



Erick Peterson/East Oregonian  
Diners congregate at the Hermiston Food Pod on Friday, April 15, 2022.

## Food:

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"If we can play music and have a place for people to go, maybe they won't get into so much trouble," he said.

### Customers enjoy the pod

Rosa Alonzo, Umatilla resident, made a special trip to eat at the food pod April 15. She said she likes Magui's the best but will choose different trucks. While she eats at one, the people who accompany her often get food from other trucks before sitting down at one of the benches at the pod.

"We come out here quite a bit," she said. "We enjoy the variety of foods."

Hermiston residents Shay Godden and James Wiggins were at another table. They heard of the Filipino food at the pod. Though they only rarely came to the pod previously, they dined there April 15 to try lumpia.

They also said they were enjoying the atmosphere.

"It's kind of like the fair," Godden said.

Wiggins, who has worked at various fairs, agreed. Like the fair, the pod is lively, they said.

### Vendors tell their stories

Godden and Wiggins obtained their Filipino food from Maureen Dickens, owner of Twisted Filipino Variety Cuisine.

Dickens said she is from the Philippines, where her family operated restaurants. It gave her experiences with food and a love of the restaurant business.

"Ever since I was little, we had a restaurant," she said.

Three weeks in business, she said this is her first restaurant in the U.S. She offers foods from her native country, Hawaii, America and more.

Her American offerings, she said, include chicken tenders, which are popular.

Her husband, she said, is retired, and she is semi-retired, which is why she said she prefers food truck work over opening a regular restaurant. It is easier, though still hard, she said.

Tim Wilson, Krack Burger owner, was taping a menu to his truck on Friday, his first day of operations. Foods, such as burgers, hotdogs, shakes and ice cream, were all on that menu.

"I'm new to the food truck industry, but not to the restaurant business," Wilson said.

He said he had a restaurant in the Tri-Cities that was bought out by his ex-wife.

"She didn't want a partner,

and I totally understand," he said.

Now a Hermiston resident, he said he is excited for this business venture. Restaurants are fun, he said, and food trucks are booming. He said he expects to do well.

Berenice Rodriguez, of Alma's Express, said she is optimistic, too. She serves smoothies, nachos, breakfast burritos and more, and she said business is good.

"We wanted to have our own business and not work for anybody else," she said.

Having worked for others at restaurants and other trucks, she said she has long wanted to have her own business and not be beholden to someone else.

Kalani Morales works at Bobablastic, which offers orange chicken, churros, boba tea and more. She said this business is good for her. She also has a job at Panda Express in Hermiston and working at the pod means she can earn extra income while enjoying herself, too.

"I like it, I really do," she said. "It's fun."

Dalene Hadley operates the Grizzly Grill, offering grilled cheese sandwiches, corn dogs, fries and more. She said she has had the business for around 10 years but frequently moved during. Now, she said, she plans to stay still, with the exception of a few upcoming events.

"I like it," she said. "The people here are really good, and it's less work."

Being in a fixed location, she does not have to bother much with hooking and unhooking utilities.

Throughout the renovations, Tacos Garcia was the lone truck able to stay open because it operates on the other side of a short fence from the other restaurants. Rigoberto Garcia is its owner.

Garcia said he is happy to see a filled pod. Yes, they are within a short distance of his food truck. And, yes, he said, some customers may choose to eat at other food trucks instead of his. Still, Garcia said, the pod attracts many customers, bringing many diners to his truck for his wide selection of tacos, burritos and more.

"There's enough for all of us," he said of the customers. "And I like my neighbors. There's business for everybody."

More changes to the pod are coming, Hunt said. According to Hunt, live bands will perform starting in the middle of May.

The pod is open seven days a week, 11 a.m. to around 7 p.m., though not all vendors are open each day. Some vendors might expand to offer breakfast, Hunt said.

## Doolittle:

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The Army in February 1942 reassigned the B-25-equipped 17th Bombardment Group at Pendleton Field to Columbia Army Air Base, South Carolina, where Doolittle formed volunteer crews to train for the raid.

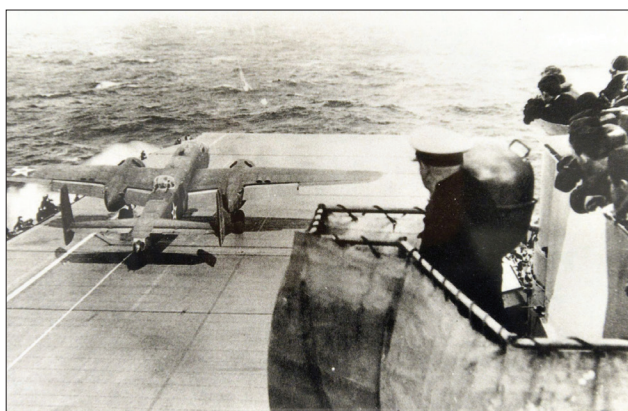
To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the daring exploit, the Oregon Army National Guard flight facility on the west end of the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport dedicated new plaques for the Guard's B-25 exhibit. And the Pendleton Air Museum that evening held a fundraising dinner with auctions at the BackFire Station also in remembrance of the raid, complete with senior members of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 922 presenting the colors.

### Recalling the raid

PAM board member, retired Army aviator Col. Tim Kelly, introduced keynote speaker, retired Army Maj. Gen. Fred Rees of Helix, to the sold-out audience. Kelly pointed to photos of the brave bomber crew members adorning the west wall. He noted volunteers for the seemingly suicidal mission served in the 17th Bombardment Group, based at Pendleton Field from June 1941 to February 1942.

Its four squadrons were the first to receive B-25s and most experienced in operating them. Of the 80 airmen in the raid, 71 survived. Two crew members drowned. The Japanese captured eight, executing three of them, and four died of starvation and maltreatment.

Only Oregon native Staff Sgt. Jake DeShazer lived to return to Japan as a mission-



East Oregonian, File

**A B-25 bomber from the 17th Bombardment Group takes off from the deck of the USS Hornet on April 18, 1942, on its way to bomb the city of Tokyo. Sixteen bombers flew from the carrier on the raid that Lt. Col. Jimmy Doolittle led. Almost all of the 80 airmen in the raid trained at what was then Pendleton Field, the military base in Pendleton.**

ary. Other Raiders died during the war.

Kelly's fellow Vietnam War veteran Rees graduated from Griswold High School, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, and from the University of Oregon Law School. Rees served four times as adjutant general of the Oregon National Guard. He was chief of staff of U.S. Northern Command, director of the Army National Guard and twice acting chief of the National Guard Bureau. After retiring, Rees returned to his family's ranch.

"From my earliest days, the sacrifices of veterans were impressed upon my mind," Rees said. "Five uncles served in World War II, not in B-25s, but in B-24 bombers in the Southwest Pacific. All had stories to share."

He added, "There was a significant amount of pride in Pendleton's association with the Doolittle Raiders. As a youngster, the history of the barracks, hangar and guard shacks at the airport made an impression on me."

Rees recalled he was in second or third grade in the

early 1950s when he saw the "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo" in a Pendleton movie house. The 1944 film starred Van Johnson as pilot Ted Lawson and Spencer Tracy as Doolittle. It was nominated for technical Academy Awards and won for best special effects.

Lawson wrote the book on which the movie was based. He and three other crew members were badly injured while ditching on the China coast. Only one member, engineer/gunner, David Thatcher of Montana, was in good enough condition to help his comrades. He died in 2016, aged 94, the second-to-last surviving Raider. Co-pilot Dick Cole died in 2019 at the age of 103. The mission's flight surgeon amputated Lawson's leg in China.

"The raid was important, so that people knew we could strike back after Pearl Harbor," Rees said.

Just nine days before the raid, Americans and Filipinos surrendered at Bataan.

"It was not a great time for the people of the U.S.," Rees continued. "While the raid didn't cause a lot of damage, a morale boost swept the

country. People were thrilled. Each aircraft had a story of derring-do, skill, courage and patriotism, of 80 volunteers willing to take the fight to the enemy."

### Memorials on display

Rees was instrumental in building a second Oregon Army National Guard Aviation Support Facility at Pendleton in 1996.

"It was in my mind to dedicate the facility to the Doolittle Raiders and Pendleton Field," he said. "We collected and displayed memorabilia from the outset. At the dedication, we were honored to host a few Raiders."

And he wanted to have a display of a B-25 Mitchell bomber, but that didn't pan out. The U.S. made thousands of the planes, he said, but finding one proved a challenge.

"The surviving Doolittle Raid plane was rumored still to exist in Vladivostok, but that was too far," he said. "We found one in (Texas), dismantled, transported and reassembled it. With the help of the air museum and community people, we restored it in the Chinook hangar. It's now on display at the facility."

The Oregon Military Department, Rees concluded, would like to make a public plaza around the bomber, and he thanked the crowd for their "enthusiasm and support for this event tonight to commemorate some of America's great heroes."

Live auctioneer Ford Bonney of Hermiston said, "Growing up here, I didn't know about this history. So it's great what you're doing."

East Oregonian news editor Phil Wright contributed to this article.



Phil Wright/East Oregonian  
Curb and sidewalk improvements remain underway Tuesday, April 19, 2022, along the Southeast Court Avenue side of the Hamley Western Store & Saddle Shop in downtown Pendleton.

## Upgrades:

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"We've talked with some of them about how they can stay open," he said. "Visibility is the main problem. A lot of customers don't see the open signs. We're trying to make sure that people can see those signs."

Davis added most of the work will wrap up in about two weeks, and after that, "just odds and ends will

bring us back." Taylor on April 19 said she has reached out to officials about the situation.

"I talked to everyone," she said. "The mayor came down. I talked to ODOT and the county commission. You gotta know what you don't gotta know."

And she stressed the transportation department is not planning on compensating her business. If it was only a few days, she said, that would be OK.

"But weeks?" she said "No."

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