

Small-business & Ag HAPPENINGS

Expressions Salon & Spa hosts 're-grand opening' today

LA GRANDE — From 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. this evening, La Grande's Expressions Salon & Spa is throwing a Re-Grand Opening at 1011 Adams Ave. The business wants the public to see the changes it has been gradually making, rearranging things to make the space even more welcoming and comfy for its clients, and there is a "something BIG" to be shared at the event. There will also be refreshments and raffle drawings. All are welcome to stop by.

Women business owners invited to mentoring gathering

LA GRANDE — IGNITE Entrepreneurial Center and Coworking encourages all woman business owners to join in its first "Monthly Mentoring" gathering at noon Feb. 21. IGNITE is located at 104 Depot St., in La Grande. For more information go to Ignite-mybusiness.org.

Oregon Farm Bureau releases statement on Hammonds

SALEM — The Oregon Farm Bureau released a statement Feb. 15 on the Hammonds grazing permit reissuance: "On Feb. 14, 2014, the Bureau of Land Management revoked the grazing permit of Hammond Ranches. Almost five years to the day later, on Feb. 13, 2019, BLM signed documents that reissued the permit, allowing the Hammond family to get back to the business of raising cattle in Eastern Oregon.

"This reissued grazing permit signals that justice has finally been achieved for this rural family. While nobody can restore what the Hammonds have lost to years of prosecutorial overreach and bureaucratic vendetta, we are grateful that this awful chapter is closed.

"Oregon Farm Bureau was proud to play a role in advocating on the Hammonds' behalf, including gathering over 25,000 online signatures and working directly with officials, so the family can return to doing what they love and keep a proud heritage of ranching alive."

Community Bank reaches asset milestone in 2018

JOSEPH — Community Bank, the locally owned and operated full-service commercial bank, finished 2018 with total assets of \$422,824,000. This was the first time in its history that the bank completed an operating year with assets greater than \$400 million.

Bauer Financial, a bank rating agency, has assigned Community Bank its highest star safety rating of 5 (Superior). The bank is currently the only financial institution headquartered in Eastern Oregon recommended by Bauer Financial, which requires a rating of at least 4 stars.

Regarding the bank's recent performance, Community Bank CEO Tom Moran stated, "With total assets north of \$420 million, Community Bank was the largest financial institution headquartered in Eastern Oregon at year end. We can directly attribute this success to the dedication of our bankers, and the continued support of our customers, who understand the importance of banking with a local financial institution. The funds deposited in Community Bank are redeployed directly into our local markets in the form of loans, investments, sponsorships, and donations."

Founded in 1955 by a group of Joseph business leaders as the Bank of Wallowa County, Community Bank operates 14 full-service bank branches and a loan production office.

USDA acreage reporting deadline for perennial forage changes to July 15

WASHINGTON, D.C. — USDA Farm Service Agency has established a new acreage reporting deadline for perennial forage for 2019 and subsequent years. Previously set in the fall, the new deadline is July 15 for all states, except for Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Timely and accurate acreage reports for all crops and land uses, including prevented planting or failed acreage, are the foundation for many FSA program benefits, including disaster programs for livestock owners. Producers must report their acreage to maintain program eligibility.

Producers who have coverage for perennial forage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program must report their crop acreage by the earlier of any of the following: the established acreage reporting date (July 15); 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported; or the established normal harvest date for the end of the coverage period.

Grazing conference targets land and livestock practices

■ Two renowned speakers to keynote conference in Pendleton

Observer Staff

PENDLETON — The biennial Roots of Resilience Conference — to be held March 27-28 at the Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate — will feature two nationally known speakers, Temple Grandin and Gabe Brown. Those who attend the grazing conference, "Resilience for Land & Livestock," will learn more about the innovative practices in cattle behavior of Dr. Grandin, a Professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University. She has designed humane livestock handling facilities all over the world. Brown, a



Temple

rancher from North Dakota who is a leader in soil health and holistic management, will share his successful, sustainable approach to grazing and pasture recovery. This two-day conference runs 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day.

On Thursday, Brown will be the keynote speaker. A panel will discuss individual experiences on grazing cover crops in the Pacific Northwest. The panel members will be Stephen Machado, Doug Poole, Dan Cavadini, Leslie Michel and Drew Leitch. Also, Chad Krueger, director of Washington State University's Center for Sustaining Agriculture & Natural Resources, will speak on regenerative agriculture.

Dr. Grandin will speak on

Friday. She is widely known for her writings on the principles of grazing animal behavior that help reduce stress. Grandin's life story was the subject of a popular HBO movie. The program will include a live demonstration on low-stress livestock handling by Chris Schachtschneider, OSU Extension livestock and rangeland specialist. Dr. Grandin will provide comments on the principles involved in the demonstration.

Pre-registration is necessary. Early registration, which has been extended to March 11, is \$299 and covers the cost of lunch and refreshments both days. Additional attendees from the same family, ranch or organization can register.

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Courtesy Photo

Gabe Brown, a rancher from North Dakota and leader in soil health and holistic management, is one keynote speaker for the conference

Anderson Perry's unique fish passage project earns top honors in Oregon's Engineering Excellence Awards

■ The passage solved a decades-old problem that negatively affected migratory fish populations in the area.

By Francisca Benitez
For The Observer

Anderson Perry, a civil engineering company founded in La Grande, has been awarded a grand award in Oregon's 2019 Engineering Excellence Awards for its Beaver Creek Fish Passage Project.

The project, completed in October of 2017, allows fish to migrate up and down the Beaver Creek dam.

The dam, which was constructed to provide water for La Grande, had been a problem for fish migration since its construction in 1915. It is located inside a protected watershed for migratory fish like steelhead, trout and salmon.

There needed to be a solution that would withstand the test of time without electricity and without much maintenance. There was also an issue of constructing the project, as the site is nearly inaccessible in snowy weather, according to an Anderson Perry press release.

Anderson Perry's design team, led by Brett Moore, P.E., came up with a unique solution to the problem, according to the release. They created the passage in pieces which could be constructed off-site and joined together like legos on-site. There were 59 pieces in total. Each piece is a 27,000-pound concrete weir that had to be transported and precisely placed.

The passage is expected to positively affect migratory fish populations immediately, according to the release.

The project was so successful that the design will be used as a model by the Oregon Department of Transportation in other sites where the terrain accessibility is an issue.

This is not the first award



Courtesy Photo

Beaver Creek Fish Passage Project, completed in October of 2017, allows fish to migrate up and down the Beaver Creek dam.

Anderson Perry has received for their projects. Last year Anderson Perry received project of the year for Prineville's Crooked River Wetlands Project. Since 2004, Anderson Perry has received eight

engineering excellence grand awards, according to the release. ■

Contact Francisca Benitez at frankiebenitez4@gmail.com.

Payless ShoeSource files for bankruptcy

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Payless ShoeSource has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection and is shuttering its remaining stores in North America.

The filing on Monday came a day after the shoe chain began holding going-out-of-business sales at its North American stores.

The company, based in Topeka, Kansas, updated the number of stores it is closing to 2,500, up from the 2,100 it cited on Friday when it confirmed it was planning to liquidate its business. It reiterated that stores will remain open until at least the end of March and the majority will remain open until May.

The liquidation doesn't affect its franchise operations or its Latin American stores, which remain open for business as usual, it said.

The debt-burdened chain filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection a first time in April 2017, closing hundreds of stores as part of its reorganization.

"The challenges facing retailers today are well documented, and unfortunately, Payless emerged from its prior reorganization ill-equipped to survive in today's retail environment," said Stephen Marotta, Payless ShoeSource's chief restructuring officer.

He noted that the prior Chapter 11 proceedings left the company with too much debt and with too many stores.

US automakers to Trump: Don't slap tariffs on imported cars

By Tom Krisher and Paul Wiseman

Associated Press

DETROIT — America's auto industry is bracing for a potential escalation in President Donald Trump's tariff war with the world, one that could weaken the global auto industry and economy, inflate car prices and trigger a backlash in Congress.

Late Sunday, the Commerce Department sent the White House a report on the results of an investigation Trump had ordered of whether imported vehicles and parts pose a threat to U.S. national security. Commerce hasn't made its recommendations public, and the White House has so far declined to comment. If Commerce did find that auto imports imperil national security, Trump would have 90 days to decide whether to impose those import taxes.

Trump has repeatedly invoked his duty as president to safeguard national security in justifying previous rounds of tariffs. An obscure provision in trade law authorizes a president to impose unlimited tariffs on particular imports if his Commerce Department concludes that those

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