

HERMISTON

Brother, sister open gourmet salad shop on Locust Avenue

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

A Hermiston woman has turned a healthy habit into a much-anticipated business venture this week with the opening of a gourmet salad shop.

Jaclyn Crowder opened Veg Out with her brother Ben Millard this week, and the small salad shop at 319 W. Locust Avenue already has 33 reviews on its Facebook page, all of them for five stars.

"It's been awesome," Crowder said. "We've been kind of overwhelmed."

Positive comments on Facebook were what spurred the business venture in the first place. Crowder said after the birth of her kids she struggled with her weight, especially since being a stay-at-home mom meant she had access to food all day long. To combat the problem she started experimenting with creating different types of salads, and found she enjoyed them more if she made them "pretty" too. It was only natural, in this day and age, that she then share her handiwork



Staff photo by Jade McDowell
Ben Millard, left, and Jaclyn Crowder, right, opened Veg Out this week at 319 W. Locust Avenue, Hermiston.

on social media before eating it.

"I started posting on Facebook for friends to see and they started asking me to make them for them," she said.

Originally Crowder just wanted

to sell the colorful salads from home, but soon realized the law required her to make them in a commercial kitchen. She posted on a public Facebook forum asking if anyone would be interested in a

salad shop, and hundreds of enthusiastic comments poured in.

She asked her brother if he wanted to join in on the venture and he agreed.

"We felt we owed it to Hermiston," he said. "That response (on Facebook) is what's kept us going."

The small shop, located just behind Bi-Mart, is takeout and delivery only, although the business's Facebook page points out it is only half a block from McKenzie Park's picnic shelter.

Millard said from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. business slows down, but if the first few days are an indication, when someone wants to pick up a salad during the lunch or dinner rush they should call ahead by at least an hour if they don't want a long wait to pick up their order. Delivery of orders of at least three salads is available for a \$3 charge.

Veg Out's menu currently features five salads, ranging from the \$7 classic chicken caesar salad to the \$13 steak taco salad with cilantro lime dressing. Brazilian cheese bread, a fruit bowl and bottled beverages are also available.

Millard said since the kitchen

is so small, the menu will likely always be limited to five or six salads, but the selection will change depending on what fruits and vegetables are in season. He said to start out the business is getting its ingredients from one vendor, but that will probably change.

"We've checked out some local lettuce places, and we might start getting some of our berries local," he said. "We might try to source some more local produce, as much as we can."

On Thursday afternoon a couple came to pick up a pair of salads and were surprised to learn that the shop had only been open a few days. Christina Martinez, who ordered the berry nutty salad, said they had just moved into town a couple of weeks ago and found Veg Out on Yelp.

"We're excited to try it," she said. "Our salads look amazing."

Veg Out is open 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

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

BRIEFLY

Farm store opens near Lexington

LEXINGTON — Grass-fed beef, farm-raised pork and pasture-raised chicken are all available at a new farm store, located just outside of Lexington.

Neiffer Ranch has been selling its products at farmers' markets in the Tri-Cities and decided it wanted a more formal outlet for the local community. The farm store's summer hours are Mondays and Thursdays from 1-7 p.m. or by appointment at 64466 Clarks Canyon Road, Lexington. Affectionately referred to as the "Wagenblast Place," the farm is easily identified by the large red barn on the property.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact Lara Neiffer at 541-371-7264 or grassfedfamily@gmail.com.

Hermiston looking for new finance director

HERMISTON — The city of Hermiston is on the hunt for a new finance director after Amy Palmer's exit.

Palmer said at a recent city council meeting she was leaving to care for a family member. She was hired in 2012 and came to the city with more than 20 years of public sector accounting experience.

The city has opened a nationwide search for Palmer's replacement using a recruiting firm it has used to find other department heads in the past. The position, listed with a salary range of \$92,964 to \$113,112, is open until filled. A first review of applications is scheduled for Sept. 17.

A job description and application can be found online at hermiston.or.us/employment/finance-director.

Pathology practices combine services

PENDLETON — Blue Mountain Pathology and Incyte Diagnostics have entered into an agreement to combine their practices.

Founded in 1980, Blue Mountain Pathology is based in Pendleton. With five board certified pathologists, it currently provides onsite anatomic and clinical pathology services to St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton and Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston, as well as other hospital and physician's offices throughout Eastern Oregon and parts of Washington and Idaho.

Incyte, which was founded in 1957, is based in Spokane, Bellevue, Walla Walla and Yakima. Its 42 pathologists provide services to 35 hospitals. The combined staff features professionals with expertise in 27 pathology disciplines/subspecialties.

For more information, call 888-814-6277 or 800-700-6892.

Pendleton Presbyterian Preschool announces new director

PENDLETON — The Pendleton Presbyterian Preschool has hired Lori Albright as the new director and teacher of the school.

Albright had been a foreign language teacher at Pendleton High School for 21 years before jumping to the preschool at 201 S.W. Dorion Ave.

According to the First Presbyterian Church website, the preschool serves three and four-year olds and follows the Pendleton School District calendar.

People can contact the preschool about openings

by calling Albright at 541-304-5012, emailing her at mrsalbright51@gmail.com or visiting Pendleton Presbyterian Preschool's Facebook page.

Free workshop assists with grant process

PENDLETON — A workshop designed to provide best practices information in regards to end-of-project reports for grant funding is offered free of charge.

"End of Project Reporting: What you Need to Know and Why you Need to Get it Right" is Wednesday, Aug. 23 from 3-5 p.m. at the Eastern Oregon Business Source, 245 S.E. Fourth St., Pendleton. While there is no registration fee, those planning to attend area asked to register in advance.

The session also will cover common material that funders ask for in reports, as well as some tips to stay organized and ahead of the reporting cycle. Those attending will receive assistance in improving their grant writing and reporting skills, as well as helping the organization make a strong impression.

For more information or to register, visit www.eobusinesssource.com. For questions, contact Brittany Johnson at 541-215-9252 or brittanyjohnson@eobusinesssource.com.

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