

Celebrating 20 years

The Potter's Gift House & Gallery hits a landmark anniversary

By Dick Mason
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — About two decades ago, artists Bob and Judy Jensen tired of hauling their pottery, paintings and ceramics to sell at outdoor art galleries, so they took things into their own hands — they opened their own gallery, the Potter's House.

A hit from the start, the Potter's Gift House & Gallery has proven as enduring as the pottery and paintings the Jensens create. They are beginning a celebration of their 20th year in business at their present location at the corner of Sixth Street and Penn Avenue, La Grande.

"We didn't think we'd be open this long. We thought we would be too old by now," Judy Jensen said.

The years have been kind to the Jensens, who today appear as vibrant as ever, although they are scaling back operations at their gallery a bit to allow for semi-retirement.

The Jensens do not miss the trips they once made throughout the Northwest while transporting their works to galleries. Much of their time was spent packing and unpacking their crafts.

"It was exhausting," Judy Jensen said.

The roots of the Potter's House date back to 1995 when the Jensens opened a summer gallery in Joseph, Jensen Artforms, which



Staff photo by Dick Mason/EO Media Group
Bob Jensen makes pottery at the Potter's Gift House & Gallery, La Grande. Jensen creates stoneware and raku pottery. The business is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

they ran for 10 years.

Since opening in 2000 in La Grande, the Potter's House has been saluted by many, including Oregonian columnist Gerry Frank who listed the gallery as one of the 400 best places to eat, drink, stay or visit in the state in the 2014 edition of his book "Gerry Frank's Oregon." The Potter's House was one of two

La Grande stops Frank recommended, the other being the Ten Depot restaurant.

Frank's recognition came two years after the Union County Chamber of Commerce named the Potter's House Gallery the best gift shop in Union County.

Such honors recognize the paintings, Judy Jensen's restorative furniture work and Bob

Jensen's stoneware and raku pottery.

A longtime educator, Bob Jensen was burning the candle at both ends in the early years of the gallery for he also was an art teacher at La Grande High School. He taught there for 12 years before retiring after a

See, **Celebrate**/Page 3B

Oregon consumers revive spending levels

Editor's Note

This article was originally published by The Oregonian/OregonLive, one of more than a dozen news organizations throughout the state sharing their coverage of the novel coronavirus outbreak to help inform Oregonians about this evolving health issue.

By Mike Rogoway
The Oregonian/OregonLive

SALEM — When the coronavirus shutdown hit Oregon in March, Oregonians closed their wallets.

Overall consumer spending fell by as much as a third as the state hunkered down to ride out the pandemic. Spending in a few categories, like transportation and restaurants, nearly stopped, according to data from Opportunity Insights, a Harvard-based economic research team. Spending levels have broadly recovered in the intervening months, despite an enormous spike in unemployment — the state's jobless rate was 11.2% in June. Spending has been helped along by stimulus payments and supercharged unemployment benefits. Oregon has paid out \$3.2 billion in jobless claims during the pandemic, even though tens of thousands are still waiting for their money.

As of mid-July, Oregon consumer spending was off just 7% compared to January.

That spending isn't being distributed evenly, though.

Opportunity Insights estimates that transportation, entertainment and restaurant spending in Oregon are all down more than 40% from January.

Health care and apparel spending have largely rebounded, meanwhile, and grocery spending — which spiked as much as 60% during the panic buying that accompanied the early days of the pandemic in March — remains up 13%.

Opportunity Insights' national data show Oregon has closely tracked national patterns.

"Most Americans believe that the impact of the crisis on their routines and personal finances will last beyond the next four months. This sentiment has made consumers evaluate what they are spending on and where more carefully," consulting firm McKinsey & Co. found in a survey released

See, **Spending**/Page 3B

Meet Cosmo, the gene-edited Crispr calf

By Sierra Dawn McClain
Capital Press

DAVIS, Calif. — Five years of research, half a million dollars, dozens of failed attempts — and now the calf was seven days late.

His due date, March 30, had passed. Alison Van Eenennaam, animal genomics researcher at the University of California-Davis, recalled feeling worried.

The calf's surrogate mother, Cow 3113, or "Elle," was dilated, but nothing was happening. Finally, the vets broke the water, put chains on the calf's legs and pulled him out.

"He had his tongue hanging out of his mouth, and I was so nervous. That would've been the worst of all outcomes to lose him then," said Van Eenennaam.

He lived: 110 pounds, black with a snowy spray on each back leg and soon romping.

But this was no ordinary calf. Cosmo was the grand finale of



Photo contributed by UC Davis/Capital Press

Cosmo, the genome-edited calf, with his surrogate mother, Cow 3113, or "Elle."

a series of experiments to create a line of genome-edited cattle tailored for the beef industry. He was designed to produce 75%

male offspring.

Livestock researchers say male cattle are 15% more efficient at converting feed into

weight gain. More males mean more beef and a smaller environmental footprint.

But genome-editing is controversial and complicated, and U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations mean the likelihood of Cosmo-like animals entering the marketplace is slim.

Van Eenennaam said it all started with a conversation.

"I was speaking to a producer, and he flippantly said, 'You know, wouldn't it be cool if you could produce a bull that made all boys?' And I thought, 'Well, hmm, that might be possible.'"

When she won a \$500,000 USDA grant, she and Joey Owen, a graduate student, set to work.

To edit Cosmo, Owen and Van Eenennaam used Crispr, a genome-engineering technique. Crispr uses a specialized stretch of DNA that can act like a pair of scissors to cut DNA strands.

See, **Calf**/Page 3B

No masks, no distance: Pandemic wedding horrors for vendors

By Leanne Italie
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Wedding planners, photographers and other bridal vendors who make the magic happen have a heap of new worries in the middle of the pandemic: no-mask weddings, rising guest counts and venues not following the rules.

Now that weddings have slowly cranked up under a patchwork of ever-shifting state and local restrictions, horror stories from vendors are rolling in. Many are desperate to work after the coronavirus put an abrupt end to their incomes and feel compelled to put on their masks, grab their cameras and hope for the best.

No-mask weddings, no social distancing and dance floors prohibited in many states have been the talk of online groups for vendors around the country.

"People have worked in venues outright looking the other way on masks and size," said photographer Susan Stripling in New York.

Reports of COVID-19 outbreaks traced to weddings remain rare. One wedding was shut down by local officials at a San Fran-

cisco church; the nearly 100 guests had been instructed by the bridal couple to avoid the public entrance and go in through an underground parking garage instead.

Working with deception

Photographer Cherie Schrader in Chicago said she felt deceived when she showed up for a July wedding with 165 unmasked people indoors after being assured all safety precautions would be taken.

There was no social distancing. The crowd mingled at a happy hour and the dance floor was lively.

"I was told by the bride that it was an indoor-outdoor venue, but it was 95 degrees and they never opened the doors," she said. "The tables were, at the most, 3 feet apart," she said, noting masks should have been required at all times under those conditions.

"It looked like a normal wedding pre-COVID," Schrader said.

The rule for indoor gatherings in her state was half a venue's capacity or up to 50 people, whichever was lower, she said.



AP Photo/Jorge Saenz, File

Groom Raul Benitez and bride Jenny Bonet wear protective face masks as they kiss during their wedding ceremony at the Civil Registry office, in Asuncion, Paraguay, on June 13.

Schrader, wearing two masks, said she forced the bridal party outside for formal pictures in the heat and humidity.

"They complained because they were all sweating, but I was spending the least amount of time

as possible inside," she said.

Schrader entered the venue, which she would not name out of fear of professional retribution, for short stints to shoot special moments, such as the cake cutting. An associate photogra-

pher voluntarily remained inside to work.

"I truly love my brides and grooms, and then to be pressured to risk my life is extremely disappointing," she said. "I have an 80-year-old mom."

Payment versus safety

Alexis Alvarez, a wedding planner in Chicago, said she and other vendors often have no practical recourse to recoup deposits or full payments if they pull out.

She has a long-scheduled wedding with a guest list of about 100 planned for October in Wisconsin, where state health officials recently advised residents to avoid gatherings of more than 10 through late August. The couple had postponed once and might do it again, as some couples have done three times or more.

That, vendors said, has helped drive a desire among brides and grooms to just get it done, with many choosing small, micro-weddings instead of the larger affairs they had dreamed of.

Whether the weddings are

See, **Weddings**/Page 3B