

Warmin’ up with Cowboy Breakfast

By WILL DENNER
East Oregonian

Slow as it might have seemed Wednesday morning, the annual cowboy breakfast — and its chilly patrons — were just getting warmed up. “We’ll do 500 and some today, 600 to 700 tomorrow,” Clifford Smith said. “Friday and Saturday we’ll do over 1,000 each day. As long as the weather stays good.” Compared to past years, when volunteers had to scrape ice off the tables at Stillman Park, or when rain-fall made for a muddy mess, this week figures to be warm and dry.

The breakfast, organized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 922, takes place each year at the park in the 400 block of SE Byers Avenue on Wednesday through Saturday from 6 to 10 a.m. An \$8 fee for adults and \$4 for kids gets you as many pancakes, eggs and ham slices as your appetite desires. Proceeds from the week are donated to local scholarships, Little League baseball and veterans with disabilities.

The group expects a consistent crowd throughout the week, counting on



Photo by Rachael Owen for the East Oregonian
Anthony Bowman, serves J.D. Kindle a side of ham at the Cowboy Breakfast early Wednesday morning. Both are from Pendleton.

supporters who come from near and far to get breakfast each year.

“Everybody wants to go to the outdoor breakfast — that’s the first thing on the agenda,” said Paul Gadaire, a volunteer since 1957.

Bill Zypf took over as event chairman this year, replacing Zach Knight. Zypf was asked if he wanted the responsibility at a post meeting, and said he would think about it. Their next meeting, Zypf learned he had the job. Zypf has lived in Pendleton since 1976 and helped with other Round-Up

groups like Main Street Cowboys, but cowboy breakfast is new territory for him.

“They said it gets easier after the first year,” he joked. “I said, ‘I might not know because I might quit.’”

Fortunately for Zypf, many of the volunteers have decades of experience at the event, making his job a little easier.

“Those guys won’t let you have their spatula to even give them a break,” he said.

Contact Will Denner at wdenner@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0809.

AROUND ROUND-UP

Gary Smith, a Yakima Indian from Granger, Washington gets dressed in what he called a “contemporary traditional costume” for his appearance Wednesday at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Photo by Greg Lehman for the East Oregonian



Idaho cowboy Nathan Duckworth took a header off the back of Labyrinth during the saddle bronc competition Wednesday at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Photo by Greg Lehman for the East Oregonian



A flag barer adjusts his hat prior to the open ceremonies Wednesday at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Photo by Greg Lehman for the East Oregonian

COBA: Worst part was breaking the scary news to her family and friends

Continued from 1A

was able to catch her cancer early. It started with a routine mammogram, where doctors noticed a small lump on her left side that didn’t look right. It was probably nothing serious, they told her, but scheduled an ultrasound and biopsy to be sure.

The results left both Cobra and her doctors stunned — triple-positive breast cancer, the type that spreads more quickly and aggressively than usual. The worst part of the ordeal, Cobra said, was breaking the news to her husband, Marshall, as well as their two grown daughters, friends and family.

“I wanted to protect them, because I knew they were going to be scared and worried about me,” she said.

As for herself, Cobra said she’s very much a process person. She simply viewed it as another challenge to overcome.

“I just immediately went to, ‘OK, I’ve got it. Now, what do I do about it?’” Cobra said.

The treatments began with a lumpectomy in early November, where doctors removed the small lump from her breast. The cancer had not spread to her lymph nodes, which was a promising sign. She then began chemotherapy on Dec. 2.

Telling friends and family was the most difficult part of battling cancer, Cobra said losing her long brown hair was the second-most difficult.

“When you lose your hair,



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Cancer survivor Katy Cobra, who served as both princess and queen of the Pendleton Round-Up, will be taking part in Tough Enough to Wear Pink day with her friend and fellow breast cancer survivor Ann Knutson.

you become a very visible patient,” she said. “It’s all out there in the public.”

Chemotherapy and radiation can lead to a litany of side effects, yet Cobra said she still felt well enough to continue working full-time at the ODA in Salem. She alerted her staff and Gov. Kate Brown, all of whom lent their support and pulled together to make sure the department didn’t miss a beat.

“They would have been fine if I had been gone five days a week,” Cobra said with a laugh. “The overwhelming support was quite humbling.”

Cobra still has a long way to go before she’s out of the woods. She will continue to receive targeted treatments via an IV injection once every three weeks through December. Breast cancer patients aren’t declared cancer-free until after 10

years, assuming there are no setbacks.

In the meantime, Cobra has plenty to keep her busy. She will begin her new job Oct. 1 as Oregon’s next Chief Operating Officer, overseeing the day-to-day operations of state government.

Cobra said the experience will also lead her to become an advocate for women to get regular mammograms and checkups, which in her case might have saved her life. The 1982 Round-Up queen said she’s excited to be back home to support Tough Enough to Wear Pink, and reach out to cancer patients however she can.

“This has given me the opportunity to be thankful to live every day,” she said.

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

RIVER: Historically the largest salmon-producing river system in the world

Continued from 1A

announcement. “The Pacific Northwest relies on this vital resource remaining clean and healthy to meet our needs.”

The Columbia River Restoration Program would fall under the Environmental Protection Agency. It would not add any new regulations, but provide a competitive source of funding dedicated to the basin.

In 2006, the EPA designated the Columbia River Basin a priority “large aquatic ecosystem” in the same class as the Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico and Puget Sound. Yet the basin is the only one of those large ecosystems that receives no dedicated funding to clean up and monitor toxic chemicals.

The restoration act initially proposed setting aside \$50 million over five years, though the latest provision — which was added into the Water Resources Development Act — does not specify a funding level for the program. A spokeswoman for Sen. Merkley said Congress will be able to set a funding level if and

when the bill passes.

The Columbia is the largest river in the Northwest, and fourth-largest in the country. It spans 1,243 miles, with a drainage basin roughly the size of France. The basin reaches into seven states and British Columbia, and is historically the largest salmon-producing river system in the world with annual returns peaking around 16 million fish.

The EPA has identified numerous toxins present in the basin, including arsenic, lead, pesticides and flame retardants. These are in addition to so-called “legacy pollutants,” such as polychlorinated biphenyl, or PCBs, which are now banned by the EPA but can still found in imported products like inks and dyes.

High levels of some pollutants can build up in the fatty tissue of fish and lamprey in the river, which are then consumed by people. Sara Thompson, spokeswoman with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, said she believes water quality is one of the most overlooked issues

that needs to be addressed across the basin.

“Water is our ultimate First Food,” Thompson said. “Any steps we can take to improve water quality is a step in the right direction.”

CRITFC represents the four tribes with treaty fishing rights on the Columbia, including the Umatilla, Warm Springs, Yakama and Nez Perce. Other groups that support the Columbia River Restoration Act include the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership, Pacific Northwest Waterways Association and Salmon-Safe.

For Oregonians, Merkley said the Columbia River is more than an iconic landscape. It’s a crucial part of the state’s environment and economy.

“A clean Columbia River is essential for the health of our communities and the strength of our fishing and recreation industries, and I’ll keep pushing to get this legislation across the finish line,” he said.

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

HAMLEY: Pearce putting together a deal to try to buy out Woodfield

Continued from 1A

businesses this week.

Woodfield hired La Grande attorney Steven J. Joseph, who filed the lawsuit Tuesday in Umatilla County Circuit Court, Pendleton.

“What we have here is a two-member owner dispute,” he said. “But I don’t anticipate any immediate effect upon the operating entities.”

The lawsuit accuses Pearce of 12 misdeeds as a Hamley’s owner, including having the store pay for personal items, violating gun sale laws and using Hamley’s resources to help his wife open an antiques and arts store in downtown Pendleton, in competition with Hamley’s.

Woodfield seeks to expel Pearce from member and management positions within the four limited-liability companies the two men formed to control operations of the Hamley Steakhouse & Saloon, the western store, the business properties and “all intellectual property associated with the Hamley brand name.”



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Blair Woodfield is suing co-owner Parley Pearce for control of the Hamley’s franchise.

Pearce said the allegations in the lawsuit “are all pretty much fabricated.”

Nothing at Hamley’s prevents his wife from operating her store, he said, and staff handle gun sales and the accompanying paperwork. Pearce said one gun he did sell, which Woodfield references in the lawsuit, was an 1878 handgun. But guns made before 1899 qualify as antiques and are exempt from federal gun sale laws. Joseph said he could not answer why Woodfield did not call police if he knew there were illegal gun sales, which is a crime.

None of it, Pearce said, will keep Hamley’s from operating.

“Hamley’s, frankly, as a company is pretty healthy,” he contended.

Attorney Sam Tucker of Milton-Freewater is representing Pearce. Pearce said he was putting together a deal to buy out Woodfield for around the same price the tribes offered. Pearce said he anticipated that would happen in the next three or four weeks.

Contact Phil Wright at pwright@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0833.

GOURMET: \$150 for single seat ticket

Continued from 1A

salmon during tie-down roping and saddle bronc, flank steak sliders during steer wrestling and team roping, smoked pork chops during bull riding and s’mores during steer roping.

The Round-Up enlisted Portland chef Max Germano to come up with the menu, which he described as traditional western cuisine with “fun little twists.”

Those “fun little twists” include gourmet flourishes like miso sauce and a chile-infused reduction.

“It’s a really fun challenge,” he said.

Germano is being assisted by 10 students from Kristin Swaggart’s culinary arts classes at the high school.

Helping Germano prepare the food for Round-Up’s opening day Wednesday morning, Swaggart was in her element,

having previously been head chef at Bookwalter Winery.

With students working from 9-5 in the kitchen and in the 1910 Room, Swaggart said this experience hones the hands-on skills and attention to detail students need to work in restaurant.

Germano lends a hand in the educational process as well.

As Swaggart continues to lead the kitchen, Germano and a contingent of students take the prepared food on a motorized cart to the 1910 Room, where they work on plating and presentation.

Germano said once he plates an item, he ask for input from students and sometimes rearranges the plate accordingly.

Early in the rodeo’s proceedings, the denizens of the 1910 Room were impressed by the service.

Popular rodeo clown Flint Rasmussen was invited to the room by the

Round-Up and said it was a huge upgrade over the bleachers that were replaced to make space for the area.

A group of friends from Washington said there was a similar area at the Ellensburg Rodeo and were excited to try it out after hearing about it for a friend.

With high-end service comes a high-end price tag and the 1910 Room is no exception — prices range from \$150 for a single seat ticket to \$4,000 for a 20-seat table.

Round-Up publicity director Randy Thomas said that might sound like a high price to pay for Round-Up seats, but it’s still considerably cheaper than a night on the town in Portland.

He also said the 1910 Room is sold out for Saturday’s finals.

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