

Business & Ag

OTEC hires new communications director

By Meghan Andersch
Meghan@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Lara Pettilerc-Stokes is OTEC's new Communications Director. She is replacing Jim Horan, who will be moving to a new position in a different state.

Pettilerc-Stokes said she is looking forward to working for a democratically controlled, four-county, member-owned co-op. Pettilerc-Stokes, whose responsibilities include public relations and government affairs, said she had a chance to follow Horan around during her first couple of weeks and used a digital recorder to catch his "pearls of wisdom."

Some of the duties she has been learning include reporting outages to news media, keeping abreast of legal motions on the West side of the state, preparing press releases, and learning people and names from the four counties. She said she is highly organized and spoke glowingly of everyone she has met so far.

Her adventurous spirit shone as Pettilerc-Stokes described the route her life took before bringing her to Baker City. She and her husband, who both grew up in Idaho, spent four years teaching in Japan in a Japanese exchange

program.

From Japan, they moved to Seattle until, about 2007 or 2008, they decided they wanted to return "home."

Pettilerc-Stokes said her husband did not want to go to Boise, saying it's much bigger and busier than we remember and not for us. He did, however, have a job interview in Baker City, the town in which his mother had been born.

Pettilerc-Stokes said she decided to accompany him when he traveled for his interview, and that as soon as she saw the Elkhorn Mountains, she knew this place was something special. She recounted that she said, "Okay, if the air smells good and the water's okay, I'm in." She said when she got out of the car and sniffed, the air smelled fantastic. They tasted the water at their hotel and it was good. Husband Perry Stokes was offered and accepted the position of library director. After moving, Pettilerc-Stokes worked part-time while studying for her Master's Degree in Library Science.

After graduating, she worked five years at Eastern Oregon University as an Analyst II, doing a lot with budgets, numbers,



Submitted Photo.

Lara Pettilerc-Stokes is OTEC's brand new communications director here in Baker City.

and public relations. She rode the Community Connections shuttle service between Baker City and La Grande each morning and evening.

Pettilerc-Stokes said the job was wonderful and the people she got to know on her daily commute were just fantastic.

Pettilerc-Stokes said she was out of work and looking, when her husband told her about the opening at OTEC and said he

thought it was a job she'd be great at. She sent in an application, gave a presentation, provided three writing samples, and was ultimately hired for the position.

Pettilerc-Stokes stated she and her husband are in heaven and thrilled to be living in this beautiful place. They also feel blessed to be able to make a living in a place where that can be challenging.

Rite Aid's renovations continue

By Meghan Andersch
Meghan@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Baker City's Rite Aid store has been undergoing remodeling, both inside and out, down to the parking spaces in the lot being repainted.

Inside, merchandise is rearranged and certain items, such as yarn, have been closed out.

Kristin Kellum, PR specialist for Rite Aid, explained that the store is being remodeled into a Genuine Wellbeing store, with the remodel expected to be completed this spring.

Kellum explained, "This new store format, which debuted in spring of 2011, is part of Rite Aid's continued commitment to providing services, products, and resources to

help its customers and their families live healthy lives."

According to riteaid.com, the newly remodeled stores will feature lowered shelves and widened aisles to assist with navigation, as well as expanded health and wellness offerings.

Kellum stated, "There are hundreds of new health and wellness products including organic and/or gluten-free foods, an expanded caregiver section, all-natural personal care and home care products, fitness and workout equipment and a bigger wellness magazine and book section. The store also features a private pharmacist consultation room for advanced clinical services. Wellness Stores have pharmacists with special training in diabetes care, medication management

and the ability to immunize against about a dozen diseases including flu, pneumonia, shingles and whooping cough."

Another feature of the Genuine Wellbeing store is the Wellness Ambassador.

Kellum explained, "As a new customer service position created solely for the 'Wellness Store' format, the Wellness Ambassador serves as a bridge between the front end of the store and the pharmacy. Wellness Ambassadors also serve as a liaison to the community during periodic health events accompanying the Wellness Store format."

The store site states the Wellness Ambassador can also help locate products and provide access via iPad to information on over-the-counter medica-



Kerry McQuisten/
The Baker County Press

Workers continued exterior renovations Monday.

tions and supplements. Rite Aid will celebrate the completed remodel with a grand reopening ribbon cutting ceremony later this spring.

New beef processing plant to open

Texas-based Caviness Beef Packers has formed a joint-venture with the J.R. Simplot Company to build a new Idaho beef processing plant near Kuna, Idaho.

Pending approval of permits from all necessary regulatory agencies, construction of the nearly 300,000 square foot plant would begin in spring 2015 with an expected fall 2016 opening.

The new joint-venture will operate under the name, CS Beef Packers, LLC. The joint venture is expected to invest \$100 million to complete construction of the plant.

The plant is expected to process a maximum of 1,700 head per day, and could create up to 600 new jobs.

The primary purpose of the plant will be to harvest

cull cows and bulls from Northwest dairy farms and cattle ranches throughout the Intermountain West. The plant will also include hide and rendering processing and have the ability to process niche-fed beef programs.

Scott Simplot, J.R. Simplot Company chairman, said the new plant will be the first significant processing operation in the region, reducing the need for dairy farmers and ranchers to ship cattle out of the area for processing.

It's estimated that there are more than 600,000 dairy cows and more than 600,000 beef cows in the region.

"This effort complements the area's dairy industry including milk, cheese and yogurt processors," Simplot said.

Caviness said, "We look forward to being a valued partner to area ranchers and dairymen as we expand our footprint in the United States with another world-class beef packing facility."

The final product will be

prepackaged boxed beef that will primarily be marketed toward food-service suppliers and retail outlets.

"We are excited to bring a new advanced plant to the area," said Tom Basabe, president of Simplot Land and Livestock.

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CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

BRUCE NICHOLS, CPA
STAN MITCHELL, CPA
2550 Broadway, Baker City
541-523-6471 • brucenichols@integra.net

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— WEEKLY HAY REPORT —

Friday, March 6, 2015 — Eastern Oregon

Prices trended generally steady compared to the same quality last week. Trade activity and demand have slowed a little this week. The continued good weather in several areas of Oregon has slowed down demand, as pasture grasses are growing causing end users to be able to turn animals out on pasture rather than purchase and feed additional hay. Few containers available at the shipping ports has slowed down the ability to export hay overseas. Several producers have held all that they plan to sell for this season.

Baker County: No new sales confirmed.

USDA Market News Service—AMS.USDA.gov

— CATTLE MARKET REPORT —

Wednesday, March 4, 2015
Vale, Oregon

Cattle sold through the auction: 631

Steer Calves

300-400# Bulk 294.00 - 319.00 Top 332.00
400-500# Bulk 274.00 - 312.00 Top 318.00
500-600# Bulk 258.00 - 286.00 Top 294.00

Heifer Calves

300-400# Bulk 234.00 - 259.00 Top 272.00
400-500# Bulk 232.00 - 256.00 Top 258.00
500-600# Bulk 224.00 - 259.00 Top 264.00

Yearling Steers

600-700# Bulk 221.00 - 239.00 Top 243.75
700-800# Bulk 196.00 - 214.00 Top 217.00
800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Yearling Heifers

600-700# Bulk 204.00 - 219.00 Top 229.25
700-800# Bulk 187.00 - 206.00 Top 208.00
800-900# Bulk N/A Top N/A
900-1,000# Bulk N/A Top N/A

Thin Shelly Cows 89.00 - 101.00
Butcher Cows 103.00 - 113.00
Butcher Bulls 108.00 - 129.00
Stock Cows 1400.00 - 1775.00
Younger Hfrts. 118.00 - 149.00
Stock Cows Yng. - 1825.00 - 2200.00

ProducersLivestock.com
541-473-3136

— LOG PRICE REPORT —

Price per 1,000 board feet: Northeast Oregon

Delivered to Elgin

Doug Fir / Larch 6"+ \$370/m
White Fir/Sp 6"+ \$380/m
LPP 6"+ \$350/m

Delivered to La Grande

P. Pine 6-11" \$290/m
12-17" \$340/m
18-23" \$390/m
24'+ \$420/m

Delivered to Pilot Rock

12-17" \$390/m
18-23" \$440/m
24'+ \$480/m

Delivered pulp

\$28/ton to Elgin
\$28/ton to La Grande
Courtesy of Arvid Andersen,
Andersen Forestry Consulting

— PRECIOUS METALS REPORT —

Price per ounce, USD

Gold: \$1164.00
Silver: \$15.74
Platinum: \$1,131.13
Palladium: \$802.00

Bloomberg.com

— AG COMMODITIES —

Corn: \$384.00/bu/USD
Wheat: \$486.50/bu/USD
Soybeans: \$990.50/bu/USD
Oats: \$283.50 bu/USD
Rough Rice: \$10.49/cwt/USD
Canola: \$460.50 CAD/mwt
Live Cattle: \$153.95/lb./USD
Feeder Cattle: \$206.93/lb./USD
Lean Hogs: \$65.35/lb./USD

Bloomberg.com