

Small Business Happenings

Oregon Farm Bureau supports federal gray wolf delisting

SALEM — Oregon Farm Bureau released a statement in April applauding the U.S. Department of Fish & Wildlife Service's proposal to remove the gray wolf from the federal endangered species list.

According to the OFB statement, "The recovery of the gray wolf in Oregon and other states is a conservation success story by any measure. The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife reports that there are at least 124 known wolves in the state today, well above the goals set by the state Wolf Plan, and this number has increased annually since 2009. Wolves have been found as far west as the Oregon Coast. The U.S. population of gray wolves also surpasses recovery targets called for by the federal Endangered Species Act. A federal delisting will help simplify Oregon's patchwork of laws. Right now, because of such strong recovery rates, wolves on the east side of the state are not covered by the state endangered species law, only the federal ESA. The federal delisting proposal is also an example of successful collaboration between ranchers, landowners, environmental groups and government agencies. All of these stakeholders depend upon a healthy ecosystem. The OFB is in favor of the Trump administration joining both the Obama and Bush administrations in supporting the federal delisting of the gray wolf, basing decisions on science, and negotiating with a diverse group of stakeholders. The organizing hopes this will inspire greater collaboration at the state level around wolves and their increasing harm to livestock and Oregon's ranching families."

Small Business Development Center announces upcoming classes

LA GRANDE — The Small Business Development Center based at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande is organizing a "Starting and Managing a Nonprofit" series, a 10-week course beginning April 4. The weekly classes will be held from 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Thursdays at the Integrated Services Building, 1607 Gekeler Lane, Room 148, La Grande. To learn about fees and to register, go to www.causeoregon.com/events/la-grande-area-nonprofit-business-series, call 541-962-1532 or email eousbdc@gmail.com.

In May, a one-day class will focus on "Proposal Development for Contracting with the Government." The free course will start at 8 a.m. on May 14, at the Integrated Services Building in La Grande. Register by calling 541-962-1532 or emailing eousbdc@gmail.com.

Heart 'n Home has a new logo



LA GRANDE — Heart 'n Home has released a new logo, which will soon be displayed on the organization's website, social media, vehicles and building signage. According to a press release, the logo's clean and simplified concept aligns perfectly with Heart 'n Home's recent endeavor to structure and simplify its services in order to best support its clients and their families. The logo's modern feel pairs well with the organization's focus on executing a modern approach to hospice management. The three leaves symbolize the holistic aspect of hospice care: meeting the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of a patient and their loved ones. Leaves depict hope, renewal, and growth. For individuals on hospice care, their hope often changes throughout their journey. Learn more about Heart 'n Home at www.goHOSPICE.com.

Oregon close to finalizing cap-and-trade bill

By Brian Melley and Larry Neumeister
The Associated Press

SALEM — Oregon lawmakers on Monday unveiled a compromise proposal to a controversial cap-and-trade bill regulating greenhouse gas emissions, responding to overwhelming opposition from businesses and agricultural groups who worry the plan could put them out of work.

If passed, Oregon would become the second state in the country after California to implement an economy-wide cap-and-trade program. Under the bill, the state would place an overall limit on emissions and then sell a set number of pollution permits or "allowances" to the highest bidder.

But the plan sparked criticism from both sides, drawing thousands to testify at a series of public hearings around the state over the past two months. Environmentalists complained that the program doesn't go far enough and exempts too many polluters, while businesses say the costs associated with it would mean higher fuel costs and lost jobs.

Co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction Sen. Michael Dembrow and Rep. Karin Power said the new changes are meant to address those concerns and strike a delicate balance between preserving economic interests



Andrew Selsky/WesCom News Archive

A man walks by the Oregon State Capitol in Salem on Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019, the first day of the Legislature's 2019 session.

and combatting an impending climate catastrophe.

Most notably, they're proposing to invest a majority of the funds to rural and low-income communities and added a plan to refund any additional fuel costs to those making less than their area's

median income.

"The rural communities are in the front lines of climate change," said Dembrow, a Democrat from Portland. "They're going to feel those effects most directly so we want to make sure any invests coming out of this program are investing

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Elgin Chamber banquet honors top ten

By Trish Yerges

For WesCom News Service

The Elgin Chamber Banquet hosted 150 guests at the Elgin Community Center Tuesday evening where they spotlighted the Elgin Lions Club and honored three businesses, one organization and six individuals.

Chamber president Kathy Bonney and awards ceremony emcee Gary Bottger welcomed their guests to a meal catered by Island City Deli and Catering and served by the Elgin FFA Club. A teaser performance was provided by the Mamma Mia! cast of the Elgin Opera House. Honored

speaker and president of the Elgin Lions Club, Kathy Oliver, spoke about the mission and activities of the club.

The awards ceremony followed, and this year the Chamber Banquet expanded the program by including two new award categories, the Community Applause Recognition and the Community Heritage Award.

On behalf of the Elgin Chamber, Bonney presented the Community Applause Recognition to W. C. Construction's founders and best friends, Dennis Cross and Bob Wiles, who have recently retired from a 40-year career

in the construction business. Accepting the award on their behalf was Jared Rogers.

"This year, they downsized their operation and moved to a smaller office, allowing the City to transition (its business offices) into their complex," said Bonney. "What better place or what better organization could be in that building. It's perfect!"

Historically, W.C. Construction's generosity has been so wide-spread "that these two fellows have truly touched every life in our community to some extent," she said. "Their latest contribution to the construction of the new Elgin

Health District clinic has probably been their most important contribution for all of us."

Presenting the Community Heritage Award was Kem Brainerd of the Elgin Chamber.

"This is a recognition and appreciation award for a time-honored business and staple in this community," she said.

The award recognized the Elgin Electric Company, currently the longest family-operated business in Elgin. The business started in 1952 with two business partners, one of whom was Robert Miller Sr., and for the past 30 years, it's been operated by his children, a brother-sister

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Elgin Chamber and EDGE combine

By Trish Yerges

For WesCom News Service

After some collaboration, the Elgin Chamber of Commerce and Elgin's Economic Development and Growth Endeavor organization have combined under a new name, Elgin Community Network (ECN), and they have selected their officers at the March meeting.

Kem Brainerd, the facilitator of the monthly meetings and spokesperson for the new umbrella organization, recapped the history of this consolidation effort.

"Back in 2009, we wanted to combine both of those organizations because a lot of the same people were going to those two monthly meetings," said Brainerd. "The Chamber and EDGE do a lot

of the same things, except that EDGE is a non-profit group and the Chamber is not. They tried talking about it, but people didn't think it would work."

Brainerd was always a proponent for the consolidation of the groups, so although the topic was shelved back in 2009, it never was rejected entirely. Consequently, the topic was revisited in January 2019, and details were worked out. Finally, the name for the new umbrella organization was created, Elgin Community Network. It was appropriate, Brainerd said, because this one umbrella organization would bring the Chamber, EDGE and even the City of Elgin to the table, once a month to collaborate more

efficiently on civic projects in which they have a shared interest or role.

"Elgin Chamber of Commerce and EDGE are still the same, but by putting them under one group name, everyone will meet at one meeting a month, which is a time consolidation," she said.

In March, the ECN meeting facilitator and officers were appointed to ensure efficient meeting structure and to allow the Chamber and EDGE an equitable representation. Among those appointed were Brainerd, who will act as facilitator and moderator at the meetings. Cindi Chandler will act as the EDGE representative and Kathy Bonney will act as the Elgin Chamber representative.

Each of the representatives will be spokespersons for their respective sub-groups.

"In addition to the two representatives under Elgin Community Network, we have one secretary, Carol Buckley, who takes notes for both subgroups. We also have two treasurers, Kathy Rysdam for the Elgin Chamber and Mary West for EDGE," said Brainerd.

March's meeting was the first official ECN meeting, and Brainerd was optimistic that with a few more meetings, they could really hammer out the proficiency of their meetings.

"We're not only consolidating our time and effort, but we're basically strengthening each organization by coming together," she said.

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