



Photo by Dick Mason/EO Media Group

Brother Bear Cafe owner Kody Guentert makes espresso Tuesday, Aug. 11. The new coffee shop and restaurant, which opens Saturday, will operate in the former Joe Beans Coffee site in La Grande after the restaurant closed earlier this year.

Unions address trade-related job losses in Oregon

By Jade McDowell
EO Media Group

SALEM — A new analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Labor shows Oregon has lost the most jobs per capita to trade and offshoring, according to the nonprofit Trade Justice Education Fund.

The report uses numbers from Trade Adjustment Assistance, a federal program that provides assistance to workers who lost their jobs as a direct result of the job being moved overseas or the product they produce being replaced by imports from other countries. A total of 11,396 job losses in Oregon from 2017 to 2019 were certified as “trade-related job losses” by the TAA.

Jon Irvine, the workforce liaison for the Oregon AFL-CIO union, said he had his own experience with Trade Adjustment Assistance after being laid off in 2008.

“It was an incredible program at the time for me,” he said.

Irvin said the TAA allowed him to get into a nursing program after his high-skill job was cut and it didn’t look like it was coming back.

He said it was “ridiculous,” however, to see workers, such as machinists in high-skill jobs continually lose their jobs and go back onto the TAA rolls again before going through the training needed for another company.

“Nothing replaces good, solid manufacturing jobs right here in the state of Oregon,” he said.

One of those people who has been a TAA recipient multiple times is Nathan Aldrich, a former machinist who was laid off with “hundreds” of other people due to offshoring. He went back to school with the help of the TAA and worked for Boeing before recently losing his job again to offshoring.

“I got some experience with manufacturing and a trade, but it is definitely suffering,” he said of those industries.

Umatilla County residents have had their own experiences with trade-related job losses. According to the Trade Justice Education Fund’s report, 33 people who lost their jobs at Hermiston Foods were certified by the TAA as trade-related job losses in 2017, along with 219 jobs at Sykes Enterprises Incorporated.

Hermiston Foods was a vegetable-processing plant owned by NORPAC, which closed the Hermiston facility and laid off

See, **Losses**/Page 2B

New cafe to open Saturday

Brother Bear Coffee will open in previous Joe Beans location

By Dick Mason
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — Kody Guentert will celebrate the start of a promising new life chapter Saturday, Aug. 15, while keeping a significant part of downtown La Grande’s recent past percolating.

Guentert, 26, will open his first business, Brother Bear Cafe, a new restaurant and coffee shop at 1009 Adams Ave., the former site of Joe Beans Coffee, which closed several months ago because of health-related issues. Al and Colleen MacLeod sold their shop to Guentert after operating Joe Beans for 10 years.

Guentert, who previously worked at the MacLeods’ cafe for about 1-1/2 years, will salute their legacy by continuing to serve their Joe Beans coffee.

“Its flavor is hard to beat,” said Guentert, who began drinking the coffee seven years ago.

The coffee will be provided by Al MacLeod. He has roasted beans for years and will continue to do so for Brother Bear Cafe. Guentert was impressed not

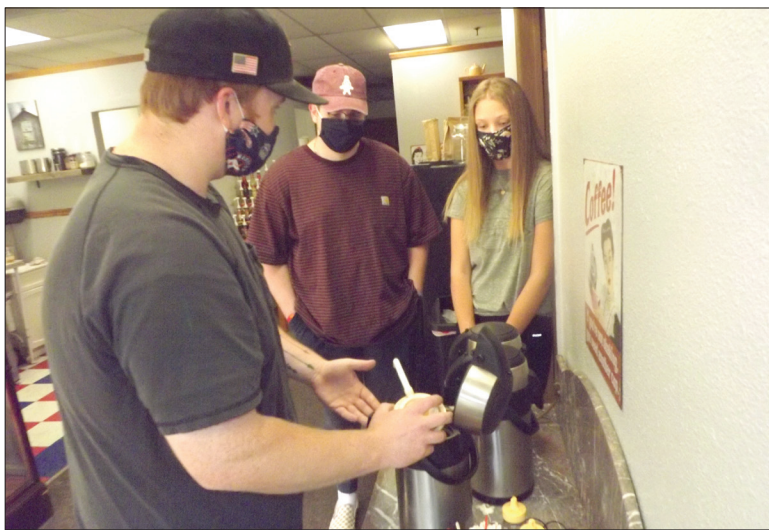


Photo by Dick Mason/EO Media Group

Brother Bear Cafe owner Kody Guentert (left) directs employees Riley Jefferies (center) and Soren Caudill through steps the staff will take at the new coffee shop and restaurant. Brother Bear Cafe, which opens Saturday, Aug. 15, will feature local ingredients and locally roasted coffee.

only with the MacLeod’s coffee but also with how the couple greeted their customers, something he and his staff will strive to emulate.

“They made everyone feel special, needed and cozy and comfortable,” he said.

Guentert added that the MacLeods were very good to their staff.

“It was fun working there,” he

said. “They treated everyone like family.”

Colleen MacLeod said Guentert was among their favorite employees.

“There is nobody like Kody. He is like a son to us. He is terrific,” she said.

Brother Bear Cafe customers will find the same hospitality but a different look. Guentert and his staff are working to add

a rustic look to the cafe’s decor and a lounge area with couches. And customers will find faster internet, as fiber-optic Wi-Fi service has been added.

All meat sandwiches served at the cafe will have a local flavor, for the ingredients will come from Hines Meat Co. in La Grande. Guentert has a first-hand appreciation of the quality of Hines’ meats as an employee there — a job he will resign from after his cafe opens.

Brother Bear Cafe’s features will include the presence of a candle making business and one that makes customized mugs.

Guentert, who grew up in the Pacific Northwest, is more than a businessman. He also is an Eastern Oregon University student close to earning a bachelor’s degree in psychology. Guentert has worked in the food service industry since he was 15. He previously was a cook and waiter at the Flying J restaurant in La Grande and also worked at Shari’s Cafe and Pies in Portland.

Guentert will be assisted at Brother Bear Cafe by staff members Riley Jefferies, Soren Caudill and Payton Jolley.

The cafe will be open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Tiny backpacks for chickens find parasites

By Sierra Dawn McClain
Capital Press

To help poultry farmers fight parasite infestations, researchers have invented a new insect detection system they believe could transform the industry: “backpacks” for chickens.

Amy Murillo, entomologist at the University of California-Riverside, recalls attending poultry meetings and wondering what could be done to control parasites.

Infestations can have devastating economic consequences, and parasites aren’t just a problem in caged birds. Some parasites, Murillo said, are more likely to fester in complex habitats with nest boxes where they can live in cracks and crevices, emerging at night to feed on chickens.

Poultry producers have methods of observing flock health, but examining individual chickens is painstaking. There

must be a better way, Murillo thought.

One day in 2017, when Murillo was looking at a Fitbit watch — a wearable device that measures people’s activity such as number of steps walked, quality of sleep and heart rate — an idea struck her.

Murillo knew chickens behave certain ways, such as dustbathing more often, when battling parasites such as blood-feeding livestock mites. It struck her that tracking chickens’ behavior might help detect mites.

“Looking at the watch, I thought: Hey, it picks up whenever I step. Why can’t we do this for chickens?” said Murillo. “It seemed like an outlandish idea at first for sure. It seemed silly to put a Fitbit on a chicken.”

But that didn’t stop her. Murillo approached

See, **Chickens**/Page 2B

Via Via Nikki’s to hold grand opening



Photo by Ronald Bond/EO Media Group

The Via Via Nikki’s Second Street location has already opened, but will hold a grand opening celebration Monday, Aug. 17, with \$3 gyros and a free soft drink. The restaurant opens at 11 a.m.