WEATHER
COOLER, SMOKE AND CLOUDS, 20 PERCENT CHANGE OF RAIN

Veteran Phil Chaperon celebrates his 100th year   Page B1

Cascade Locks volunteers create school trophy case — A12

Runners continue training — A13

Columbia Gorge News

HOOD RIVER | THE DALLES | WHITE SALMON

Wednesday, September 16, 2020   Volume 1, Issue 24 $1.00

WILDFIRES IMPACT GORGE

Heavy wildfire smoke reduced visibility downtown The Dalles Friday afternoon to about three blocks. Masks were made available for residents county-wide, with distribution sites in The Dalles and outlying communities.
Mark B. Gibson photo

Smoke reaches hazardous levels

■ By Mark Gibson
Columbia Gorge News

Agencies throughout the Columbia River Gorge are responding to hazardous smoke blanketing the region and much of the state.

Citizen Alerts were sent to residents of Wasco County Friday and Saturday, warning of hazardous air quality due to thick wildfire smoke and informing residents that protective KN-95 masks were being made available at distribution sites throughout the county Friday and Saturday.

See **SMOKE**, page 2

HR Saddle Club assists with evacs
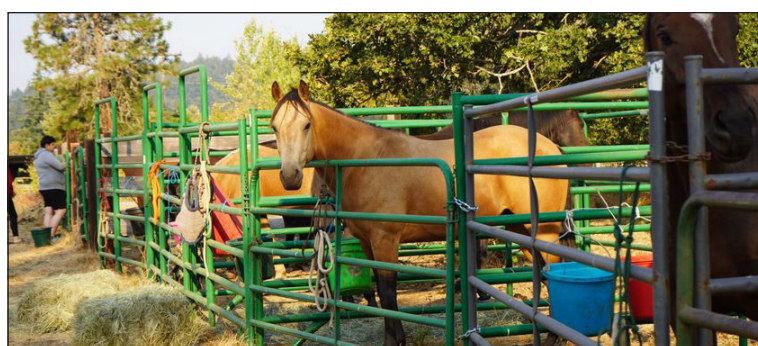
■ By Trisha Walker
Columbia Gorge News

The first load of horses and humans arrived from Estacada to the Hood River Saddle Club grounds Tuesday night, Sept. 8.

On that day, all of Clackamas County was under some kind of evacuation notice due to the Riverside Fire; Estacada was officially elevated to Level 3 — "Go Now" — orders Sept. 9.

Helen Hansen, Saddle Club manager, said she received her first phone call that day from a man with five horses who had seen the club's information on social media. Within hours, he arrived with his family and horses.

The club is now housing three families and their animals. Two of the families have campers and are staying on the grounds, while a third, who arrived with only a pickup and horse trailer, is staying with Hansen.

In all, the club is now hosting more than 10 horses, as well as chickens, a goat, cats and dogs.

"We're just trying to help people out," said Hansen.

She said word got out that the saddle club had space via social media and veterinary clinics. To make more pens, Hansen has broken down her own fencing. She has had numerous calls from community members wanting to donate items such as hay, but as of now, help is not needed.

Horses find safety at the Hood River Saddle Club after being evacuated from Estacada last week due to wildfires.
Photo courtesy Eloise Russell

Evacuation sites

Hood River County saw other sites, both public and private, offer their grounds for evacuees and animals. They are as follows:
■ Hood River County

See **ANIMALS**, page 3

'Under Canvas' review begins

■ By Jacob Bertram
Columbia Gorge News

Klickitat County will hear public comments through Sept. 18 on an environmental review of a development proposal submitted by luxury camping company Under Canvas after the Klickitat County Planning Department issued a preliminary determination of mitigated non-significance.

Most public and private development proposals must undergo an environmental review by the lead agency, in this case the Klickitat County Planning Department, of the ways in which a development can impact its natural surroundings. Named after the State Environmental Policy Act, a SEPA review can result in either a determination of significance, non-significance, or mitigated non-significance, which can be taken into consideration when a board begins its deliberations on the outcome of a permit application.

In this case, the planning department issued a preliminary mitigated determination of non-significance on Aug. 27, meaning the

See **REVIEW**, page 3

Hanging up the badge

■ By Neita Cecil
Columbia Gorge News

When Jeff Halter started college, he was considering engineering, but soon worried it would be too boring. So he switched to law enforcement.

Now retired after 29 years at The Dalles Police Department, Halter's demeanor might, ironically, lead someone to peg him as an engineer. He's bright, mechanically inclined, and measured — and not one to tell cop stories.

Most cop stories are also a story about someone's bad experience that they lived through, he said, and he doesn't want to infringe on their privacy.

Fellow retired officer Dan Nelson said of Halter, "He's a contrast to so many of the things you think cops are. Instead, he's all the things you want cops to be."

Nelson said Halter's policing style is "logical, because he's the smartest man I know. To say he's extremely logical in his approach would sell short the emotional side he's able to bring too. He's very thorough, very methodical, attention to detail. He's that guy, he's the guy you want in charge of things."

Born in Wisconsin, Halter grew up in Cove, Ore., a burg of about 500 souls. After starting college at Oregon Institute of Technology, he transferred to Western Oregon University once he grew keen on law enforcement.

After graduation and a few odd jobs, he landed his first — and only — police job at The Dalles in 1991. He was a detective after just four years, and made sergeant two years after that.

He knew foregoing engineering for law enforcement was a trade off: He'd make less money, but the job would be more varied, interesting and meaningful. And the job has at times proved a bit boring, "but it can be kind of soul crushing in different ways."

In the early days the job was fun, exciting and admittedly stressful at times. "After awhile though, you see a lot of dysfunctional people," he said, "and a lot of sad things and a lot of waste. I don't know."

See **BADGE**, page 3

Among Jeff Halter's hobbies are remote controlled airplanes. He built the 12-foot wooden plane pictured here.
Contributed photo

CONTACT US AT
541-386-1234
541-296-2141

DELIVERY/Subscribe@gorgenews.com
NEWS TIPS/ORnews@gorgenews.com or WAnews@gorgenews.com
PLACE AN AD/Sales@gorgenews.com

STAY CONNECTED
FACEBOOK.COM/
TWITTER.COM/
INSTAGRAM.COM/

0 88267 02331 4