

Fun Beach Fun Center: New owner takes the wheel

By LUKE WHITTAKER

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LONG BEACH — James Stewart always wanted to live by the beach, so when the opportunity to own a popular Long Beach attraction arose, he sprang.

In May, a “semiretired” Stewart, 59, moved from Camas to Long Beach to become the new owner of Fun Beach Center, which operates a go-kart track, mini golf course and snack bar.

‘Always wanted to live by the beach’

Originally from San Jose, California, Stewart moved to the Long Beach Peninsula from Camas to operate the business roughly six months ago.

“I always wanted to live by the beach, but when you’re young there’s no jobs. I was kind of semiretired and decided to move over here,” he said.

Stewart became aware the business was for sale after perusing potential real estate properties and became the official owner in May. Roughly three months into the experience, Stewart said things are going well.

“It’s going good. It’s a lot different from the businesses I had before — I never had young kids working,” he said.

Among the impressive young staff is Marcus Miller, 16, who works in the bike rental department and regularly makes bike repairs. In addition to rentals, the business also sells electric Rad Power Bikes, made in Seattle.

The business underwent an extensive renovation in 2018 under the ownership of Glenn and Hillary Trusty, who sought to rehabilitate the landmark after a drug raid on the former owner left the future of the business in limbo. The ambitious remodel involved the go-kart track, 18-hole mini golf course, snack bar and corner market.

Fuel prices impact operating costs

The price of the go-karts was raised from \$10 to \$12 for single rider due to the increasing cost of fuel, but Stewart isn’t anticipating any immediate or major changes, just some “tweaks” in the offseason. The prices include: go-karts (\$12 for single, \$17 for double), mini golf (\$10, free for kids under age 5) and bike rentals (\$25 per hour for e-bikes, \$40 for traditional bikes for full day).

The business, which has approximately 15 employees, relies on four primary sources of income — the go-karts, mini golf course, bike rentals and snack bar. The go-karts, mini golf and bike rentals have been steady, Stewart said, however the snack sales, particularly the ice cream, has been “frustrating.”

“It seems like more people come to use our latrines than buy ice cream,” Stewart said.

“But overall it’s going smoothly.”



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The Fun Beach Fun Center includes a go-kart track, mini golf course and snack bar.



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Fun Beach Fun Center owner James Stewart, left, talks to employee Marcus Miller while he makes a repair on an e-bike. Stewart took over ownership of the popular Long Beach attraction in May.

Fun Beach Fun Center

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James Stewart, owner

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