

REVIEW: Looking back at the last six months of 2019

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for the position alongside Ed Wilder and Jason Garrett Gibson.

Mt. Hood Railroad's assets and business operations have been turned over to Novo Advisors, a financial advisory firm, after a U.S. District Court judge ordered the railroad's owner, Iowa Pacific Holdings, to place the railroad into receivership. Mt. Hood Railroad has been owned by Permian Basin Railways, a subsidiary of Iowa Pacific Holdings, since 2008. "Everything is moving forward in a positive direction, and we're looking forward to a busy Christmas season," said General Manager Ron Kaufmann.

October

Gorge Wellness Alliance debuted its short documentary, "Cultivate: Compassion," at Columbia Center for the Arts, produced by CoenFilm. The documentary features six local people from the Columbia River Gorge sharing their personal journeys and some of the associated challenges they've faced in life.

The Bridge of the Gods is getting ready to implement electronic tolling, utilizing the same BreezeBy system as the Hood River-White Salmon Interstate Bridge, said Jess Groves, Port of Cascade Locks Commission president. The Port of Cascade Locks is hoping to use electronic tolling as a way to offer discounts to those in financial need, Groves said, as well as speed up transactions across the bridge in the busy summer months.

Rep. Greg Walden announced via video statement Oct. 28 that he would not seek reelection to the Second Congressional District and will retire at the end of his current term, after a career that spans 30 years. Walden won re-election to a ninth term in 2018, by a wide margin but his closest ever: 56.3 percent of the vote to 39.4 percent for Democrat Jamie McLeod-Skinner.



Photo by Caleb Lundquist

THE ANNUAL Roy Webster Cross Channel Swim had a change of location this year: Cascade Locks.



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

LATINO NETWORK President Martha Verduzco introduces speakers from the Mike Schend Stage at the third annual Latino Fest in August, held at Jackson Park.

November

The Nov. 5 Special Districts election in Hood River County saw the city-only Measure 14-67, termed by supporters as "Protect Our

Parks," pass 1,786 to 690, a 72.13 percent to 27.87 percent victory. The West Side Fire Local option levy renewal question garnered a 78 percent approval, with



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea

SHEPPARD'S celebrated its 100th birthday in 2019, as highlighted in a December Kaleidoscope. Above are, from left, Bill, Craig and Ben Sheppard.

1,457 votes to 401 no: 78.424 percent to 21.58 percent. The levy renews an existing five-year local option levy.

With planned infrastruc-

ture improvements in the works at the Ken Jernstedt Airfield, surrounding residents are concerned that ongoing noise problems are

going to get worse. The Port of Hood River has had a spike in noise complaints over the last few years and in response, the port implemented the Fly Friendly program, which encourages pilots to adhere to a set of guidelines designed to minimize noise impacts. While residents think the program is a good idea, they don't think it ultimately works because there isn't a way to enforce it.

The elections and assessment staff would probably have voted against it, but Kim Kean has retired as chief deputy clerk for Hood River County. Kean, who has overseen assessment record-keeping and the ballot tabulation process for three decades, received a retirement send-off on Nov. 22 at the County Administration Building.

Angel Reyes Borton, Gladys Rivera and former Council Member Susan Johnson have applied for the vacant position on Hood River City Council. All were interviewed at the city council meeting on Dec. 9, with Rivera ultimately appointed to fill the position of now Mayor Kate McBride, who left her council seat vacant when she was appointed in September to fill out the term of mayor.

December

After more than a year's absence, FISH Food Bank returned to Odell in December with a school-based pantry at Mid Valley Elementary School. The Odell site will be open on the west end of the building on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 3-5:30 p.m.

Sheppard's celebrated its 100th birthday this year. Sheppard's is the oldest continually-owned business in downtown Hood River, and among the oldest in the county — a status outstripped by a number of the family-owned orchards Sheppard's serves.



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