

Big Sky statement

Hawks roll — A10



WHAT'S GOING ON

Entertainment A3 Happenings A9

WEEKEND EDITION

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'Grow a row for us'

Non-profit's members look at challenges and opportunities in goal of feeding the Gorge

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
News editor

Gorge Grown, champion of local growers and improved nutrition and access to quality food in the region, hosted a wide-ranging discussion on "feeding the

Gorge" Thursday.

At the second monthly "Community Conversation" on local agriculture, Rebecca Suits of Oregon State University asked the producers to "Grow a row for us": set aside a portion of their fields to grow food that can be used in nutrition education programs in the schools.

Suits noted that this month, OSU nutrition educator Lauren Kraemer served students onions, caramelized and in high demand — last month it was carrots — and Suits said students responded well to consuming healthy foods. Kraemer is always looking for local food to serve to kids at

"tasting tables" that demonstrate how delicious healthy, whole food can be.

Suits added that the Hood River County School District is amenable to increasing purchase of locally-grown food, as long as they can get it fresh — just one opportunity mentioned in Thursday's gathering at Springhouse Cellars.

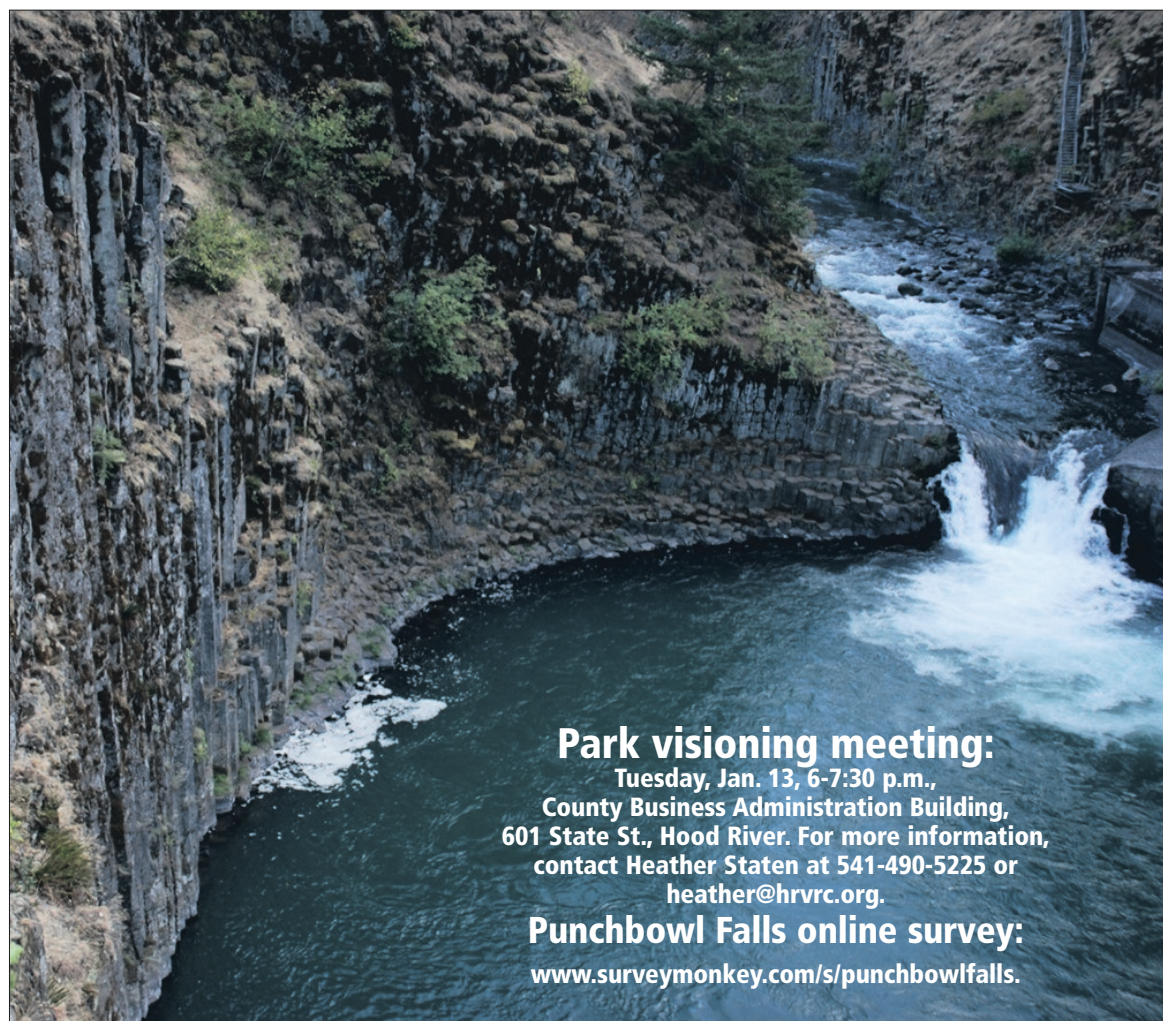
About 70 people attended, more than Gorge Grown director Sarah Sullivan expected, prompting a second run for pizza, as the group weighed in on challenges as well as opportunities to local food producers.

Please see GROW, Page A2



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

"CHANGE HAPPENS from the ground up," Gorge Grown director Sarah Sullivan told members Thursday.



Park visioning meeting:
Tuesday, Jan. 13, 6-7:30 p.m.,
County Business Administration Building,
601 State St., Hood River. For more information,
contact Heather Staten at 541-490-5225 or
heather@hrvc.org.
Punchbowl Falls online survey:
www.surveymonkey.com/s/punchbowlfalls.

Photo courtesy of Western Rivers Conservancy

PUNCHBOWL FALLS will be the subject of discussion during a public forum held next week to gather input on a plan to turn 102 acres of land around the falls into a public park. The meeting will be held Tuesday at 6 p.m. at the County Business Administration Building, 601 State St.

Groups seek public input on Punchbowl

First of two public meetings on park proposal held Tues.

By BEN MITCHELL
News staff writer

Hood River County and conservation groups want to turn an area around a popular waterfall near Dee into a public park and are looking to the public for input on the plan.

On Tuesday, a meeting will be held in Hood River to discuss a proposal regarding the development and management of a public park at Punchbowl Falls, located just north of Dee off Punchbowl Road. The 10-foot-high falls are created by the West Fork of the Hood River tumbling over pillars of columnar basalt, from which swimmers often leap on a hot summer's day.

Though it is a popular place for swimming as well as other recreational activities, the land is currently private property. Portland nonprofit Western Rivers Conservancy bought 20 of its 102 acres along Punchbowl Falls from Longview Timber in 2006 and the remainder from PacifiCorp in 2010

for the purpose of preserving the land for public access as well as for fish habitat. The land under WRC's ownership includes land south of the falls and stretches past a popular sandy beach located north of the falls at the confluence of the East and West forks of the Hood River.

WRC has been trying to sell its land to the county for years with the provision that it be used as a county park, but has not been successful. Early last year, WRC met with the county and offered to sell its land at half its appraised value of \$1.1 million and offered to set up a development and maintenance fund for the proposed park.

The county agreed and pursued a \$578,000 Oregon State Parks Grant to purchase the park, but was denied, with the state placing the request near the bottom of a list of 36 other projects around the state that were also seeking funding.

Heather Staten, executive director of Hood River Valley Residents Committee, a citizens land use group that is helping with the public "visioning" process for the project, said that one of the reasons the state had ranked the project so low was because the county had not

Please see LAND, Page A2

Spotlight

A weekly series about a day in the life ...

Kirk Miller enjoys the challenges of Ski Patrol



Photos by Trisha Walker, submitted

This is Kirk Miller's fourth season on the Mt. Hood Ski Patrol, a volunteer position he maintains because he enjoys the comradery of the team. Pictured are, from left, instructor John Gastineau, Miller, and Beau Dickey.

By TRISHA WALKER
News staff writer

Kirk Miller has a day job — he's a software designer at Insitu — and, with his 50 hour work weeks, you'd think that would be enough to keep him plenty busy.

Spoiler alert: It's not.

This is Miller's fourth year as a volunteer member of the Mt. Hood Ski Patrol. Unlike pro patrollers, who cover all resort locations on Mount Hood year round, volunteers commit to working at Mt. Hood Meadows one day every other weekend — for Miller, that's Sunday — during the season, which generally runs November through May.

Ski patrol serves as "a release from my normal day to day routine, so it's a nice break for me," he said. "How-

Please see KIRK, Page A7

New year, new series

With Megan Spears we began "Saturday Spotlight," our new weekly feature, succeeding Slice of Life. "Spotlight" will focus on how local people spend their days. Do you have a person in mind for Spotlight? Send ideas to Trisha Walker at twalker@hoodrivernews.com.

LOOK INSIDE

- A2 — The Ale List
- A3 — Entertainment
- A4 — Viewpoint
- A6 — Obituaries, Public Records
- A8 — Adopt-A-Pet
- A9 — Legals, Happenings
- A10 — Sports
- GC — Classifieds

May special districts election filing begins

The filing period has started for the Special District election on May 19, 2015.

Filings for special district seats are accepted through March 19, which is also the deadline for districts to file a measure for the May election.

Potential candidates can find the filing form on the Hood River County Elections website. All applications must be in our office no later than 5 p.m. on March 19.

For details contact the Hood River County Elections office at 541-386-1442.

Rotary Ski Day returns Jan. 19 at Meadows

The best deal on skiing you'll find all year will be Jan. 19 at Mt. Hood Meadows.

The occasion is the annual Rotary Ski Day, for all the skiing you can do from 2-9 p.m. The price is \$15 in advance, \$20 at the gate. Go to: ski-hood.com/schedules and events to purchase your Rotary pass. Rotary devotes the proceeds to its scholarship program and other projects. In addition to the skiing, Rotary brings in singer-comedian Joe Stoddard for a show from 6-9 p.m. Food and drink is available for sale at the various Meadows outlets at the resort. Regular tickets and season passes will be in effect until 4 p.m., but after that you need a Rotary ticket to use the lifts on Jan. 19.

Lions Club Christmas tree collection

The Hood River Lions Club will be picking up Christmas trees inside the Hood River city limits today (Jan. 10) from 9 a.m. until noon, said Christmas Tree Pickup Project chairman Scott Thomson. To participate, simply leave your tree outside on the curb for club members to collect. There is no charge for the service; however, Lions members will go door-to-door to collect donations, and donation envelopes will left where residents are not at home.

