation moved in February to Eska Way from the 82nd Avenue site it shares with Willamette Valley Fruit Company.

The pie company's popular retail store on 82nd Avenue will remain open alongside the fruit packing operation.

In Silverton, bakery employees are more comfortable, production is linear, and there's room to expand in the future, said owner Jeff Roth.

"We're using the same process, but now we have more efficiency and more elbow room," he said.

In fact, Willamette Valley Pie is currently using only two-thirds of its new building - 20,000 square feet is available for lease. Pie making occurs in a sparkling new metal-skinned "building-within-a-building" constructed by CD Redding Construction and designed jointly by Food Facility Engineering of Yakima and Mildred Design Group of Tigard.

The Salem company worked for nine months to turn the warehouse, previously owned by Snodco and leased out to grass seed farmers, into Willamette Valley Pie's manufacturing headquarters, said project manager Jeremy Kuenzi.

"This is big for Silverton - to find someone willing to utilize and repurpose an existing building," Kuenzi said.

A custom-built 8,500-square-foot storage freezer was one of the warehouse re-

model's big jobs. It maintains temperatures as low as -10 degrees and required specialty engineering including a heated slab floor to prevent cracked concrete, Kuenzi said.

On the manufacturing floor, now there's room for multiple production lines, with clusters of employees making a variety of things at once - pies, turnovers, cobblers and freezer jams. Also, at the old location, freezing required an extended trip by cart; now the freezer is right there on the floor.

For workers who make 27 varieties of 9-inch pies alone, this makes a big difference.

"We have the ability to run more lines ... the flow has improved," Roth said. "Instead of pulling machines out of lines, we have a dedicated line for each product."

"We're ecstatic to be in the new facility," said Marlene Gunderson, bakery production manager.

Willamette Valley Pie's need for more space became obvious after the Gerald Roth family sold the fruit-processing arm of its business to Phoenix-based Inventure Foods in 2013. The family re-

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Celebrate Silver Falls history

JUSTIN MUCH
APPEAL TRIBUNE

A one-day outing at Silver Falls State Park will feature a little bit of history, a little bit of music, some family games and, as planned, a lot of fun.

The seventh annual Historic Silver Falls Day is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, July 9, at the South Falls Historic District.

Friends of Silver Falls State Park organizer Lou Nelson said the event is a celebration of the history of the area that is now the park. A rich history it is.

Nelson itemized the activities and exhibits on hand: Model T and Model A antique cars; demonstrations of antique logging tools; flint knapping; families participating in old-fashioned games, story telling of the area's historic days and horse logging demonstrations.

Adding to the atmosphere will be bluegrass music from the Roundhouse Band and carriage rides throughout the afternoon.

"It's a lot of fun," Nelson said. "In the past they've brought in a covered wagon and gave rides on that, and it was very popular."

She said another annually popular display is the logging demonstration, showing visitors what it was like to handle the job in the early days.

Nelson said the event traditionally has been held over two days, but this year plans are to pack everything into one day. Preparations are underway to ensure that all activities and exhibits will be equally rewarding and prepared for the single-day show.

Also on tap: Area historical societies will have displays in the historic Silver Falls Lodge, while the Forest History Center will display Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) artifacts and a

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Teacher workshops become smarter

ANNETTE UTZ
FOR THE APPEAL TRIBUNE

"Reluctant," "uncertain," and "confused" were oft-used adjectives when parents and teachers were asked about their reactions to the new Common Core school curriculum adopted in Oregon and several other states in 2010.

Common Core values represent a shift in concentration for both students and teachers back to the basics of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. It is designed to ensure students are prepared for future careers, college and workforce training programs.

The aforementioned

adjectives were also heard when the Smarter Balanced assessment tests were introduced to measure student progress in meeting those goals. The assessments are aligned to standards for English language arts and math and are administered in grades 3-8 and grade 11.

David Bolin, North

Santiam School District Associate Superintendent, sees the move towards Smarter Balanced Assessment as an important improvement over past methods of testing.

"Our students deserve better tests, ones that measure high-level

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