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Self-serve in the Gorge?

Bill allowing self-service gas in rural Oregon passes House

By PATRICK MULVIHILL
News staff writer

Drivers in rural stretches of Oregon—including Hood River County—could be pumping their own gas if a new bill makes it through Salem.

The Oregon House unanimously passed a bill last Friday that would allow gas stations in counties with

fewer than 40,000 residents to keep self-service pumps turned on when no owner, operator or attendant is present to dispense gasoline.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario), and co-sponsored by Senator Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day) breezed through the House with a bi-partisan 60-0 vote. The next step is a Senate decision.

Oregon is one of two states that have historically banned self-service gas, along with New Jersey. The new legislation would strike down Oregon's 64-year-old law barring Oregonians from pumping their own fuel, but only in rural

areas. The original 1951 statute intended to defend the public from handling "Class 1 flammable fuels," and also to protect the elderly and disabled from getting out of their car to pump gas "because Oregon's weather is uniquely adverse, causing wet pavement and reduced visibility."

The new bill attempts to ease traveling through isolated stretches of Oregon, particularly in southeastern Oregon, where drivers can become stranded if no gas stations are open. Bentz argued parts of Oregon are so remote that people

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Photo by Patrick Mulvihill

ESME VELA, assistant manager at Nobi's Gas Station, pumps gas Wednesday afternoon at the Tucker Road station.

'Remembering the Year 1980'



Photo by Darryl Lloyd

LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHER Darryl Lloyd captured the eruption of Mount St. Helens during its second big eruption on May 25, 1980, from the south side of Mt. Adams at 7,800 feet. "The eruption started early in the morning and lasted until midday," Lloyd said.

Lloyd presents slide show of St. Helens

BY TRISHA WALKER
News staff writer

Local photographer Darryl Lloyd will present "Remembering the Year 1980" at Skamania Lodge in Stevenson on May 13, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The presentation is part of the Mount St. Helens Institute's Volcanic Views and Brews Scenic Pub Lecture Series, which is cele-

brating the 35th anniversary of the mountain's eruption.

The presentation is one of several located within the Portland/Vancouver area.

Lloyd will serve as host for the evening, showing about 50 slides that he took of Mount St. Helens over the course of several years.

"I've always had a very intense

interest in Mount St. Helens, since I first climbed it at 11 years old," Lloyd said. He went on to climb the mountain several times in the 1970s. The presentation begins with his time on the mountain as a child, then continues to some of his climbing expeditions before concentrating on photos he took in

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Union Pacific president visits

Railroad chief meets with local leaders

By RAELENN RICARTE
The Dalles Chronicle

The top executive for Union Pacific Railroad and his communication team met Tuesday with city, county and port officials in the gorge to discuss safety concerns related to crude oil shipments.

During an interview May 5 at The Dalles Chronicle office, Lance Fritz, UP president and chief executive officer, noted that railroads are prohibited by federal law from turning down coal and oil shipments.

"If our customer delivers a commodity to us that conforms to U.S. Department of Transportation requirements, we must ship it," he said.

Transport of both products has drawn fire from environmental groups concerned about pollution from coal dust and explosive fires caused by a derailed oil train. On a larger agenda, the Sierra Club and other organizations have vowed to stop production and use of both fuel sources out of the belief they

contribute to global warming. "We are somewhat caught in the middle between a group of highly motivated individuals who don't want these products to move and our obligation," said Fritz.

At the end of the day, he thinks it is highly unlikely that coal and crude shipments by rail will be shut down altogether by political will. Especially when truck transports of oil have not only the highest rate of accidents but the highest fatality rate, according to a Manhattan Institute report. Seventy percent of crude oil and petroleum products are shipped by pipeline in the U.S., with 23 percent by barge or ship, three percent via rail and four percent in trucks.

"Every generation of leadership has new challenges so we just



Lance Fritz

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Spotlight

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

Nellie Hjaltalin shares Meals on Wheels experience

BY TRISHA WALKER
News staff writer

Nellie Hjaltalin, 88, has found it hard to retire as a driver with the Hood River Valley Adult Center (HRVAC) Meals on Wheels program, where she's volunteered for the past 25 years.

But she's had to, due to health reasons, and now she's hoping that someone else — or many someones — step up to take her place. Though it's not a big time commitment, finding volunteers is often difficult.

"The younger generation doesn't think of it," Hjaltalin said. "They're thinking of their grandkids who maybe have a soccer game, or 'I want to go shopping.' It's a case of being volunteer oriented, and I don't think many people are nowadays.

"To me, the most important thing to stress is that a lot of people say, 'I can't take the time.' It's really only two to three hours, but it's what you make it. Two or three hours out of your day is minor (in light of) what you are doing."

Hjaltalin started as a driver after retiring from the sales audit department at Meier & Frank in 1989, when she moved

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Photos by Trisha Walker

NELLIE HJALTALIN, 25-year driver for the Hood River Valley Adult Center's Meals on Wheels program, has recently retired, and hopes that new volunteers step up to take her place. On Thursday, driver Lynn Rasmussen and cook Kimberly Estey go over a route.

Four To Go

CGCC board meets in HR Tuesday

Columbia Gorge Community College board of directors meets at 6 p.m. May 12 at the Indian Creek campus, in room 1.310.

Agenda items include a welcome and introductions by Joah Schoppert, Director of Library Services, finance and operations updates, a Foundation report, and chairman's report by M.D. Van Valkenburgh.

In addition, faculty members plan to present a request for the resignation of CGCC president Dr. Frank Toda.



Parks & Rec hosting Indian Creek meeting

Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District is holding a neighborhood meeting Tuesday, May 12 at 6 p.m. at the Hood River Fire Department (by the Aquatic Center) to discuss the proposed Southside Indian Creek Trail. The trail would link the undeveloped Eliot Park to the existing Indian Creek Trail near Dutch Brothers. Anyone interested in the trail development is welcome to attend. For questions and comments, contact Parks & Rec by email at parksandrec@gorge.net or by calling 541-386-5720.

Upper Valley Lions back in Parkdale

The Upper Valley Lions Club disbanded about two years ago, but a new club is set to be formed this month. Members of the Hood River Lions Club will hold an open house on May 14, from 7-8 p.m. at the Parkdale Community Center to answer questions and help the new club get off the ground with its own goals and objectives. Bring questions! Snacks and beverages will be provided. For more info, contact Greg Simpson at 541-490-1535 or hrlionreg@gmail.com.

'Finding Peace Art Tour' at the library

Visit the Hood River Library between May 9 -22 for "Finding Peace: Art Tour," an art project created by Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC).

The project consists of a community art show, a community conversation project, and a community tour of prize winning pieces. This display is free and open during regular library hours. Visit cgcc.edu/news/cgcc-art-show-finding-peace to learn about all the events for the "Finding Peace."

