

Grants Pass Downs season under way

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grounds to suffer approximately \$30,000 in lost revenue, which contributed to its continued financial crunch.

These factors have made this year's racing season that much more critical to the fair-ground's survival, McBee said.

"We need to make money to keep the fair-grounds open," she said. "That's the bottom line."

Last December, the Josephine County Board of Commissioners ordered the fair-grounds to become self-sufficient with its finances. McBee said that under those circumstances, a successful racing season is very important.

"Horse racing is one of the things that will keep us self-supporting," McBee said. This year's racing season

was reduced to nine days, down from 15, in an attempt to cut costs.

Grants Pass Downs offers one of six race meets in the state, and is second only to Portland Meadows in overall size and scope.

Races will resume Saturday, June 23; with the Grants Pass Derby scheduled for Saturday, June 30; and the final Firecracker Quarter Horse Futurity Wednesday, July 4. That event will feature the eight fastest horses out of 76 competing in trials.

The futurity will have an estimated purse of \$35,500 and is the first leg of the quarter horse triple crown.

Races will run every weekend, with the last one slated for Sunday, July 8.

Tag Wotherspoon, director of communications and marketing for the event, had

an upbeat assessment of the situation Sunday as he waded through the crowd.

"I'm really excited about how things are going this opening weekend," Wotherspoon said. "The fans are having a good time."

Last Fathers Day, the Downs drew a total handle of \$47,296, Wotherspoon said. That figure is more than \$12,000 less than this year's handle.

As such, Wotherspoon was visibly optimistic about the likelihood of this year's races being a continued success.

"Mother Nature cooperated with us," Wotherspoon said. "With that in mind, we're off to a great start."

For more information, phone the Josephine County Fairgrounds at 476-3215.



Teen-age workers enjoy pizza. (Photo provided)

Teen Work Program has celebration of first year

A pizza feed for teen-agers, family and friends to celebrate the end of the first full year of the Teen Work Program was held by Illinois Valley Family Coalition on Thursday, June 7.

Some 22 teen-agers and guests attended the all-you-can-eat event. Teen workers attending were Chelsea Pearson, Case Pernicke, Rhino Prince, Tiffany Garland, Sarah Jaentsch, Mike Coots, Corie Hefley, Bethany Coots, Jesse Philemon, Drake Pernicka and Dean Hoyle.

The program provides job training and work experience to I.V. teen-agers while providing needed services to senior and disabled residents on a sliding fee scale. Teen workers may also be available to the general public depending on schedules.

For every three hours the participants are paid for completed work, they are assigned to one hour of community service. Some of the service projects worked are serving breakfast at I.V. Senior Center, landscape work at I.V. Visitor Center, and landscape clean-up at Siskiyou Field Institute's Deer Creek Ranch.

Group backs safe motoring

With more daylight and warmer days, the United Spinal Association urges motorcycle enthusiasts to review some simple safety tips before taking to the highways.

According to the U.S. Dept. of Transportation, a motorcyclist is 16 times more likely to die in an accident than occupants of vehicles with four wheels. Motorcyclists are also three times more likely to be injured than people in cars.

As part of its nationwide Motorsafe Campaign to promote safe motoring and raise awareness about spinal cord injury, United Spinal reminds that, according to a report released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: 3,661 motorcyclists died during 2003, a 12 percent rise from 2002 and a 74 percent increase from 1997.

Another 67,000 were injured, 4 percent more than those injured during 2002.

United Spinal's Motorsafe program stresses the following precautions:

- *Never ride without a certified motorcycle helmet and eye protection.
- *Read your owner's manual thoroughly.
- *Attend motorcycle rider educational classes.
- *Wear the proper shoes,

gloves, and clothing.

*Purchase a bike you can handle safely.

*Consider the primary use of your bike -- don't buy a "trail" bike for highway use. Similarly, don't buy a "highway" bike if most of your riding will be off-road.

*Follow the rules of the road and drive defensively.

*Ride sober and awake.

United Spinal Association's Motorsafe is a nationwide public awareness campaign promoting safe motoring.

For more information phone (800) 404-2898 or visit unitedspinal.org.

Walden aids retention of EDA aide for development

At the urging of Second District Congressman Greg Walden (R-Ore.), the Economic Development Administration (EDA) has reversed itself and will now keep an economic development representative in Oregon instead of consolidating the position with one in Seattle.

"As I've heard from economic development leaders from The Dalles to Klamath Falls, there is no substitute for having boots on the ground when it comes to helping jumpstart our local economies," said Walden said.

"The investments and partnerships that come from EDA are absolutely vital to rural Oregon, as is the in-person nature of so much of the work that goes into creating economic opportunities in these areas. The Dept. of Commerce provides tremendous economic assistance and advice to local communities, and it's great news that they saw fit to keep the economic development representative post in Oregon."

Walden added that he is "particularly grateful to Sandy Baruah," assistant secretary for economic development in Washington, D.C. She is an Oregonian and "dedicated public servant, who took personal interest in our case to maintain this vital position in Oregon."

Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.
- Thomas Edison -

I take a simple view of life: keep your eyes open and get on with it.
- Sir Laurence Oliver -

Budget fix proposes land sale ...

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services." Doug Robertson, a Douglas County commissioner and chairman of the Association of O&C Counties, presented an alternate plan during the June 14 meeting. The association plan calls for approximately half the 2.4 million acres of O&C land to be sold, and the other half saved for conservation and recreation purposes.

Robertson said that the portions of federal land to be sold under the proposal would remain open to the public; be designated for permanent timber production; and would be spared from future development.

Robertson said that the plan would produce an estimated 40 billion board feet of timber, which would take three years to come to market. The land sale, he said, would raise some \$12 billion.

That \$12 billion would be put into four separate trust funds for the counties, the

state, BLM and other states.

"We believe there are solutions at hand," Robertson said. "The answer is management on these lands."

During a question-and-answer session, Vaile said that he was "intrigued" by the Association of O&C Counties plan. But he disagreed with the concept of selling half the federal land.

"I have a hard time thinking you could split that baby in half," Vaile said.

Jim Frick, a real estate broker with Century 21 Harris & Taylor, asked Vaile if environmental groups would support returning the lands back to the counties. Vaile said that is an "interesting idea," but would depend on the environmental safeguards in place at the local level.

"The devil is in the details," Vaile said.

Robertson said that environmental groups would oppose such a move, because it would remove those lands from federal laws, including

the National Environmental Protection Act.

The meeting adjourned without consensus being reached on any issues.

During a Friday, June 15 telephone interview, Vaile said that he was disappointed that the meeting's main focus pitted timber interests against environmental interests.

However, he remains optimistic that common ground can be reached.

"I think there are some irreconcilable differences, but in some ways, I think there's also a lot of room to talk," Vaile said. "Maybe there needed to be some venting, and we got it out and next time we meet, it will be more productive."

The Josephine County Long Term Funding Citizens Task Force will meet again on Thursday, July 12 at 1:30 p.m. at Anne Basker Auditorium. Among topics to be discussed will be splitting the task force into smaller sub-committees.

Evergreen, Foris partner for Chateau

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IVCDO is a local non-profit and operates Oregon Caves Outfitters as the authorized concessionaire for the Chateau.

"There will be a lot of publicity about the Chateau in 2009 because it will mark its 75th anniversary and the 100th anniversary of the Oregon Caves National Monument," said Devine.

"However, this historic lodge is far too important to our local economy to wait until then to start letting the world know that it needs to be saved."

While looking at this year's submissions of wildlife art for the benefit of Wildlife Images, located in rural Grants Pass, Devine saw an image by Shawn Gould, an artist in Eureka, Calif. Devine thought that Gould's image would work as part of the Foris wildlife art series and for the Chateau as well.

"We have already been

working with local artists to produce ideas for a 'Cave Bear' beer label that could create awareness about the Chateau and create a small local cottage industry producing label art," said Devine.

"I really hope that this still happens; I think the merchandising opportunities could be out of this world.

"We were running out of time for this year, so I called Ted and, despite the short notice, he has hit another home run with his Foris Cave Bear Red wine featuring the image by Shawn Gould."

Said Gerber, "We were pleased that we were in a position to be able to help. and we are proud of the way the project has turned out so far. The Oregon Caves National Monument means so much to this community and all of us in Southern Oregon.

"It is important for the community to come together and ensure the preservation of this national treasure."

Why a cave bear? Devine answers, "I have realized

for a long time that there needs to be a renewed connection between the Oregon Caves and local businesses, especially in Cave Junction and Grants Pass.

"People seem to have forgotten about the whole Caveman thing and the effect it had on tourism. Just look in a phone book and see how many things still bear the Caveman name."

Devine continued, "We need new ideas -- things that will capture the imagination of today's tourists. Then, several years ago, a prehistoric bear skull was discovered in an unexplored area of the Oregon Caves, and I remember thinking how someone could have literally tripped over an great opportunity.

"A Cave Bear -- what a great marketing and merchandising opportunity for local business."

For information about the availability of this wine and others in the Foris Wildlife Art Series, phone Foris Vineyards Winery at 592-3752.

Driver sought

Oregon State Police troopers have a suspect in mind in connection with a reported hit-and-run accident in Kerby.

The incident was reported as occurring at 5 p.m. Friday, June 15 on Hwy. 199 near Holton Creek Road, OSP said.

The victim was identified as Kerby resident Tracy Dawn Nichols, 40. Her passenger was identified as Britney D. Loyd, 15, of Cave Junction.

Nichols' vehicle incurred more than \$1,500 damage, OSP reported. There was damage to her car's left rear, OSP said. The other vehicle had right-front damage. No injuries were reported.

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