



Artist Jean Christofori Howton holds up a print of one of her original pencil drawings at her home on Wednesday in Hat Rock.

ARTIST: She loved the French art scene

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ings stretched across the carpet of the loft. Howton said she pulled much of the artwork from every nook and cranny of her house, where it has been stashed for years, but she is also working on some new pieces that will be available at Saturday’s open house.

“I had so many pieces of art tucked away everywhere, I’m getting everything uncluttered,” she said.

Howton said she feels she was born an artist. She remembers how much she loved finger painting during her earliest school years, and after that she was always “scribbling” something. Her art matured as she did, and in college she took plenty of art classes in various mediums.

She fell in love, got married and raised a family, but she never stopped drawing and painting.

“It just kept creeping along, and finally it was on a level that was professional,” she said.

Howton has shown her work at galleries in the Pacific North-



Artist Jean Christofori Howton moves one of her paintings while preparing her home gallery for a show on Wednesday in Hat Rock.

west and in Europe. Posters from her French openings can be seen around the house.

She and her husband bought their Hat Rock home in 1986, but he died only seven years later. Afterward, Howton decided to head to France with a friend who was from there, and she stayed 10 years in Normandy.

She loved the French art scene.

“They are very enthralled with artwork,” she said.

The French countryside was an inspiration for much of her representational art, which often features rolling pastures of cows or herds of sheep. She is also fascinated by llamas.

“They’re such strange creatures,” she said.

Even the cabbage comes from

France, where large, colorful, fresh produce was abundant.

“Vegetable shopping in France was absolutely amazing,” she said.

Her abstract art is rooted in the natural world as well. A painting with yellow shapes is titled “Bug Wings,” while one in beige and black is titled “Wren’s First Nest.”

Howton finds inspiration in walks around the Hat Rock area and paints in her loft, using wooden boards as palettes. After the boards are filled with layers of color, she cuts them up into their own unique pieces of art.

On Saturday, all of Howton’s art will be on display at her Hat Rock Art Gallery, 34009 Beachshore Drive, from 3-8 p.m. She is calling it Le Crecendo, or “The Grand Sale,” and will have Sno Road Wine and chocolates on hand.

Photos of her work and other information can be found online at www.jeancreates.com.

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FINE: Largest CAFO penalty ever issued

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tive judge.

“It is the largest CAFO penalty we’ve ever issued,” said Wym Matthews, the program manager.

None of the violations were that severe on their own, but they added up over time, he said. “The same thing happened continually without repair.”

Lost Valley Farm was recently put under new management after its owner, Greg te Velde, lost control of the facility’s operations in bankruptcy proceedings and the reins were handed to a federal trustee. Two other dairies, both in California, were also put under the trustee’s control.

ODA expects to proceed with its revocation of the dairy’s confined animal feeding operation permit even if the trustee, accountant Randy Sugarman, cleans up the facility’s act, said Matthews.

“Our unwavering aim is to revoke this permit. Whoever’s name is on it, we’re going to revoke it,” Matthews said at an Oct. 11 meeting of the CAFO advisory committee in Salem.

Lost Valley Farm is challenging the revocation of its CAFO permit through an administrative process, and a hearing on the matter is scheduled for Nov. 13.

Even if the dairy is brought into regulatory compliance, its past actions — such as manure lagoon overflows — warrant the revocation, and the ODA has lost all trust in te Velde’s management, Matthews said.

Even if the facility operated properly over the short term, the agency has no confidence that te Velde could keep up the compliance, he said.

The ODA anticipates arguing in bankruptcy court that its revocation of Lost Valley’s permit isn’t subject to the “automatic stay” that protects the company against adverse creditor actions under the bankruptcy process, Matthews said.

“Do you allow a facility to continue to violate state and federal laws?” he said.

While the facility does have some design flaws, ODA believes the wastewater problems were fundamentally caused by improper operations, he said.

If the dairy is eventually sold to repay te Velde’s creditors, the new owner would have to apply for a new CAFO permit, Matthews said.

PERS: Back-up tapes stored a mile and a half away from headquarters

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The agency keeps back-up tapes stored a mile and a half away from the PERS headquarters. In a natural disaster like the Cascadia earthquake, that information would likely also be destroyed. PERS now said that it will arrange a backup in the cloud by next June.

The audit said PERS hasn’t tested its disaster recovery plans and has yet to comply with directives from the Legislature to improve disaster recovery planning.

The Legislature allocated \$1.65 million to

shore up the pension agency’s disaster planning.

As of July, according to the audit, the agency has spent \$22,000 — for a consultant’s report.

And PERS has been told before to fix such gaps.

“Over the last several years, work on disaster recovery has often started and stopped with little continuity or sustained effort,” auditors wrote.

In 2015, the Legislature flagged the agency’s inability to respond to a disaster.

About a year later, Gov. Kate Brown put a budget request from PERS on hold because it hadn’t

done enough to address the Legislature’s concerns. Brown’s office was also concerned that PERS didn’t share a consultant’s findings about inadequate information security at PERS with her office, according to the audit.

The audit also said the agency could make member information more secure by better monitoring who has access to personal data.

PERS can also do a better job updating software. Attackers tend to target systems that have known gaps in security, auditors said.

The agency may also

need to overhaul its information management because the current system — which was finalized in 2010 — is hard to modify and doesn’t do everything the agency needs, according to the audit.

The agency has struggled to recruit and retain skilled information tech-

nology workers, instead relying heavily on contractors. PERS spends about 25 percent of its IT budget on contractors.

PERS didn’t dispute the findings and its director, Kevin Olineck, promised action.

“The PERS mission is to pay the right person, the

right benefit, at the right time, and the functionality of our technology systems and disaster preparedness planning are key to that mission,” Olineck wrote to auditors.

Olineck said the agency would implement most of the audit’s recommendations by next June.

BRIDGE: ADA-compliant pedestrian ramp cost rose from \$2,000 to \$10,000

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state committed \$5 million in immediate curb and signal crossing upgrades and another \$18 million for similar retrofits starting in 2018.

Simons said the lawsuit affects the bridge by spurring ODOT to create disabled accessibility for the pedestrian bridge and rethink its ramps for the curb work it will do on Southeast Eighth Street.

Under the new guidelines, Simons said the cost of building a pedestrian ramp compliant with the ADA rose from less than \$2,000 to more than \$10,000.

“It’s disheartening to me that we can’t plan and fund with confidence when we make decisions like this,” Councilor Paul Chalmers said.

Simons said city staff were frustrated with rising

costs as well and weren’t informed of the lawsuit’s effects on the project until sometime within the last six months.

The increase in the local match will come out of the city’s system development fees fund, which has about \$1.2 million in it.

City Manager Robb Corbett said the money is earmarked for transportation expansion projects, and if part of it wasn’t used for the Eighth Street Bridge, it would go toward projects like the Interstate 84 Exit 209 interchange realignment.

The council also approved contracting with the Murra-smith engineering firm for \$113,039 to create final designs for the streets and drainage at the planned Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range Industrial Park.

The council agreed to

pay Murra-smith \$597,211 in September to design utility extensions to the industrial park, although the city doesn’t have the money to build the park, which would be constructed north of the airport terminal.

The city acquired a new hangar at the airport when the council agreed to purchase the facility from the estate of Robert Hart for \$30,000.

Steve Chrisman, airport manager and economic development director, didn’t name a specific tenant that would occupy the building but said the hangar would likely rent for \$2,740 per month and “two to three” UAS companies would probably be interested in the hangar.

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