

## Mother-daughter bakery business takes off

By ANN BLOOM  
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — Do you have an anniversary coming up? There's a cookie for that. Have a birthday around the corner? There's a cookie for that. Wedding? Yep, there's a cookie for that, too.

No matter the occasion, Rancho Road Bakery, a new mother-daughter bakery in Wallowa County, can probably provide you the cookies to commemorate the occasion.

Debi Warnock — the mother — and daughter Deidre Schreiber, started the business, named after the road they live on, about three months ago. It all started when

Schreiber, who attends Eastern Oregon University, was home for Thanksgiving break and, with a lot of time on her hands, baked about 300 gingerbread men that were scattered on the counter throughout her mother's kitchen, Warnock said.

"After she went back to college, I thought, 'Hey, do you think ...?'" said Warnock.

And the cookie-baking business was born.

"Who would have thought this community needed so many cookies, but they do," she said.

Warnock works full time as the OSU 4-H and Family, Community Health agent, and Schreiber is a full-time student. The bakery

is not a full-time endeavor for the women.

"We do it because we like to make people happy with cookies," Schreiber said.

Schreiber has worked at a bakery and Warnock has taught, by her estimation, "hundreds of kids in this county how to bake."

They recently moved to a house with a larger kitchen.

"Truly, our kitchen begs to be baked in," she said.

Schreiber said she "likes to experiment and learn different techniques and getting to enjoy the end product. It's a stress reliever."

Schreiber was in 4-H for 12 years and participated in the 4-H

cooking club.

"Who's not happy eating a cookie?" asked Warnock. For her, she says, it is a relaxing, creative outlet.

Among the cookies are sugar cookies decorated with royal icing, a type of icing that is used in decorating baked goods and is harder than regular buttercream or powdered sugar frostings. The duo said they spent quite a while perfecting the recipe.

They say they have made cookies for weddings, bridal showers and baby showers, birthdays, barbecues, Easter, Bible study groups, graduations and



Debi Warnock/Contributed Photo

A plate of tulip cookies made at the new Rancho Road Bakery.

See, **Bakery**/Page 2B

## Lights, lasers, action



Carbon Robotics/Contributed Photo

The robot from Carbon Robotics of Seattle is as big as a medium-sized tractor, can work through the night and uses lasers to zap weeds.

## Like 'Star Wars': Startup offers robots that kill weeds with lasers

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN  
Capital Press

NYSSA — Each year, vegetable farmer Shay Myers hires hundreds of workers to plant, weed and harvest approximately 4,000 acres of produce in Nyssa.

But that may change. Myers hopes to transfer his weeding work to robots.

Myers, CEO of Owyhee Produce, is an early adopter of a Seattle robotics company's "autonomous weeder," a self-driving, diesel-powered robot about as big as a medium-sized tractor that zaps weeds with powerful laser beams.

Carbon Robotics introduced the latest iteration of the technology in April.

"The idea of weeding robots to me, when I first heard of it, was like science fiction. I mean, it just seemed so far-fetched," Myers said.

Other farmers described the



Carbon Robotics/Contributed Photo

This undated photo shows a Carbon Robotics autonomous weeder in a field. Nyssa vegetable farmer Shay Myers is an early adopter of the Seattle robotics company's self-driving, diesel-powered robot.

robots as "extremely futuristic" and "like 'Star Wars.'"

The company says its robots will save farmers money by reducing their reliance on

labor crews. Because the units use a certified organic, no-till method of weed killing, Carbon Robotics says its robots also cut herbicide costs.

Myers, the farmer, participated in early trials and has ordered two robots for 2022. He estimates a single unit will save him 23 man-hours per acre per growing season — a big deal since his labor costs are up 40% during the past five years.

Each robot is equipped with artificial intelligence technology, 12 cameras, eight lasers, a GPS and a safety scanner.

When a farmer buys a robot, Carbon Robotics' engineers pre-program it to recognize field boundaries and furrows and to differentiate between wanted crops and unwanted weeds.

The robots are then sent out to zap weeds. The fine-tuned lasers can kill 100,000 weeds per hour with blasts of thermal energy — about 15 to 20 acres per day.

Paul Mikesell, Carbon Robotics' CEO, said he came up

See, **Robots**/Page 2B

## Court hears arguments over ranch's 'grazing preference'

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI  
Capital Press

JORDAN VALLEY — An Oregon family wants to convince a federal appeals court that its ranch's "grazing preference" was canceled contrary to the U.S. Bureau of Land Management's own regulations.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments on Monday, May 3, in the lawsuit, which raises questions about the interaction between private lands and public grazing allotments.

After losing a permit to graze on 30,000 acres of BLM allotments in nearby Idaho, ranchers Mike and Linda Hanley leased their private "base property" in Jordan Valley to their daughter and son-in-law, Martha and John Corrigan.

When the Corrigan family applied for a new grazing permit — citing the private ranch's "grazing preference" to the allotments — the BLM rejected the request in 2017.

The BLM claimed the property's grazing preference, which gave it priority for access to public allotments, was lost along with Hanley's grazing permit.

The agency's interpretation of the preference rules was upheld by a federal judge last year, but an attorney for Hanleys and Corrigan has now asked the 9th Circuit to overturn that decision.

Alan Schroeder, the family's attorney, argued that BLM must undertake a separate legal process to eliminate the grazing preference, which provides the ranch property with first-priority access to permits for nearby grazing allotments.

The Hanleys and Corrigan believe the BLM's decision could set a troubling precedent for ranchers' due process rights, since they weren't allowed to challenge the BLM's elimination of their property's valuable grazing preference.

The controversy has also concerned ranch groups, such as the

See, **Grazing**/Page 2B

## Grande Ronde Hospital Foundation wraps year with online event



Grande Ronde Hospital Foundation/Screenshot

Matt and Kyle Goodwin in this image from a Grande Ronde Hospital Foundation video tell how the loss of their baby Andrew in March 2020 led to their efforts to fundraise for a cuddle cot for Grande Ronde Hospital, La Grande. The cot allows grieving family members to stay longer with babies who die.

## Fundraising organization is working to improve ICU, patient communication, more

By PHIL WRIGHT  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Grande Ronde Hospital Foundation wrapped up its fundraising year in April with a livestream event that showcased the organization's efforts and brought in about \$6,000.

Foundation Manager Patrick Flynn said the online happening on the evening April 16 went better than he had hoped, and the 80-minute video has drawn at least 1,100 views, so the Foundation's message continues to get

out. Going to a livestream event, he said, was due to COVID-19.

"As with everyone this last year, COVID kind of blew everything up. We normally have our gala in mid to late March and that event is our largest fundraiser," Flynn said.

But two days before the gala in 2020, Gov. Kate Brown ordered the first shutdown of Oregon.

"We were about to head out to decorate the venue," he said, "and we got the notice."

The outbreak at that time was

small in Oregon with most cases in the Portland area.

"We just didn't anticipate it being a statewide shutdown," he said.

Neither did other organizations or events throughout Oregon. And after a year, he said, the foundation realized it was not going to be able to have a live gala in 2021, either. Some brainstorming led to a couple of ideas.

One was to livestream a gala. He said organizations taking that road have met with different degrees of success, but he ultimately did not see it as viable for capturing what the gala was about. The foundation during the

See, **GRHF**/Page 3B