

PENDLETON

Chamber hires new tourism manager

East Oregonian

The Pendleton Chamber of Commerce has hired a new director to lead its tourism and promotion committee.

In a press release, the chamber announced that it was hiring Kristen Dollarhide as the tourism and hospitality manager for Travel Pendleton.



Dollarhide

Dollarhide, a former executive director for the Union County Chamber of Commerce, will replace Pat Beard, who was hired as the Pendleton Convention Center manager after four years as the event recruiter for Travel Pendleton.

Under Pat Beard's leadership, Travel Pendleton has attracted or supported new events including

Pendleton Whisky Fest, Pendleton Bike Week and Oktoberfest, and launched a "tripster" advertising campaign aimed to bring 20-something tourists to town.

According to the *La Grande Observer*, Dollarhide resigned in September 2016 from the Union County Chamber of Commerce after three years on the job. Previously, Dollarhide spent time working for St. Alphonsus Medical Center in Baker City.

Although Travel Pendleton is under the chamber's umbrella, the committee is funded through the Tourism Promotion Assessment Charge, a city-imposed, \$1.50-per-night tax on hotel rooms.

Dollarhide will start her new job Aug. 14.

BRIEFLY



Contributed by the city of Hermiston

Mayor David Drotzmann and other members of the Hermiston delegation pass out watermelons in 2016 during the annual watermelon giveaway at Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square. Hermiston officials return to Portland for the traditional event on Friday to promote Hermiston watermelons and other locally-grown produce.

Portlanders line up for annual Hermiston watermelon giveaway

HERMISTON — Several representatives from Hermiston will head west this Friday to spit seeds and share watermelons.

Mayor David Drotzmann will face off against Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler in this summertime favorite, as part of the two cities' annual watermelon giveaway on Friday at 11 a.m., at Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square, 701 S.W. Sixth Ave., Portland.

The event dates back to 1991, when former Hermiston Mayor Frank Harkenrider challenged then-Portland mayor Bud Clark to a watermelon seed-spitting contest. The event became an annual tradition that lasted until 2008. In 2015, the two towns revived the event, with Hermiston representatives returning each summer with truckloads of produce to hand out to eager Portland residents.

Local farms donate produce for the event, including Bellinger Farms, Walchli Farms, and other farms that chose not to be named. This year, Drotzmann, Hermiston councilors Jackie Myers and Rod Hardin will have dinner Thursday night with Wheeler and Seraphie Allen, the assistant for policy and community affairs for the city of Portland. The group will discuss ways for the two cities to work together.

The seed-spitting contest and produce distribution will be Friday at Pioneer Courthouse Square.

"This is a great event that continues to build on our relationship with our partners in Portland," Drotzmann said.

Gray Ribbon Challenge honors late rodeo board member

HERMISTON — Competitors can look forward to a new twist at this year's Gray Ribbon Challenge at the Farm-City Pro Rodeo, which carries on the memory of a late rodeo supporter.

"There's no belt buckle this year," said Rhonda Sallee, the founder of the challenge with her daughter Jolene Sallee-Davis. "Instead, we're giving out a memorial knife."

The basic tenet of the event is the same, though, as a way to honor Sallee's husband, longtime Farm-City volunteer and board member Darrel Sallee. Sallee joined the board in 2004 and died in 2014 from brain cancer.

"He was a volunteer since the rodeo started," said Sallee. "He worked security in the parking lot, he parked cars. He used to take his horse down and park them on horseback. He was a jack of all trades."

Sallee said she and her daughter started the challenge in 2015 in his memory, and cowboys from all timed events compete. Contestants wear gray ribbons, designated for brain cancer awareness, and gray feathers in their hats.

The memorial knife will be awarded on Saturday night to the champion header of the team roping event.

Additionally, \$500 will be awarded each night to a competitor from one of the four timed events, and the order of the timed events will be determined closer to the rodeo and posted for competitors.

The money for the cash prizes is donated by the Sallee family.

"It's been a nice hand-up to the cowboys," Sallee said.

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.

PENDLETON

Neighbors come out for National Night Out

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

The snow cone line was long at Pendleton's National Night Out celebration. Participants lined up Monday evening across the grass at the city's aquatic center for the free iced treats in sunny weather verging on 100 degrees. The free hot dogs also were going fast.

Members of the Pendleton Police Department and their families prepared and served up the goods, courtesy of local businesses, including Wal-Mart, Hill Meat Co. and Franz Bakery. Pendleton was one of a multitude of communities joining the effort to bring people together to fight crime and encourage looking out for one another.

Ashlee and Joshua Dow of Pendleton said they enjoyed past Night Out gatherings. She said there is a real benefit in meeting neighbors and seeing police interact this way with the locals. Her husband agreed.

"It brings everybody together, it's nice," Joshua Dow said, "especially on a hot day."

Horacio and Vanessa Zamudio of Hermiston brought their two children for a fun day at the aquatic center, but said they were keen to participate in the happening. The couple said they support law enforcement, and Zaiden, their 6-year-old boy, loves cops. Vanessa Zamudio said the boy can't get enough of police shows or finding out about officers.

Zaiden even demanded a photo with Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts, who was happy to oblige. For Roberts, those



Staff photo by Phil Wright

Lexi Bowen and Aubrey Lehnert prepare snow cones Monday evening during Pendleton's National Night Out event. The pair are entering the leadership program at Sunridge Middle School and are daughters of Pendleton police officers.



Staff photo by Phil Wright

Zaiden Zamudio, 6, of Hermiston, sits with Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts for a photo Monday evening during Pendleton's National Night Out event. The lad's parents said he loves police.

moments exemplify the community building of National Night Out aims to achieve.

"It truly is a partnership," he said, because police cannot be all places at once, and the community are the

eyes and ears police rely on. That happened early Tuesday, when a citizen's description of a suspect led to the arrest of Cody Ray DuBois in connection to another vehicle break-in (see more on that in the Public Safety Log).

Roberts continued to advocate for residents to make their property hard targets, but beyond that, he urged anyone to call police when something suspicious happens. If officers are busy with an urgent call, they might take a while to respond, he said, but the Pendleton Police Department still adheres to a policy of answering every call.

After all, he said, that is what police are there for.

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

MILTON-FREEWATER

Chiropractor loses court fight to keep license

Accused of violating billing rules, defrauding insurance company

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Milton-Freewater chiropractor Brandon Hatch lost an Oregon Court of Appeals ruling to keep his license to practice, but said he is planning to take the case to the Oregon Supreme Court.

"My attorneys are working in court to restore my license," Hatch said in a written statement. "I expect their efforts will soon put me back to providing chiropractic care for my patients — which is why I'm here."

Hatch owns Amon Chiropractic, 85458 Highway 11, Milton-Freewater, which operates as Stalene Family Chiropractic Clinic. His father, Lance Hatch, also a chiropractor, worked at the clinic. The Oregon Board of Chiropractic Examiners in 2014 revoked both of their licenses after an investigation determined the father and son violated state rules for keeping patient records and Brandon Hatch engaged in billing fraud and unprofessional conduct.

Brandon Hatch was in a car crash in December 2009, according to the board's final disciplinary order, and his father treated him in 2010.

The board in October 2011 received complaints against the Hatches for possible billing and coding errors along with poor record keeping. The complaints prompted an investigation that found "irregularities" in Brandon Hatch's patient record, including multiple occasions of signing his own patient charts. The board also contended Brandon Hatch billed for services not provided, defrauded an insurance company and was dishonest in answering questions from a peer review committee that looked into the issues.

The board on Nov. 21, 2014, ordered the revocation of their chiropractic licenses and ordered them to pay more than \$21,000 for administrative hearings.

The father and son asked the board to hold off the punishment. But the board denied that request in March 2015. That prompted a petition to ask the Oregon Court of Appeals to stop the revocations.

The appeals court in 2015 put a temporary hold on Brandon Hatch's revocation, noting he made an initial showing he would suffer irreparable financial

injury if he could not practice. Lance Hatch could not make the same showing, however, and his revocation stood.

But the appeals court on July 24 issued a final ruling without an explanation that affirmed the board's decision to revoke Brandon Hatch's license.

Cass McLeod-Skinner is the director of the Oregon Board of Chiropractic Examiners. She said this case is unusual because the appellate court's stay has lasted so long. And now the board will wait to hear if the Oregon Supreme Court takes up the case. Until then, the board is following the latest order.

"As of July 20, the revocation was in effect," she said.

"I was disappointed with the board's action," Brandon Hatch responded, "because it keeps me from my first priority, giving my patients the excellent care they need."

He also said he "appreciated the expressions of support" from patients and others, and his attorneys advised him to allow the court process to go forward without further comment.

McLeod-Skinner said the examiners board is investigating whether Brandon Hatch was practicing since July 20. The board's under-

standing is Hatch was on vacation when the ruling came out.

This was the second revocation for Lance Hatch. The chiropractic board in 2006 revoked his license after he stated on his renewal form he had a criminal conviction.

Lance Hatch in 1993 lived in Utah, according to federal court records, and participated with several tax professionals in a scheme to transfer clients' properties and businesses into trusts to avoid paying income taxes.

He pleaded guilty in 2004 to conspiracy to defraud the United States, and on Sept. 11 of that year started serving 20 months in prison. The court also sentenced him to three years of post-prison supervision and a \$10,000 fine.

Hatch admitted he caused a total loss to the United States exceeding \$1 million and a tax loss of \$248,000, according to the chiropractic board's revocation order.

He was able to end his probation early, and in 2009 he reapplied for his license. The board granted that request, noting on the consent order the crime did not involve his chiropractic patients and he cooperated with federal prosecutors.

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

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