

Birkenfeld Store Reinvented as "The Ol' House of Music"

By Scott Laird

Drive north of Vernonia on Highway 47 and then follow Highway 202 towards the coast range and it feels like you are heading back in time. And in a way you are, especially if you stop in the sleepy village of Birkenfeld. Cows, horses and farmhouses line the highway as you cross rivers and creeks

Eventually, twenty miles west of Vernonia, you reach Birkenfeld, home to one of the more interesting establishments in Oregon. A place that has been re-invented again and again. A place full of memories and history. And now, a place full of music.

Established in 1910, the the Birkenfeld Country Store, is considered the longest continually operating Country Store in the State of Oregon. Now known as "The Birk," this isn't just a country store anymore.

Although owners Mike and Wendy Ingraham continue to operate a small store section, with beer, chips, canned goods and other "necessities," they have slowly drifted away from the store concept and more into providing food and live entertainment in an unusual location and setting.

What the Ingrahams have created is a unique destination, an old style roadhouse filled with hospitality and charm, located out in the coun-

try, serving up whiskey and beer and sometimes a big old helping of the blues.

On a visit to The Birk you are likely to run into a completely eclectic crowd of people. On a recent evening



RootJack performing live at The Birk.

there were bikers in leathers, a logger straight from a job site still dressed in hickory shirt and suspenders, city folks who own cabins at Fishhawk Lake-the nearby vacation resort, as well as locals from Vernonia, Clatskanie and of course Birkenfeld. Throw in some college-age kids and few grandmothers and grandfathers and you've got quite a range in one room. During that visit I watched what looked to be three generations spending an evening out together-a father who had to be in his seventies, out on the floor with his daughter and his granddaughter, dancing to the hard rocking blues com-

ing from the stage. Sometimes you'll find bicycle riders, decked out in their spandex with their thousand dollar bikes parked out front, stopping for lunch as they ride the country roads, sitting alongside work-

ers dirty from a morning in the woods, who are sitting beside a group of local retired couples. Everyone is welcome at The Birk.

The Ingrahams purchased the Birkenfeld Country Store back in 2004. Several years ago they starting calling the place "The Birk Pub & Eatery," putting an emphasis on food and drink. They also started booking live music on weekend nights a few times a month.

Now, after several recent major renovations that completely changed the interior layout, the Birkenfeld Country Store has been almost

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Budget Committee Approves School Budget With No Teacher Cuts

By April Bamburg

FTE.

On May 23, the Vernonia School Board and members of the Budget Committee took a step toward saving high school Spanish, Shop and Physical Education courses. The document may read "Approved Budget," but it still has one more hurdle - the full School Board's adoption, which could come at the regular School Board meeting on June 13th.

But, the Approved Budget still comes at a price with cuts to the number of school days next year and several instructional assistant positions.

At the May 23 meeting, the Budget Committee was presented with a proposal to cut nine days from the school calendar as well as two instructional aid positions. Superintendent Dr. Ken Cox proposed further cuts to the number of instructional assistants, for a total of three, to cut an additional day of school from the calendar, and revealed that one retiring teacher and a half-time schedule of another teacher who is leaving the district, will not be replaced in the coming school year.

In the budget committee-approved document, high school Spanish is budgeted at .80 full-time equivalent (FTE), while high school shop is funded at .55 FTE, elementary PE is at .60 FTE and high school PE is at .40

In addition, Cox recommended that the superintendent position be cut to half-time, and the board and budget committee approved that recommendation with the rest of the budget document.

Cox told the board, budget committee and assembled crowd that if the district doesn't get more than a dozen new students by the end of September, they'll face a reduction in state funding in the 2014-2015 school year. A situation like this occurred in the previous budget cycle, Cox said, and because of that, the district must have an additional \$85,000 in the contingency fund to pay back the state in May 2014 when the state asks for the overpayment of state funds back.

Attendees expressed concern over the uncertainty over the number of new students that would need to join the district. Cox told the crowd that if those students did not arrive in this school year, the district would be forced to cut a teacher or calendar days to make up for the shortfall, although the previously mentioned cuts would help to cushion the blow.

The school board and budget committee approved the revised budget document and referred it to the next school board meeting for full approval. That meeting is June 13, 2013 at 6:00 PM

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Fleck Wins Second State Championship, Sets State Meet Record

Nathan Fleck, a senior from Vernonia High School ended his Vernonia track career in style.

Fleck set a new state record in the 800 meters while winning his second straight state championship at the 2A State Track Meet at Hayward Field in Eugene on May 24th

Fleck's time of 1:57.07 was also a new Vernonia school record. Fleck led the race from start to finish, pulling away to win at the end by 30 meters. "He's just been absolutely great all year," said Logger head coach Byron Brown. He's made all the runners around him better and pushed himself to excellence all season. He is possibly the best middle distance and all around runner ever to come out of Vernonia."

Senior Samantha Lindauer, capped her career by bringing home

four medals with an impressive 3rd place finish in the 3K, 6th in the 1500, as well as medaling in the 4x100 and 4x400 relays. "This was a great way to finish her high school career--another leader on the track for us," said Brown.

The Logger's Meghan Sullivan also brought home four medals--in the 4x100, 4x400, and took 4th in the 100 meters and 5th place in the 200 meters. "This was just an outstanding performance by an outstanding athlete in just her sophomore year," said Brown. "Her 2nd leg of the 4x400 was absolutely amazing--she must have made up close to 75 meters on the leader and actually moved us from last to first

HISTORIC HAYWARD FIELD				
Boys 800 Meter Run 2Finals				
HEAT: 1				
PL	NAME	TEAM	TIME	
1	Fleck	VERN	1:57.07	
2	Burns	ENTE	1:59.88	
3	Elder	RIUD	2:01.21	
4	Leon	LRIU	2:02.46	
5	Belanger	CULU	2:02.75	
6	Becker	ELIC	2:05.64	
7	Fine	OAKR	2:06.44	
8	Officer	MYRT	2:07.15	

at that point in the race. She almost killed herself doing it, but it showed what a champion she is. Expect great things if she can stay healthy."

Maina Martin took 3 medals with a 7th in the 100 meters and medals in the 4x100 and 4x400 relays. Senior Dezi Roberts took home 2 medals for 6th in the high jump and

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