

Small-business & Ag HAPPENINGS

OSU Extension Service hosts Oregon's Community Food Systems livestream

ENTERPRISE — Oregon State University's College of Agricultural Sciences and the OSU Extension Service are partnering with OSU150 (a collaborative celebrating the 150th anniversary of OSU) to convene an event to spark bold and visionary conversations around food systems and community food resilience, and reflections on the role of land grant universities.

The event, originating at the Portland Art Museum, will be livestreamed to county Extension Service offices in Oregon from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Sept. 5. The event will be seen at the Willowa County Extension Office, 668 NW First St., Enterprise.

A facilitated discussion will follow the livestream event. Light refreshments will be served. For more information and to register, contact Ann Bloom at 541-426-3143 or stop by the OSU Extension office in Enterprise.

Oregon Wheat Commission meeting open to public

THE DALLES — The Oregon Wheat Commission will hold its regular commission meeting Sept. 7 to discuss commission business. The meeting will be held at the Fort Dalles Readiness Center, 402 E. Scenic Drive, The Dalles, beginning at 9 am in the classroom on the first floor. Lunch will be provided.

The agenda includes a discussion of the Barley Program, the Rural Dryland Farming Initiative and the Tri-State Commission Meeting. OWC Commission meetings are open to the public and anyone wishing to attend is encouraged and welcome to do so. Dress is business casual. For more information, contact the Oregon Wheat Commission office at 503-467-2161.

Cows contribute to unique fundraiser

BAKER CITY — Named Oregon's Best Philanthropic Event by the Oregon Festivals and Events Association, Baker City's Great Salt Lick Art Auction is a one-of-a-kind fundraiser. For this celebration of bovine art, local artists spend the weeks prior to the event licking their artistic masterpieces into shape before they're put on display for the auction.

Funds raised from the evening's art auction are donated to the Parkinson's Center of Oregon at the Oregon Health Science University. This year's auction takes place Sept. 15 at the Crossroads Carnegie Art Center, 2020 Auburn Ave. in Baker City. Social hour begins at 6 p.m. and the auction starts at 7 p.m.

Locally owned RV manufacturer offers full benefits

LA GRANDE — Northwood, a privately held and locally owned RV manufacturer, is offering immediate interviews between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Tuesdays and between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Fridays, through Sept. 27.

Scheduled interviews are also available upon request. Located at the La Grande Airport Industrial Park, the company offers a full benefits package, including health care, retirement savings and paid training, holidays and vacation. To apply for an interview, go to www.northwoodmfg.com/northwood-careers/ or stop by the main office at 59948 Downs Rd. For more information, call 541-962-6274.

USDA microloans help farmers purchase farmland, improve property

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property.

These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.

Microloans help farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment and living expenses. Microloans are now also available to help with farmland and building purchases, and soil and water conservation improvements.

Since 2013, the microloan program has provided more than 16,800 low-interest loans, totaling more than \$373 million to producers across the country. Seventy percent of loans have gone to new farmers. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified

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BUILDING A STRONG PARTNERSHIP

■ New home design company brings together decade-long business partners

By Max Denning

The Observer

LA GRANDE — Ralph Edwards and Les Tipton have had an informal working partnership for a decade.

Edwards, owner of Workable Design, one of the few local residential home designers, and Tipton, owner of Blue Eagle Engineering Company, one of the few residential engineers in the county, often shared work with each other.

"The community constantly calls on us," Edwards said. "We're the only ones full-time who fill a niche for residential plans and engineering and light commercial plans and engineering."

Now, Edwards and Tipton are making their business partnership official by opening Associated Design and Engineering in La Grande. The company, which opened Aug. 24, will specialize in creating residential and light commercial designs that customers can then turn into homes or commercial businesses after being approved by the La Grande Building Division, a process that Associated Design and Engineering will help customers with.

Tipton has owned and operated Blue Eagle Engineering Company, based in Summerville, for 23 years, and has been

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Ralph Edwards and Les Tipton are responsible for most of the houses at the new development property near Birnie Park in La Grande. Recently, the pair officially partnered up after working together for a decade.



Chris Loman Construction employees are working on a new home that was designed by Ralph Edwards and engineered by Les Tipton near Birnie Park.

Cherise Kaechola photos / WesCom News Service

designed by Ralph Edwards and engineered by

Hotel developer asks for 50-year lease, incentives from Pendleton

By Antonio Sierra

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — After holding a workshop to discuss it, the Pendleton City Council is set to approve a 50-year lease with Makad Corp. for a 74-room hotel at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport at a meeting Tuesday.

In lieu of a standard land lease contract, Makad, a Vancouver, Washington-based company that is also planning a data center on the Airport Road extension, will pay Pendleton up to 2 percent of the hotel's gross revenue.

The lease will also include an incentive package that includes in-kind civil and environmental engineering work, water and sewer connection fee waivers, and up to 50 percent permit fee

reduction. Not including the waiver and discount, City Manager Robb Corbett is estimating the incentive package will cost \$300,000 for a sewer line extension.

The start date of the lease has been pushed back multiple times since then and construction has yet to start on the data center, but Allan Fulsher, general counsel for Makad wrote the company is still working on "one of the largest developments in Pendleton history."

According to Fulsher, Makad is challenged by a lack of infrastructure in Pendleton, particularly a dependable source of electricity, and is looking for a "creative solution." Additionally, Fulsher wrote the company is

spending time identifying end users for the data center and debt and equity financing.

"The amount of time from original announcement until the present is not unusual for private developments of this scope, especially where significant barriers are present," he said.

When asked whether Pendletonians could be confident the hotel project would get off the ground given the lack of construction on the data center, Fulsher said the two projects were unrelated.

"The only connection between the two projects is that we anticipate that future travelers to Pendleton related to the construction and operation of the data center will find the hotel to

be a convenient place to stay," he wrote. "Neither of the two projects is dependent upon the other in any way."

As Makad moves toward getting city approval for the project, Fulsher wrote that there are a number of reasons the company wants to build a new hotel in Pendleton.

"Horse Valley LLC (a Makad, Corp. subsidiary) is most attracted by the anticipated business growth at the airport and the industrial park," he wrote. "This includes the burgeoning unmanned aviation industry center at the airport. The hospitality project is intended to cater to business and recreational travelers that will find the airport location to be convenient."