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C & K CEO resigns

By
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A spokesman for C&K Market Inc. said "At this time there is no known ripple effect," after another tidal wave washed over the parent company of Ray's Food Place stores in Rogue River, Gold Hill and Central Point.

Greg Sandeno, president and CEO of C&K Market Inc., announced his resignation on Jan. 10.

Sandeno is the latest casualty as the Brookings-based grocery enterprise navigates its way through Chapter 11 bankruptcy. His announcement came just two days after the company, which operates 45 stores in Oregon and California, said it would lay off 45 members of its corporate staff.

The recent news puts half of the employees at its head office in Brookings and a year-old employee training center in Medford out of work, and that is in addition to the layoffs announced in November after C&K Inc. made headlines with the news that it would close 16 of its stores, including three in the Grants Pass area.

The company filed for Chapter 11 in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Eugene last fall and was forced to sell or close under-performing stores to resolve more than \$100 million in debt.

According to a press release, the corporate shake-up was the "next step" in the company's re-organization process.

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Greg Sandeno



(Photo by Dan Mancuso, Illinois Valley News)

Daniel Houston (right) along with his sister Sarah Houston during a march for justice Saturday, Jan. 18, up Redwood Hwy. Organizers estimated that almost 200 people showed up to support the Calvin and Houston families.

Bridgeview uses award to help fairgrounds

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

Bridgeview Vineyard & Winery scored a double-gold win for its 2011 Blue Moon Sweet Riesling from the prestigious San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition in early January and vineyard owner Bob Kerivan is parlaying the attention into a fund-raising effort to benefit the cash-strapped Josephine County Fairgrounds.

For the next six months, Kerivan is donating 25 cents from every bottle of Bridgeview wine sold in Josephine and Jackson counties to the 100-year-old fairgrounds; which must raise \$200,000 before July 1 to keep its doors open.

"I thought they needed some help," Kerivan said. "You don't get \$200,000 from just talking, you have to act. The county commissioners gave the fairgrounds six more months of life and we just can't let that facility shut down, that would be a disgrace for our county. The fairgrounds are a necessity for our community."

While fairground managers are focused on upgrading the aging facilities and booking more events to increase profits, various grassroots fund-raising efforts are also supporting the cause.

"If more businesses donate a small percentage of their sales, we could make a real difference. It all adds up. Businesses can afford to help out more than the average resident in the area, and those who participate can advertise on this and generate more sales."

It's a win-win."

Bob Kerivan
Bridgeview Vinyard and Winery

"I really hope this catches on," Kerivan added. "If more businesses donate a small percentage of their sales, we could make a real difference. It all adds up. Businesses can afford to help out more than the average resident in the area, and those who participate can advertise on this and generate more sales. It's a

win-win."

The \$10-a-bottle Riesling is packaged in Bridgeview's trademark blue bottle that is "beautifully etched" and now features the double-gold award on its label.

"Women really like this wine," Kerivan said. "We've gotten three good write-ups on this Riesling so far. It's well-established. We started our business making Riesling 35 years ago. We're one of the biggest Riesling producers in the state."

Bridgeview, with its 300 acres of vineyards, has about 25 employees in both Josephine and Jackson counties and produces a variety of high-quality popular wines.

The 30-year-old San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition is the largest showdown of American wines in the world. Over 60 professional judges from all areas of the wine industry participated in the blind tasting. Out of 5,825 wines (from about 1,500 wineries) entered in the competition, only 88 earned the double-gold award.

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Walker steps in to chair county

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

Josephine County Commissioner Cherryl Walker took over as chairperson of the three-member board in early January, replacing outgoing Commissioner Simon Hare. The position rotates annually.

"Our board is functioning very effectively," Walker said. "The three of us work together well."

About her management style Walker said, "I like to operate from a positive place. If you're always building on the negative, you'll never accomplish anything. We need to build upon our successes. And we do have successes here."

The board is holding a goal-setting session on Jan. 28 in the commissioner's conference room at 2 p.m. and Walker is encouraging the public to attend. She also invites citizens who can't make it but have constructive suggestions regarding what they'd like to see accomplished in the coming year to mail in or email input. In preparation for this meeting, board members are also gathering information from the county's departments.

"Our county programs are coping with big challenges," Walker said. "Most departments are sparsely staffed because we've had to cut positions due to lack of funding. We're looking at ways to implement more efficient processes, and that might include combining some services; and also, we're considering contracting out

some services. Depending on the service, that solution may be less expensive."

While the county faces many hurdles, finding solutions to the public safety funding crises is at the top of Walker's agenda. She said the county's 80,000 residents are entitled to a sense of security in their homes, schools, parks and businesses and that public safety is a basic human right.

"We must continue to work toward solutions," Walker said. "All the other issues facing our county are important, but when it comes down to it, without a solid law enforcement system in place, we cannot experience the benefits of our other accomplishments."

Walker said citizens deserve the peace of mind that comes along with knowing a dependable police presence is available to maintain order, protect property and apprehend criminals.

"Young people raising families may not want to expose their children to an unsafe community, and we cannot afford an erosion of our citizenry," Walker said. "This is a beautiful and amazing place for people to live, work and visit, but if people don't feel safe, and if we cannot resolve this situation, in addition to people moving away, our tourism industry, which is important economically, will also be diminished."

Walker supports the efforts of Securing Our Safety, the non-profit organization dedicated to finding long-term sustainable strategies to fund the county's public safety services. SOS is facilitating a public safety levy for the May ballot to fund the jail and juvenile justice programs.

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Sheriff's office volunteers needed

By
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IVN Contributing Writer

The sheriff office substation, located in the ground floor of the Cave Junction City Hall, is still in need of additional volunteers in order to expand coverage to five days a week, according to Sgt. Richard Butler, who is in charge of the volunteer program at the facility. He can be reached at 541-592-5151.

The substation is open from 1 to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Fridays. Butler, though, is hoping individuals or couples will step forward to help fill similar three-hour shifts on Mondays and Wednesdays.

"We've lost function with the failure of the levy," Butler said. "So, what we're asking is less difficult than what volunteers have provided in the past, or even what they currently provide in Grants Pass. For example, since there was

no money for gas for the patrol cars or deputies for backup in case of a problem, the patrol cars used by volunteers were sold."

Previously, volunteers patrolled specific areas to check for problems including the Lake Selmac boat ramps, the West Forks Trail area, the main parking lot at Forks State Park and Jubilee Park.

"We lent a presence we aren't able to do right now," Butler said. "In the past, we also visited all the businesses, and created a list of emergency contact information for the sheriff."

Other volunteer tasks include providing a presence at parades, and passing out information regarding available services from a booth at the Josephine County Fair.

"We appear at recruiting tables for events or open houses, but we haven't had a lot of luck recruiting volunteers for Cave Junction," Butler said. "On the days the substation is

open we do get a fair number of walk-ins and it can be interesting. We take non-emergency reports and funnel the information to the sheriff's office on an expedited basis and also file online reports for such incidents as stolen property or a neighbor dispute. Citizens are also able to file reports directly online."

Volunteers receive pepper spray training, CPR instruction and instruction in traffic control.

"We don't carry weapons," Butler said. "Guarding people is not one of our functions. In Grants Pass quite a few of our members provide court security, both in family court and the main court, checking backpacks and bags and other support functions. We also help out at the jail providing administrative functions. Some sheriff's office volunteers drive into Grants Pass from Illinois Valley, Williams and Merlin to volunteer at the courts and the jail."

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