

# Local

## Huntington Food Bank coordinators retire

By Eileen Driver

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After 16 years of dedicated volunteer service to the Huntington Food Bank, Darlene Graves, co-founder, and Maxine Murray, bookkeeper, are taking a well deserved retirement.

Graves said, "I will miss the work and the people, but its time for me to pass it on to someone with a little more energy than I have these days."

These two will be sorely missed as they have worked hard to make the Huntington Food Bank the successful operation that is today.

The Huntington Lion's Club, in partnership with the Huntington Christian Center, will be taking over the day-to-day operations and physical support of the food bank.

In 1998, a group of ladies from the Huntington Christian Center saw a need in the community and set about fulfilling that need.

They started the Huntington Food Bank in a small trailer on the Christian Center property and brought emergency food supplies to those in need. It soon outgrew the small trailer and was moved to the vacant Catholic Church in town and had to move again when that property was sold by the Catholic Church to a private party. It has been in its current location, the Lion's Building in Lion's Park, for about five years since the Lion's Club stepped up and donated the use of the facilities when the other



Maxine Murray (left) and Darlene Graves have decided to retire from their volunteer efforts at the Huntington Food Bank.

building was sold.

When the food bank was begun, they traveled monthly to La Grande in a pickup truck to pick up supplies and bring them back to Huntington.

For the last few years they have been lucky to have the food delivered here on a monthly basis by an Oregon Food Bank semi-truck.

When the food arrives, it is unloaded and stored on shelves and in freezers until it is time to sort and box it by family size and distributed to families.

The food is not all free to the food bank, they are billed at a comparatively low price to help with costs and delivery. But is

always free to the families that are on a fixed income or have lost their jobs and need the food to survive the month.

According to Maxine Murray, "The food bank spends from \$250 to \$300 per month for food and supplies." This makes looking for grants and donations a necessity.

The food bank has been fortunate and thankful to receive yearly grants from Ash Grove cement plant, Huntington Christian Center and FEMA but always needs to find other donors to make up the difference in costs as they are continuing to grow.

The Food Bank distributes food to an average of

50 families each month, from Huntington, Durkee and the surrounding area. This number has grown in the last few years due to the down turn in the economy.

The Food Bank is open the third Saturday of every month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Volunteers are always needed to help unload the truck on the second Monday of every month, and anyone interested in receiving assistance or donating time, money or food can come by the Food Bank or send an email to [huntingtonchamber@gmail.com](mailto:huntingtonchamber@gmail.com) for more information.

## Bentz announces new 2015 legislative team

SALEM—Representative Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario) has assembled the following people to help represent District 60's (Baker, Grant, Harney, Lake, and Malheur Counties) interests during the 2015 Legislative Session, which will convene Monday, February 2, 2015.

Andrea Dominguez, of Ontario, Oregon, is Rep. Bentz's District Director. She manages the day-to-day operations from the District Office in Ontario. A member of Rep. Bentz's staff since 2009, Mrs. Dominguez holds a Bachelor's degree in Media Arts with a concentration in Journalism from Eastern Oregon University, and an Associates' degree from Treasure Valley Community College.

Mrs. Dominguez staffs Rep. Bentz's Eastern Oregon office, works on research projects, assists in responding to constituent concerns, drafts press releases, compiles the Representative's newsletter, and helps manage the flow of legislative matters.

Michael Short, Esq., from Boise, Idaho, joins Rep. Bentz's staff as Legislative Director. Michael holds a Juris Doctorate from the Loyola University New Orleans College of Law with certificates in Civil Law, International Legal Studies, and Environmental Law. He also holds a Bachelor of

Philosophy degree from St. John's University in Minnesota, and is currently working on his Legum Magister (LLM) Degree in Polar Law at the University of Akureyri in Iceland.

Mr. Short will provide policy analysis, bill research, hearing backup, task force process management, and policy development.

Nicole Crane, from Salem, will staff the Representative's front office in the Capitol. Ms. Crane holds a Bachelor's Degree in Community Health Education, with a minor in Gerontology, from Western Oregon University in Monmouth, where she has been working as an Administrative Assistant.

Ms. Crane will maintain the Representative's calendar, organize email correspondence, and direct the flow of visitors through the Salem Capitol Office.

Lauren Boyd, from Vancouver, WA, will be a volunteer Legislative Intern for Rep. Bentz's team during the 2015 Session. Lauren is currently working on her Juris Doctorate at the University of Oregon School of Law, and will graduate in May 2015.

She is the Executive Editor of the Oregon Law Review and a Fellow with the Re-entry Court Clinic Design. Ms. Boyd holds a Bachelor's Degree in the History of Art from Johns Hopkins

University in Maryland. She is currently working as a court-certified intern for the Clark County Prosecuting Attorney's Office in Washington.

Garrett Kitamura, from Ontario, will return to Rep. Bentz's staff as a volunteer Legislative Intern for the 2015 Session.

Garrett worked as a Legislative Intern for Rep. Bentz during the 2014 Legislative Session. After graduating from Ontario High School, Mr. Kitamura deferred enrolling in college for a year to serve full-time as a State Officer for the Oregon Future Farmers of America (FFA), and was recently awarded his American FFA Degree. He is currently a sophomore at Oregon State University, majoring in English and Pre-Education.

Kieran Colahan, from Burns, will also be a volunteer Legislative Intern in Rep. Bentz's Capitol Office for the 2015 Session. Kieran is a junior at Willamette University, majoring in Sociology with a minor in Economics. He is a member of the Willamette University men's basketball team.

Rep. Bentz said, "This group will provide District 60 with a significant advantage in dealing with legislative issues, and it helps that three of my team are from Eastern Oregon."

The Legislature has



Submitted Photo.

State Rep. Cliff Bentz.

allocated \$37,662 to each Legislator to pay for staff, office supplies, and limited travel for the six month, "odd year" Legislative Session. Two FTE (Full Time Equivalents) are paid for from this fund. Since Rep. Bentz maintains his legislative office in Eastern Oregon year-round, he uses campaign contributions from his Campaign fund to pay for staff not paid for by the state.

Rep. Bentz is currently Vice-Chair of the Revenue Committee, Vice-Chair of the Joint Tax Credits Committee, and a member of the Energy & Environment Committee, the Transportation & Economic Development Committee, and the Legislative Counsel Committee.

He is also Co-Chair of the Public Infrastructure Commission, a member of the Governor's Transportation Vision Panel, and Assistant Minority Leader.

## ODOT

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Once I-84 closes many motorists look to locate alternate routes in order to reach their destinations without delay. Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) units are installed in many new model vehicles and are carried by many people and, once I-84 faces closure, this technology points motorists to alternative routes. Many follow the directions suggested by GPS without familiarity or thought to driving conditions on these alternative routes.

Motorists traveling between Baker City and Ontario find an alternative route with their GPS units pointing over the 5,400-foot summit of Dooley Mountain, past Bridgeport and Hereford, to Unity, Vale, and then into Ontario. While this route looks viable on a flat screen mapping device, the reality is quite different, according to Tom Strandberg, ODOT Public Information Office.

"Some people look at GPS and simply follow GPS and end up getting stuck. GPS offers alternative routes and folks don't know what to expect. Just because GPS shows another route doesn't mean it's a safe alternative," Strandberg said. "The route over Dooley Mountain is a windy, narrow two-lane highway. An alternative route like Dooley Mountain is not a safe alternative."

Strandberg explained that many times after imposing the closure of I-84, the Dooley Mountain route is also closed to semi-truck and passenger bus traffic. While the big rigs are off limits on Dooley during I-84 closure, Strandberg said that the full closure of the highway over Dooley Mountain is rare.

"We try to keep the Dooley Mountain route open to local traffic so people can get home," he said. "For those unfamiliar with the route it is best just to sit back and wait for the freeway to open."

The late fall and early winter of 2014 has been fairly mild and for the most part has seen smooth sailing on the freeway between Pendleton and Ontario.

"It's been pretty quiet. We had several freeway closures in November and one late last Sunday and early Monday due to a crash but other than that only some slide-offs and light impact accidents," Strandberg said. "We are trying to educate drivers as much as possible."

ODOT's driver education effort centers on getting current road conditions to motorists through the agency web-site [tripcheck.com](http://tripcheck.com). The site offers up to date road condition reports and allows viewers to see weather conditions on the routes by offering camera views of the roadways.

ODOT also offers winter roadway guides at truck stops and at ODOT offices "We encourage travelers to check [tripcheck.com](http://tripcheck.com) before traveling," Strandberg advises.

Additionally, ODOT now offers Twitter alerts sent directly to participants. Strandberg suggests those interested in Twitter road updates to sign-up for the service at web-site [dot. "Motorists should always use caution around winter highway maintenance equipment," Strandberg added. "If the roads are covered with snow and ice it is better to just follow the equipment as long as possible. And, never pass a snowplow on the right."](http://twitter.com/oregon-</a></p>
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### Other ODOT Winter Driving Tips.

Travelers should be prepared for winter conditions with possible snow and ice on the roadways as they travel over mountain passes and along eastern Oregon highways this week and through the weekend. People who are unprepared for winter travel can jeopardize their safety and the safety of others on the road. Here are some reminders to ensure everyone gets to where they are going safely:

Drive for the conditions of the road: Adjust your speed to the road conditions. SLOW DOWN! Plan extra travel time: Give yourself plenty of time for winter travel to reduce stress and help keep you focused on safe driving.

Turn off cruise control if snow or ice is present: You may lose control if cruise control is active in wet or slippery conditions.

Travel with warm clothes and emergency supplies: With temperatures in single digits and below zero at some locations, be prepared in case you become stuck in a traffic jam or road closure. Always carry food and water, a flashlight, extra cell phone batteries, blanket and other emergency supplies.

Use caution when taking alternate routes: If the route you were planning to travel is closed (due to weather or a crash), think twice before taking an alternate route suggested by your GPS navigation system. These systems may not take into account winter road conditions on secondary highways.

Use chains and traction tires: When chains are required, use the next chain up area to put on your tire chains. Continuing to drive in the snowy conditions hoping the road will improve is not a safe idea. Neither is stopping in the middle of the highway to put on tire chains.

Chain up areas and highway shoulders are not playgrounds: Use designated parking areas and never use chain up areas or highway shoulders as a place to play in the snow.

Don't park your vehicle along the highway: Parking in highway shoulders prevents plowing activities, limits access for emergency responders and creates a safety hazard for other road users. Abandoned or parked vehicles along the highway will be towed. Stay home if conditions are bad: Consider postponing your trip if road or weather conditions are extreme.

Know Before You Go: Visit [TripCheck.com](http://TripCheck.com) or calling 511. Here is a video about how TripCheck can help you.

For more information about winter travel, including links to chain-up videos and more, visit: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/COMM/Pages/winterdriving.aspx>