

HERD: Motions hearing is scheduled for April 12

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10,500 milking and dry cows, along with 4,000 replacement heifers.

John Top, owner of Toppenish Livestock, said they will begin preparing next week for the auction, which is scheduled for April 27. However, according to a preliminary injunction filed in Morrow County, te Velde has not given the auctioneer permission to enter the dairy.

Te Velde declined to comment when contacted Wednesday. An attorney for Rabobank also declined comment.

In a court declaration filed Feb. 15 in Fresno, Calif., Nicola Merrifield-Olivia, senior vice president and manager of commercial special assets for Rabobank, wrote that the bank had attempted to work with te Velde for more than a year to restructure his debts. Yet

despite these efforts, te Velde failed to put together a realistic plan.

"Two of the three loans extended to te Velde by Rabobank have matured, and te Velde's precarious financial condition is beginning to endanger the well-being of the three herds," Merrifield-Olivia wrote.

Lost Valley is located on a portion of the former Boardman Tree Farm. It has been a lightning rod for

controversy since before it was permitted as a confined animal feeding operation, or CAFO.

More than 4,200 public comments opposed the operation, urging the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Quality to deny a key wastewater permit for roughly 187 million gallons of liquid manure.

Opponents railed against the potential for air and

water contamination, though ODA and DEQ did award the permit based on what the agencies described as the most protective permit conditions for a CAFO to date.

Within the first year of operation, Lost Valley failed numerous inspections and was cited four times for permit violations. ODA sued to shut down the dairy, though ultimately the sides reached a settlement, with

Lost Valley agreeing to limit its wastewater to 65,000 gallons a day and ensuring manure lagoons had enough capacity to handle water from storms. It also agreed to weekly inspections.

According to court documents, te Velde had been in discussions to sell the dairy, but those negotiations fell through as of March 15. A motions hearing is scheduled in Morrow County for April 12.

TOUR: 'We've got to get those students hands on, that's how they learn'

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improvements made to HAREC since Walden's last trip out to the station a couple of years earlier. Cam Preus, president of Blue Mountain Community College, also touted the multi-million dollar precision irrigated agriculture facility the college built on the HAREC campus last year to give students hands-on training with things like maintaining the station's 15 center pivots.

"We've got to get those students hands on, that's how they learn," she said.

A few improvements made to the station in recent years includes the remodel of some research labs, solar panels that save the station about \$30,000 per year on their electrical bill, two new crop circles and the Don Horneck Memorial Building, which includes an agronomy lab and insect-rearing rooms. Currently in the works is also an expansion of the plant pathology lab and new conference room.

Hamm said the improvements are thanks to generous support from farmers and other stakeholders in the area, who are unmatched around the state in their support for the extension center.

"No one, absolutely no one, can come close to the support we get from our stakeholders," Hamm said.

He said later in the year HAREC plans to hold a "thank you day" during which they will add new names to the list of supporters on a large stone outside the front office. Hamm said Walden's name will be on that list for his work to remove a federal reversionary clause that had previously stipulated that the land where HAREC sits would revert to the federal



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
BMCC president Cam Preus, second from left, shows off the Precision Irrigated Agriculture facility on the HAREC campus to Oregon Sen. Bill Hansell and U.S. Rep. Greg Walden on Wednesday outside of Hermiston.

government if any part of it were ever used for something other than agricultural research.

Preus, during her part of the tour, told Walden that without the change to the reversionary clause the partnership with BMCC and HAREC to build the precision ag building on the HAREC campus would not have been possible. She said not only are full-time

students able to get a good hands-on education on precision irrigation, but BMCC also uses the building to hold "compressed" workshops where people from the agricultural industry can get training on changes to the industry over two full days instead of a series of hour-long classes in a semester.

"The industry folks really like that," she said.

Hamm added that

HAREC and BMCC hope someday people will come from all over the world, not just the Pacific Northwest, to learn about precision irrigated agriculture in an arid climate. Carl Melle, dean of career technical education for the college, said they were also planning to begin a series of Wednesday morning workshops for high school students interested in pursuing a career

in agriculture.

Walden said he learned a lot on the tour — from the benefits of the reversionary clause bill he sponsored to the reason why Hermiston's watermelons are so sweet — and asked that Hamm and Preus put together some information for him to bring back to his colleagues in Congress to show the good the reversionary clause bill had done.

He said he was pleased that the federal omnibus spending bill had increased the amount of funding for agricultural research from the previous year.

"It's so important, the work you do, and the work they do across the state," he said.

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Walden: Forest management also received a serious revision

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youth who commit violent acts and 69 percent who commit suicide told someone about it first.

Forest management also received serious revision, Walden said, including ending the U.S. Forest Service practice of "fire borrowing" — dipping into funds for resource management to cover the cost of fighting forest fires. The fires are natural disasters, he said, and the spending bill now

treats them like that and allows the Forest Service to use management funds for fuel removal and other practices.

Wednesday night Walden joined the Umatilla County Republican Party for its Lincoln Day dinner.

Seven Democrats are running in the May primary election for the party's nomination to challenge Walden in the general election. The Democratic Party of Oregon last week started RepealWalden.com to

funnel money to whoever wins the primary.

Walden said no doubt the Democrats are well organized and ready for a fight, and they have been since Donald Trump won the presidency. He said he is looking forward to the general election and feels good about the chances for an 11th term.

"But you have to count every vote," he said.

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Rep. Greg Walden, Center, jokes with a group of Eastern Oregon county commissioners during a press conference Wednesday at the Umatilla County Courthouse in Pendleton. Walden was on hand to talk about the recently passed omnibus spending bill.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Alysha de Martinez's piece of acrylic on canvas titled "Elena" on display at the Pendleton Center for the Arts.

MARTINEZ: Matisse is her 'biggest inspiration'

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of her work on her bedroom floor with art supplies — brushes, jars of paint, paper and magazines for clipping — spread around her.

The teenager said she has random inspirations that eventually find their way onto canvas or paper. De Martinez calls them her midnight creative spells. Inspiration "comes from my teenage soul," she said, admitting she stays up "way too late."

When it comes to art, de Martinez knows what she likes.

"I like abstract art," she said. "My biggest inspiration is Henri Matisse. I'm constantly on Pinterest looking at pins of Henri's work."

Matisse, a French artist, died in 1954 before Pinterest was even an idea, but he

seems to have reached out from the past and grabbed de Martinez like a kindred spirit.

"I feel like we have similar interests," she said.

The artist, who worked as an intern at the arts center, was encouraged by Lava-dour to organize a show. The director gave the teen six months to prepare.

On the night of the opening, de Martinez was anxious. Except for Lava-dour and her parents, nobody had really seen her art. She went to the boardroom and braced herself. Jordan Schnitzer was the first person through the door.

"For him to be the person to come in here to look..." she stopped and gave an amazed head shake.

Eventually, they both headed upstairs for the formal opening of the Bourgeois exhibition in the

East Oregonian Gallery. The French-born painter and sculptor is known for her spider sculptures, which range from tiny to towering. Bourgeois was also a prolific printmaker of various subjects until she died at age 98 in 2010. Schnitzer, who spoke by phone this week, said he loved having pieces by Bourgeois and a young artist featured in the same building — a juxtaposition of the two artists, one a master and the other just beginning.

"Louise Bourgeois was a significant artist of the last 50 years," Schnitzer said. "She burst through a lot of glass ceilings."

He said he couldn't imagine how hard it was for Bourgeois as an emerging artist in the 1950s and 1960s to be taken as seriously as her male counterparts.

"It's wonderful to have Louise Bourgeois upstairs

and Alysha de Martinez downstairs," Schnitzer said.

At the Bourgeois opening, he took a moment to introduce Alysha to the gathered art admirers.

"You're off to a very good start," Schnitzer told her. "Never stop following your dream."

The experience has bolstered the teenager's opinion of herself. She'll never forget Schnitzer telling her, "One day when your work is the Museum of Modern Art in New York, I'll be able to say I bought your first piece."

"I didn't consider myself as an artist for the longest time," she said. "It was cool to finally accept it."

Both exhibits run through May 5.

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