

PENDLETON

Industrial evolution

Local businesses expanding space, adding jobs

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Sausage, mustard, flour and wool are helping expand Pendleton’s industrial productivity.

While only Hill Meat Co. is adding jobs at this point, Newly Weds Foods and Barhyte Specialty Foods are adding additional manufacturing space while Pendleton Woolen Mills has added a new loom that should increase the factory’s productivity by 10 percent.

When asked why their company was expanding, owners and managers gave a simple answer — business is good.

Mike Barhyte, president of operations for Barhyte Specialty Foods, said revenues have been growing by 8 to 10 percent a year in recent years.

With a strong presence in the Midwest, Barhyte said the company would add a 30,000 square foot warehouse to its Airport Road facility, saving the business from having to continue to keep its products in satellite storage spaces across the city.

Barhyte said the company, which specializes in making condiments, could potentially add new jobs in the future if the business continues to grow.

Bob Bahrns, plant manager for the Pendleton Newly Weds Foods facility, also left the door open to more expansion if business continued to climb.

Facing a similar problem to Barhyte, Bahrns said Newly Weds is in the process of adding 40,000 square feet in additional storage, which allows the food processing company to store its inventory on-site instead of a warehouse in Umatilla.

In addition to adding 20,000 square feet to its pork



Day-shift manager Kevin Schmidt, 51, fixes a yarn break by hand on Pendleton Woolen Mills’ new Itema R9500 loom.

Staff photo by Jonathan Bach



A touch screen control panel of the Pendleton Woolen Mills’ new Itema R9500 loom.

Staff photo by Jonathan Bach

processing plant, Hill Meat CEO Jim Cheney said the company will also add more employees.

Cheney said Hill Meat could add 30 more jobs to its workforce, which is currently between 90 and 100.

Pendleton needs expansions like Hill Meat to make up for the jobs lost when Blue Mountain Recovery Center closed last year and took 118 jobs with it.

Pendleton city government has made numerous investments to attract new industrial development, including the construction of Barnhart Road and starting

the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range with the intention of eventually bringing a UAS manufacturer to town.

While city officials continue to wait for those investments to pay dividends, Pendleton’s current industrial sector is doing its own expansions.

One of the few growing businesses that won’t undergo a physical expansion is Pendleton Woolen Mills.

As a part of a program for the Pendleton/Pilot Rock enterprise zone, the mill’s taxes were abated for three

“As the looms reach maximum efficiency we will be able to assess the increased capacity of blanket production and full potential.”

— **John Boston**, Pendleton Woolen Mills manager

years to help them invest in a new Jacquard loom to help the company meet increased demand for the fabric.

In exchange for the tax abatement, the mills pledged to increase productivity by 10 percent.

Pendleton Woolen Mills manager John Boston wrote in an email that the new loom has met expectations.

“As the looms reach maximum efficiency we will be able to assess the increased capacity of blanket production and full potential,” he wrote.

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

BRIEFLY

Inland Musicians set rehearsals

PENDLETON — The Inland Northwest Musicians are getting set to warm up their voices and instruments.

Rehearsals for the 2015-16 chorale season begin Monday from 7-9 p.m. at Harris Junior Academy, 3121 S.W. Hailey Ave., Pendleton. The weekly practices lead up to the first set of concerts, which are Oct. 17-18.

The orchestra’s weekly rehearsal begin Thursday from 6:30-9:30 p.m., also at the junior academy. Their first concerts are Oct. 10-11.

Tryouts aren’t required for participation. For those interested in joining the chorale, contact Salli Ketchersid, 541-314-5833 or email ketchersid@eotmet.net; and for the orchestra, contact R. Lee Friese at 541-289-4696 or innw@machmedia.net.

Fish Fry offers seafood and entertainment

PENDLETON — A spectacular buffet with fish and coconut shrimp, beef or chicken satay and an assortment of tropical fruit and salads is featured in the Round-Up Fish Fry.

The event is Wednesday from 5-7:30 p.m. at McKay Creek Estates, 1601 Southgate Place, Pendleton. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for 12 and under.

Special entertainment includes Coyote Joe and Little Joe, the Round-Up and Happy Canyon courts, the Happy Canyon Can Can Dancers, Eastern Oregon Philippine-American Community

Dancers, Zoe Hern on ukulele, Pastor and Carolyn Clemons and the Main Street Cowboys and Side Saddlers calliope.

For more information or to RSVP, contact mckaycreekrd@prestigecare.com or 541-276-1987.

Dinner in the Dark supports vision center

RICHLAND, Wash. — A dinner fundraiser that helps people experience what it might be like to be blind will raise money for the Edith Bishel Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Dinner in the Dark features guests partaking in the event while blindfolded.

In addition to the meal, the event includes a no-host bar and silent and live auctions. Also, casino games, including blackjack, beat the dealer and roulette will be hosted by the Pasco Lions Club.

Tickets are now on sale for Dinner in the Dark, which is Thursday, Sept. 17 from 6-9:30 p.m. at the Shilo Inn, 50 Comstock St., Richland, Wash. The cost is \$40 per person or table sponsorships, seating eight, for \$375.

Located in Kennewick, the Edith Bishel Center is dedicated to serving the blind and visually impaired in southeastern Washington and northeastern Oregon. It offers training, education, products and resources for the visually impaired community.

For more information, to purchase tickets or donate auction items, contact 509-735 0699, cynthia@edithbishelcenter.org or visit www.edithbishelcenter.org.

SUBMIT COMMUNITY NEWS

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

HERMISTON

Council to consider tougher pot biz ban

Already passed ban on medical marijuana dispensaries in March 2014

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

A resolution on the Hermiston city council’s agenda for Monday night would double down on the city’s harsh stance against marijuana-related businesses.

The resolution would direct staff to begin the legal process of amending Hermiston’s zoning ordinance to ban all commercial marijuana activity, including commercial grow sites, processors, wholesalers and dispensaries.

Under state law, it remains legal for residents 21 and older to possess marijuana and grow up to four plants.

The council already passed a ban on medical marijuana dispensaries in March 2014, and its current codes prohibit land uses not in compliance with federal law. However, in light of

the passage of House Bill 3400 in June allowing bans in jurisdictions where more than 55 percent of voters turned down Measure 91 legalizing recreational marijuana use, amending the zoning code to comply with the new law adds an extra layer of certainty in the city’s desire to keep out marijuana businesses.

A public hearing on a proposed landscaping ordinance is also on Monday night’s agenda.

The ordinance requires a certain percentage of land on new commercial developments be landscaped, and requires developers to purchase a landscaping ordinance after presenting a plan that meets the city’s approval.

City staff have requested that the city continue the hearing to a new date instead of taking testimony on Monday. That gives them more time to research

questions raised at a recent public hearing held by the planning commission.

On Monday the city also will consider two requests that authorize staff to execute an agreement with Ascent Architecture for design of the Harkenrider Center and an agreement with Columbia Pacific Construction for completion of the taxiway rehabilitation project at the Hermiston Municipal Airport.

Before the council meets at 7 p.m. at city hall, 180 NE 2nd St. in Hermiston, the council will meet for a work session open to the public at the Hermiston Family Aquatic Center to take a tour of the facilities.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

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