

New Hermiston business provides a ‘voice of reason’

Twin sisters open agency to provide services for adults

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The wind was gusting as twin sisters Shalena Myers and Jolene Pooley cut the ribbon on their new business on Thursday afternoon, but it didn't dampen their excitement.

The sisters will serve as program directors for Voice of Reason, an agency providing job training, employment support and community living support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Myers said they will provide training, such as résumé writing and interviewing for a job, but a big focus of Voice of Reason will be helping clients stay in their job once they get one.

“Any person can go out and get that job, but the real piece of that is retention — helping them keep that job and be independent,” she said.

They can also provide living support, such as taking

MORE INFORMATION

Voice of Reason is located at 308 E. Gladys Ave. in Hermiston, in the space previously occupied by Fairway Independent Mortgage Corporation. For more information, visit the Voice of Reason Facebook page or call 541-289-0308.

someone to the grocery store or out to a movie.

Myers comes to the job with 11 years of experience at a provider agency, including as a program manager. Pooley was previously a personal support worker and has been running her own cleaning business.

Pooley said it had been a “long journey” to opening their doors, but it is something their family had been passionate about for years. One of their other sisters will also be working at the business.

“We’ve very, very thankful for everyone here today to support us,” Pooley said.



Staff photo by Jade McDowell
Shalena Myers and Jolene Pooley, center, prepare to cut a ceremonial ribbon in front of their new business, Voice of Reason, on Thursday.

Drotzmann endorses public-private partnership on PERS solutions

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
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HERMISTON — Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann is voicing support for a proposed public-private partnership that will help local leaders around Oregon develop solutions for the state's budget shortfalls.

According to a news release, the Oregon Funders' Fiscal Health & Equity Circle was formed to “foster the civic knowledge and capacity to address Oregon's fiscal realities in ways that cultivate trust in civic institutions, build bridges across cultural divides,

and lead to equitable solutions supported by data.”

The participating foundations include Meyer Memorial Trust, North Star Civic Foundation, Northwest Health Foundation, United Way of the Columbia Willamette and The Women's Foundation for Oregon.

According to the release, they have invested \$300,000 in the past two years to fund research and engagement with community leaders. They hope



Drotzmann

to raise an additional \$200,000 in donations and are also asking the state for \$500,000 to support the effort.

They are proposing a partnership with the state of Oregon to create nine regional workgroups that would work to create solutions and deliver proposals to the Legislature in 2021. Those proposals would address the difficulties faced by cities, counties and other local governments facing constraints on their ability to increase their revenue in the face of rising costs of the Public Employees Retirement System.

Drotzmann released

ONLINE

For more information, visit OurNext20.org/2020proposal.

BRIEFLY

Windermere Group One adds real estate agent

HERMISTON — Windermere Group One recently added Leslie Pierson to its Realtors in Eastern Oregon.

Pierson, a Boardman resident, will provide professional real estate services throughout Morrow and Umatilla counties, according to a news release. She will work out of the Hermiston office at 945 S.E. Fourth St., Suite B.

Pierson has a bachelor's degree in animal science and experience in agricultural sales and marketing. She is an member of the Boardman City Council, Boardman Kiwanis Club and Oregon Cattlewomen. She said she became a real estate agent to provide new opportunities for her family.

“It's an exciting time to be here,” she said in a statement. “Our communities are progressing and thriving, while honoring traditions and the people before us. We're really blessed with people who truly care.”



Pierson

personifies that commitment as it brings our organization and customers together to help others.”

In February, Pacific Power customers will find a contribution envelope in their bill. Those who pay electronically can send a check or enroll in a fixed donation program that lets customers donate as little as \$1 a month and Pacific Power will match it with \$2.

The Oregon Energy Fund has provided monetary assistance to more than 300,000 Oregonians who need help paying their bills in times of crisis since the late 1980s. Last year donations from Pacific Power's employees, customer base and its corporate branch provided support to almost 600 homes across the state.

Pacific Power customers who need bill assistance can talk with representatives to establish payment plans that work for their individual needs and direct them to agencies that may be able to help. Pacific Power's customer service number is 1-888-221-7070.

Sears Hometown Store closing in Hermiston

HERMISTON — Sears Hometown Store is closing its doors in Hermiston.

The store, located at 80487 N. Highway 395, sells appliances, tools and outdoor items.

Manager Jeremy Brown said the store's last day will be March 20. Inventory moved to liquidation sale prices on Friday, and the building was put up for lease.

The Hermiston location is one of several in the Pacific Northwest that are closing this spring.

— EO Media Group

Pacific Power will match Oregon Energy Trust aid

UMATILLA COUNTY — Pacific Power is asking customers to consider donating to the Oregon Energy Fund, and they're willing to match those donations by double.

“Partnerships like (this) make a difference,” said William Comeau, vice president of customer experience and innovation. “This program

State hosting series of informational meetings

Department of Revenue plans 13-city tour

East Oregonian

SALEM — The Oregon Department of Revenue will host a series of meetings across the state in March to provide information to business taxpayers and tax professionals about the administrative rules for Oregon's new Corporate Activity Tax.

Department representatives used input collected from stakeholders during a 12-stop tour in fall 2019 in prioritizing and writing the rules. March's meetings will include a presentation and discussion of the initial temporary rules — the last of which will be filed with the Secretary of State on March 1.

“Our CAT team will personally engage our tax-paying communities in March to provide important compliance information. We consistently strive to help taxpayers comply with the law. The CAT team will also solicit feedback on the temporary rules completed to date,” said Nia Ray, director of the Oregon Department of Revenue.

The 13-city tour kicks off in Bend on March 2 on the campus of Central Oregon Community College. Meetings on the east side of the state are set

MARCH EDUCATION TOUR SCHEDULE

Monday, March 2
Bend: 6 p.m., Science 190, Central Oregon Community College, 2600 N.W. College Way.
Tuesday, March 3
Ontario: 6 p.m., Weese Building, Room 110, Treasure Valley Community College, 650 College Blvd.
Wednesday, March 4
La Grande: 10 a.m., Zabel Hall, Eastern Oregon University, 1 University Blvd.
Wednesday, March 4
The Dalles: 6 p.m., Lecture Hall, Building 2, Columbia Gorge Community College, 400 Scenic Drive.
Monday, March 9
Klamath Falls: 6 p.m., Klam-

ath Community College, Conference Center, Room 7, 7390 S. Sixth St.
Tuesday, March 10
Ashland: 6 p.m., Stevenson Union, Room 323, Southern Oregon University, 1250 Siskiyou Blvd.
Wednesday, March 11
Eugene: 6 p.m., Center for Meeting and Learning, Room 102, Lane Community College, 4000 E. 30th Ave.
Thursday, March 12
Gresham: 6 p.m., Visual Arts Theater, Mt. Hood Community College, 26000 S.E. Stark St.
Monday, March 16
Coos Bay: 11 a.m., Lakeview Rooms E and F in Empire

Hall, Southwestern Oregon Community College, 1988 Newmark Ave.
Monday, March 16
Lincoln City: 6 p.m., Lincoln City Cultural Center, 540 N.E. Highway 101.
Tuesday, March 17
Portland: 6 p.m., Auditorium, Portland Community College Rock Creek campus, 17705 N.W. Springville Road.
Wednesday, March 18
Seaside: 7 a.m., Riverside Room B, Seaside Convention Center, 415 First Ave.
Thursday, March 19
Keizer: 6 p.m., Iris Room, Keizer Community Center, 930 Chemawa Road N.E.

for March 3 in Ontario at Treasure Valley Community College and March 4 in La Grande at Zabel Hall on the campus of Eastern Oregon University. The La Grande meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Additional meetings are planned in The Dalles, Klamath Falls, Ashland, Eugene, Gresham, Coos Bay, Lincoln City, Seaside, Beaverton and Keizer.

House Bill 3427 created Oregon's Corporate Activity Tax and granted DOR the responsibility of writing rules to implement it.

The first 12 administrative rules were filed with

Secretary of State on Jan. 1. Four additional rules became effective Feb. 1 with another set of rules scheduled to be filed with the Secretary of State on March 1.

All of the rules will be filed as temporary rules with the permanent rule process scheduled to begin April 1. The timing will allow business taxpayers and tax professionals to provide comment on the temporary rules during the upcoming meetings in March, as well as during the public comment period.

The Corporate Activity Tax imposes a 0.57% tax

on gross receipts greater than \$1 million after subtractions plus \$250, beginning Jan. 1. It is expected to generate \$1 billion a year to boost funding for public schools.

Those who are unable to attend but want to provide input may email questions or comments to cat.help.dor@oregon.gov. The department is planning a series of conference call meetings for out-of-state taxpayers and Oregon stakeholders who are unable to attend the in-state meetings. Those meetings will be scheduled once the in-state tour is complete.

Murder at the Museum

Kirkman House Museum, Walla Walla

This murder mystery game is loosely based on Clue™ but to solve the mystery you must search the house... in the dark... with only a lantern to guide your search for clues... Scary? You Bet!

A fun group activity for 5 to 8 people. Check the web site for days and times. Available for private parties.

Tickets and more information at: kirkmanhouse.org

\$20 per person