



INSIDE

LIGHT PARADES AND FESTS IN THIS EDITION OF GO!

BRINGING IN THE GREEN

Christmas trees sellers face higher costs, competition with artificial trees



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Christmas trees fill stands Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021, at the Scouts BSA Troop 700 lot in Pendleton. The troop used a donated truck to pick up their order of roughly 180 trees.

By ERICK PETERSON
and BEN LONERGAN
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Despite industry-wide supply chain issues, increased wholesale prices and more competition, local Christmas tree vendors reported they have plenty of trees, but prices at some lots are higher than in past seasons.

The Scouts BSA Christmas tree lot along Southwest Court Avenue in Pendleton on Saturday, Dec. 4, was able to get its full order of trees.

“We haven’t gotten much attention yet, but it’s picking up,” said Alexander Krokosz, senior patrol leader for the Pendleton Scouts BSA Troop 700.

“We were lucky that all the droughts and fires did not affect the trees we wanted,” Holly Krokosz said.

She is the troop’s committee chair and said the lot sources trees from the Mollala area each year. The troop used a donated truck to pick up their order of roughly 180 trees.

“We have regular folks that come through year after year,” she said.

The Scouts use the money raised through the sale of Christmas trees to help fund trips to summer camp and other



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Tyler Hall loads a Christmas tree into a pickup Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021, at the Scouts BSA Christmas tree lot in Pendleton.

excursions. Holly Krokosz said the troop wants to ensure any scout who wants to go to camp is able to afford to do so either at a reduced rate or for free.

The lot will run through Saturday, Dec. 11, stock permitting.

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BMCC hires new COO amid changes

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Blue Mountain Community College filled a key part of its organizational chart a few weeks after reshuffling it.

The college announced Friday, Dec. 3, that it had hired Pat Sisneros to serve as its next chief operating officer. In his new role, Sisneros will be one of only a handful of employees who report directly to President Mark Browning and oversee some of BMCC’s less front-facing departments, such as finance, technology and facilities.

Sisneros comes to Eastern Oregon from Everett Community College in the Seattle metro area, where he’s served as vice president of college services since 2009. Prior to that, he spent 14 years as a business owner and teacher.

In a press release, Blue Mountain touted Sisneros, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business, and his efforts at “finding innovative efficiencies, fostering partnerships with local and regional businesses (and) indigenous tribes.”

“Pat’s background is just what we need here at BMCC,” Browning said of Sisneros, who starts Jan. 3. “He has owned and operated a private sector business, he has significant experience both from the instructional side and business operations side that will be key to helping to position us to be successful as we move forward with the New Blue.”

Sisneros will serve as BMCC’s second chief operating officer after the position was created over the summer.

Reorganizing the reorganization

As BMCC eliminated 16 positions, including several layoffs, the college also rearranged its administrative structure under the direction of interim President Connie Green. The college scrapped its coterie of vice presidents and created two top administrative positions under the president: executive vice president and chief operating officer. David Shellberg was named BMCC’s first COO, but he departed shortly after transitioning into the role.

John Fields became executive vice president, a position focused on academics and student services, and was given oversight over several new dean positions. But less than a year into the reorganization, BMCC already is making changes to it.

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Council denies Marigold appeal

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Marigold Hotel will remain closed for business.

The Pendleton City Council on Tuesday, Dec. 7, unanimously voted to uphold the city staff’s decision to suspend and revoke The Marigold’s business license following a Nov. 9 shooting at the 105 S.E. Court Ave. building.

The Marigold owner Shivam Patel appealed the city’s decision, giving the city council the opportunity to either affirm the revocation or reverse it. The council held

a hearing where both Police Chief Chuck Byram and Patel were allowed to make their cases.

A three-month promise

Patel and his attorney, Matthew Lowe, assured the council the owner would take a much more active role in The Marigold going forward.

Patel told the council he focused on the health of his family at the outset of the pandemic, wanting to protect his chronically ill grandparents.

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Matthew Lowe, a lawyer representing Shivam Patel, owner of The Marigold Hotel in downtown Pendleton, references Patel during the Pendleton City Council meeting Tuesday, Dec. 7, 2021, while laying out part of Patel’s plan to play a more active role in the management of the hotel