

'Kettles' of Fun

'Follies' return this weekend — B1



Top Ten

A newcomer eyes the Community Ed catalog — A5

MIDWEEK EDITION

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'Politics of Climate Change' speaker today

"The Politics of Climate Change" will be the focus of a presentation this Wednesday, April 8, featuring former White House staffer Dr. Johannes Loschnigg at Springhouse Cellars in Hood River. Doors open at 7 p.m., and the presentation is at 7:30 p.m., followed by questions and answers.

This event is a fundraiser for Hood River County School District middle and high school science programs. A \$5 donation will be invited at the door.

Dr. Loschnigg served as senior policy analyst at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy from 2009 to 2013. As part of the Environment and Energy Division, he helped develop federal policy for renewable energy, climate change, aerospace and earth satellite observations.

Previously, he was staff director for the Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics of the Committee on Science in the U.S. House of Representatives, overseeing NASA and U.S. civil space programs.

Springhouse Cellars is located at 13 Railroad Street, Hood River.

Port plans to close on Lower Hanel land buy

By PATRICK MULVIHILL
News staff writer

The Port of Hood River is taking final steps to close on the purchase of a 9-acre property in Odell, the former lower Hanel Mill site. The vacant lot could become a valuable property for the Port as early as July.

The property sits just off Highway 35 north of Odell at 3289 Neal Creek Mill, near the tracks of Mt. Hood Railroad — a potential spot for businesses in need of rail and highway access. The Port is interested in subdividing the 9.3 acres into several parcels for light industrial use.

"We've got a pretty clear path to finish the work we need to do to close," said Port Executive Director Michael McElwee.

The Port originally voted to purchase the site from Hanel Development Group in May of 2014 at the price tag of \$850,000, subject to a five-month due diligence process. However, the commission decided it needed more time to assess the property for "surprises" such as environmental contaminants, said McElwee.

"The commission wasn't comfortable with that price with those risks," said McElwee. "So essentially the purchase and sale agreement expired but we remained interested in it."

The port underwent extensive environmental analyses before agreeing to renew their sale con-

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Photo by LisaAnn Kawachi

BEARING BLUE

Quinn Carlross, left, and Casey Beaman, both 9, reach high to attach blue ribbons on trees on Oak Street Saturday, some of 3,000 in Hood River County prepared for the 24th annual Blue Ribbon Campaign during National Child Abuse Awareness Month in April. The Child Abuse Advocacy Center hosts a fundraiser on April 19; learn more about that and the Blue Ribbon Campaign on page A12.

Pressing issues

In town hall, Merkley blasts budget, calls for 'action now' over climate change

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
News editor

High school students had the first and last words at Sen. Jeff Merkley's town hall Monday night at Hood River Middle School, calling for action on immigration and climate change.

Merkley, a Eugene Democrat, told HRVHS senior Christina Garcia he would keep working to revive immigration reform, saying "our system is broken," and he returned to junior Charley Boonstra's concern by speaking to climate change in his summing up before the audience of 75 people.



Jeff Merkley

"We all have to tackle this together," he said, pointing to a new carbon reduction agreement with China that he finds encouraging.

In the town hall, Merkley said he supports the Iran nuclear framework agreement and will work to prevent Congressional opponents from stopping it, and said revisions are on the horizon in federal education law, replacing No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Hood River Education Association President Kelvin Calkins told Merkley, "There are many ways to assess (student progress). We don't have to test every student, every grade, every year."

Merkley told him, "No Child Left Behind went way off track with high stakes testing and the shaming of schools, rather than supporting schools that need help. The shaming of schools has not worked, anywhere," he said of

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Blossom Time: Cider Fest, Studio Tour and more

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
News editor

Blossom Time bubbles up this weekend with the kickoff event, the second annual Hard Pressed Cider Fest, at Mt. Defiance Fruit on Stadelman Drive in Odell, noon to 7 p.m. Saturday.

Also happening this weekend is the annual Gorge Artists Open Studio Tour, April 10-12, throughout the Gorge. This self-guided tour provides visitors the chance to meet and talk with artists in their studios. A total of 38 artists will be on hand from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day.

Detailed maps are available at www.gorgeartist.org and at area Chambers of Commerce, and Columbia Center for the Arts.

This year's artists feature works in a variety of media including



Submitted photos

OPEN STUDIOS tour: works including photographer Leah Hedburg (cherries) and ceramist Aimee Herring Brewer (vase) highlight the April 10-12 event.

painting, drawing, jewelry, glass, sculpture, photography, textiles, fiber, and more.

Hard Pressed Cider Fest is open to all ages. Admission is \$5 (ages 18 and under are free), and \$5 for a tasting cup and four tokens. Look for more parking this year; admis-

sion is limited to 3,000 mug holders.

A total of 21 cideries from Hood River and the Gorge as well as Portland and Washington state are expected (see list, page A11), and there will be food, music, and a kids' area.

The monthly Second Saturday at

Western Antique Aeroplane and Automobile Museum will host a mini-car show featuring Dodge Brothers automobiles on April 11. WAAAM will have its 1916 Dodge Brothers Roadster out to take part in the retrospective of Dodge Brothers vehicles. The restoration shop will also be open for a tour at 1 p.m. and some airplanes from the museum's collection will be out getting some exercise too.

Three weekends make up Blossom Time. The centerpiece on April 18-19 will be the Blossom Craft Show and the Blossom Fest Quilt Show, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The fairgrounds are located in the midst of orchard country at 3020 Wy'east Road, near the community of Odell. Admission and parking are free.

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Four To Go

Panorama: April 11

Panorama, Hood River News' four-part annual special section, is coming. Panorama is your guide to Blossom Time events this month as well as the panorama of pleasures of living in the Gorge and will be included in the April 11 edition.



Get Thee to the Library!

Hood River Library hosts a passel of events for Shakespeare Week, April 21-24; kids can pick up bookmarks starting April 14.

Shoe Box stagecraft happens April 21; assemble your own shoe box theater and all the world's your stage. Portland's Original Practice Shakespeare troupe on April 23.

HRVHS cheer holds Clinic Sunday

Students 7-14 are invited to Sunday's cheerleading clinic at HRVHS, 1 to 4 p.m., taught by two juniors on cheer squad, for their Extended Application project. Cost is \$10, with all funds going to HRVHS cheerleading. Learn dance, chants, motions, jumps and crowd-working tips. For details call Kelsey at 541-399-6634 or Skylar at 490-7441. The camp is recommended for any eighth-grader planning to try out for fall squad.

Stewards seek help on Indian Creek

To celebrate Earth Day, Indian Creek Stewards will replace blackberry and other noxious weeds on Indian Creek. Volunteers are needed on April 18 to spread mulch to discourage noxious weed infestation.

Meet on Broken Tree, west of Indian Creek Golf Course; work goes from 9 a.m. until about 1 p.m.

Bring a wheelbarrow, rake, or shovel; coffee and snacks will be provided. For details, contact Megan Saunders or at 541-386-6063 or megan@hooddriverswcd.org.

