

Marching into Spring



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Union County Chamber of Commerce Director Suzannah Moore-Hemann poses for a portrait in her office Tuesday, March 16, 2021. She said the latest local shopping promotion, March into Spring, had 40 participants the first week and it appears to be gaining in size.

Union County shopping event gains momentum

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — March into Spring appears to be gaining momentum.

The month-long event, which the Union County Chamber of Commerce and La Grande Main Street Downtown are putting on to promote local businesses, had 40 participants the first week and it looks like the number will be jumping this week. Suzannah Moore-Hemann, executive director of the chamber, said on Tuesday, March 16, the number of people participating seems to be up from the week before.

“More people appear to be

coming in to get punch cards,” Moore-Hemann said.

Participants pick up punch cards in La Grande at the Chamber of Commerce, 207 Depot St., or La Grande Main Street, 102 Depot St. Next, they go to any of the 38 participating businesses in La Grande, Island City, Cove, Elgin and Union and make purchases. Every time they make a purchase at a store, their card will be punched one time for each dollar they spend.

Those turning in cards at participating locations are eligible to win weekly drawings each Wednesday of the month. Those who enter weekly draw-

ings are eligible for baskets of prizes worth between \$350-\$400 in total. All cards turned in by 4 p.m. March 31 will be entered in the grand prize drawing for a gift basket of items worth a total of \$500. The merchants participating in March into Spring are donating the prizes.

“They have been incredibly generous,” Moore-Hemann said.

The grand prize winner will be announced on social media April 1.

Entrants do not have to fill up their cards with punches to win. Cards with any amount of punches can be submitted for drawings.

“We wanted to make this contest accessible and for there to be a lot of participation,” Moore-Hemann said.

Another objective, she said, was to encourage people to visit stores they have not shopped at before.

Lists of the the stores participating in March into Spring are available at the Union County Chamber of Commerce and La Grande Main Street Downtown. For more information, contact the chamber at 541-963-8588 or Info@VisitUnionCounty.org, or La Grande Main Street at 541-963-1223 or director@lagrande-mainstreet.org.

Wallowa County wellness clinic moves

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — The Wallowa County wellness center offering acupuncture and other practices is operating at a new location.

Jamie Kimball, a doctor of acupuncture and Oriental medicine, recently moved her 4-year-old practice from her original location on East Main Street to 616 W. North St. across from Happy Gardens Chinese Restaurant.

“We’re a wellness center,” Kimball said. “We provide integrated health care along with traditional medicine to give people an option outside of what you would consider traditional or Western medicine. There are a lot of terms involved to what we do — integrative, I think, is the most ‘PC’ word these days.”

She also recently welcomed Amy Zahm, another DAOM, to her practice, which consists of five practitioners and two office staff. The clinic offers acupuncture, chiropractic, naturopathic, physical therapy and massage services, as well as a holistic approach that often uses body work, supplements, herbs and nutritional guidance.

Zahm, Kimball said, had been practicing at another wellness center in Wallowa County since the early 2000s and joined Eagle Cap in early February. Kimball said she and Zahm “treat all sorts of conditions,” including pain and anxiety.

Contrary to the concerns the uninitiated may have about acupuncture, she said it’s actually quite painless and relaxing.

“How I determine where I put in the points is based on what the person is telling me, what I feel in their pulse — pulse diagnosis is a big part of acupuncture — and then what I feel in their body,” Kimball said. “The points get placed in areas of either muscle tension or different points depending on their action and what they do. The points balance out

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Duck, duck, goose: World-renowned waterfowl breeder retires

By **SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN**
Capital Press

PHILOMATH — When Dave Holderread, one of the world’s leading waterfowl breeders, announced in 2019 he would retire in 2020, it shook the poultry and waterfowl communities.

“I’m still trying to absorb the news of his retirement,” said Jeanette Beranger, senior program manager for the Livestock Conservancy.

There are few waterfowl breeders of his caliber and knowledge in the world, Beranger said.

“His retirement is huge. I mean, he’s the man. In hockey, it’s Wayne Gretzky. In basketball, it’s Michael Jordan. And in waterfowl, it’s Dave Holderread,” said Colin Davis, owner of Apricot Valley Waterfowl Preservation, a farm in Ontario, Canada.

Holderread, 68, has bred and raised waterfowl for six decades in a lifelong game of duck, duck, goose. In Philomath, between Mary’s Peak to the west and snow-mantled Mount Jefferson to the east, Holderread and his wife, Millie, raised more than 20 heritage duck varieties and 40 heritage goose varieties they shipped to hatcheries and homesteads nationwide.

During his career, Holderread developed a new duck breed and improved existing breeds. He taught people around the world about the benefits of raising waterfowl for pest and weed control, eggs, meat, down, as protection against predators and for companionship.

Holderread said as his body has slowed down, it’s gotten harder to catch and handle birds, and the workload is no longer manageable. It’s time to move on.

“It’s hard giving them up,” Holderread said.

His glance strayed leftward, where his remaining geese grazed



Sierra Dawn McClain/Capital Press

Millie and Dave Holderread of Philomath pose for a recent photo. Dave Holderread recently retired as one of the world’s leading waterfowl breeders.

on pasture and ducks rooted under leaves.

“It’s been an adventure.”

A love for animals

Holderread was born in Twin Falls, Idaho. His dad was a high school agriculture teacher, and Holderread’s earliest memories are of tagging along to see students’ FFA projects. Animals captivated him.

“I was fascinated by anything that moved,” he said.

He said he remembers, from an early age, seeing ducks and geese as the animals that could do it all: walk, swim, fly. Whenever Holderread disappeared at parks, his parents looked for the nearest body of water, where they’d find him at the shore watching ducks and geese splashing.

Jungle island

When Holderread was 3, his parents whisked him away to Puerto Rico, where his dad got a job managing the first modern dairy opera-

tion on the island.

“What’s better for a kid that loves animals?” he said.

Holderread’s mom was a nurse, and within three years, she helped deliver about 100 babies. Holderread recalled she would often ride off on a horse into the jungle to help with deliveries.

“She was short and sweet, but nobody messed with her,” Holderread said.

He stroked his beard and smiled.

With his parents working, Holderread said he had “free run” of mountains, meadows and jungles he explored with his collie puppy.

Two yellow ducklings

When Holderread was 7, his family moved back to Idaho.

The transition was bumpy; he got kicked out of second grade for talking back to his teacher in Spanish.

State to settle lawsuit halting relief funds for Black Oregonians

By **STEVEN MITCHELL**
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — The state has agreed to settle a Grant County-based lawsuit halting coronavirus relief money for Black Oregonians.

Should the court approve, the fund could resume paying out aid to Black-owned businesses and their families, and as part of the settlement, the state would pay an undetermined sum to non-Black applicants who had applied for help from the fund last year, according to a proposed settlement agreement filed Friday, March 12, in U.S. District Court in Pendleton.

Great Northern Resources, a John Day logging company that lists Tad Houpt and Grant County Commissioner Sam Palmer as agents, filed a lawsuit alleging race-based discrimination after being denied funding from the coronavirus relief fund set up to help Black-owned businesses.

Under the terms of the settlement agreement, Great Northern would receive \$45,000, plus up to \$186,000 in fees for its attorneys.

The settlement proposal noted that \$25,000 of the logging company’s payout would be for COVID-19-related expenses listed on its grant application, while the

additional \$20,000 would be its service award as the lead plaintiff of the class-action lawsuit.

Applications that were submitted on time by business owners who are not Black will be automatically considered for funding through the grant program unless they opt out of the class action settlement, according to the settlement.

Houpt declined to comment Friday, and Palmer did not immediately respond to the Eagle as of Friday. Palmer told the Eagle in December that he was not involved in the lawsuit.

In a Friday press release, the Oregon Cares Fund said, amid mounting legal challenges, the fund offered to deposit with the court the remaining \$8.8 million it had not distributed, after distributing \$49.5 million to nearly 15,600 Black people, their families and their businesses.

If the court approves the settlement, \$5.3 million of the funds deposited with the court will be immediately released, and can be dispersed to eligible applicants who have been waiting for grants. The remaining \$3.5 million will continue to be held.

Great Northern — the original plaintiffs in the case — joined with Salem electrical contractor

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