

Gubernatorial candidate Johnson touts Eastern Oregon connections

By ERICK PETERSON
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Eastern Oregon Economic Summit brought some of the state's biggest political figures to Hermiston, including gubernatorial candidate Betsy Johnson.

The unaffiliated candidate visited supporters Friday morning, June 17, at The Pheasant Blue Collar Bar & Grill in Hermiston before appearing at the summit.

"Eastern Oregon is not, for me, just a stop on a political campaign," she said.

She was a member of the Oregon House of Representatives from 2001 to 2005 and the Oregon Senate from 2005 to 2021. Johnson said she comes to the region regularly and has advocated for, and produced for, the area a great deal.

"Hill Meat (Co.) now has bacon available in the Portland metro market because I flew the director of the Department of Ag and the grocery industry out and advocated for them to have shelf space," she said.

She added she has promoted air service, including drones, in Pendleton and worked to support a partnership between Blue Mountain Community College and the Pendleton Round-Up, which trained veterinary assistants and technicians. She said she has brought other legislators to the area to promote the work of the Port of Morrow and other activity in Eastern Oregon.

She added she has stood with Eastern Oregon legislators on their interests.

"I have had a real relationship with Eastern Oregon," she said.



Erick Peterson/East Oregonian
Betsy Johnson, gubernatorial candidate, holds up frames Friday, June 17, 2022, she said she has had for around 40 years. She said David Drotzmann, Hermiston's mayor and an optometrist, gifted her with identical frames recently. Johnson was at The Pheasant Blue Collar Bar & Grill to meet supporters.

Having flown into town, she applauded recent improvements to the Hermiston Municipal Airport, calling it "one of the most beautiful" fixed-base operators.

"And it's nice to come out onto the ramp, and they know

Local connections

Johnson said she knows Hermiston Mayor David Drotzmann, calling him "a great American," before sharing and a "silly, little story."

Johnson has made her large

"EASTERN OREGON IS NOT, FOR ME, JUST A STOP ON A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN."

Betsy Johnson, Oregon gubernatorial candidate

who we are. We bought some gas to help out the airport," she said.

She said she likes to consider herself "a regular out here." Furthermore, she said, "The town looks fabulous." She called it "clean," "attractive" and "welcoming."

"There seems to be a sense of possibility here," Johnson said.

eyeglasses a symbol of her gubernatorial campaign. The frames, however, "are damn-near impossible to find."

According to Johnson, she spoke with the mayor, businesspeople, the school superintendent and other people a month ago. During the conversation, she said, she mentioned her troubles finding eyeglass frames to the mayor. Soon

after their talk, Drotzmann, an optometrist, sent her frames from some "secret stash someplace," she said.

"I now have extras made up, and I have one of them made into sunglasses," she said. "He couldn't have given me anything that I would have welcomed more, because they are impossible to find."

She said she was "over the moon."

Goals as governor and getting on the ballot

Johnson he said she wants to make more local contacts, especially if elected governor, so she could further help the area and the entire state.

Oregon's business interests, she said, need help. She stated they need to be protected from excessive taxation and regulation.

"I'm talking to too many Oregonians who are saying, 'We can't stay here. Permitting is too difficult,'" she said.

Johnson added the state needs to promote business, keeping the momentum of successes.

Johnson was at The Pheasant in part to add signatures to put her name on the November ballot.

She said she has until mid-August to obtain roughly 25,000 signatures.

"We will get many more than that," she said.

A representative from Johnson's campaign stated it collected more than 100 signatures in visits to Hermiston and Pendleton. Meanwhile, many more signatures from other Oregonians were inundating Johnson's office.

"We know we're over 5,000. We're not sure how close we are to 10,000," the campaign representative said.

Dragon's Gate Brewery to host renaissance faire

By EMRY DINMAN
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

MILTON-FREEWATER — It might be a little surprising that an establishment with a name like Dragon's Gate Brewery, the Milton-Freewater business specializing in Belgian-style ales that has been open for 10 years, hasn't hosted a renaissance faire.

Saturday, June 25, owners Jennifer and Adam Gregory are going to change that, with the first of what they hope will become an annual affair. Starting at 1 p.m. and running until 7:45 p.m., the free event at the Gregor's farmhouse brewery will play host to knives and nobles, with live music, vendors, costumes and demonstrations.

And, of course, there will be a knight on horseback — Sir Nathan of the Umapine Realm, to be exact, Jennifer said in an interview.

Entertainers include members from Shakespeare Walla Walla, who will be reciting the bard's works throughout the day, belly-dancers and people active in the local Athena Caledonian Games. In addition, members of the local chapter of the Society of Creative Anachronism, an international organization devoted to researching and recreating pre-17th century skills, arts and culture, will also be on site to put on demonstrations and to raise a large tent for the event.

There will also be a number of vendors on location with goods and services including jewelry, face painting and leatherwork. While Dragon's Gate will be supplying the beer, wine and cider — as well as their Harry Potter-inspired, non-alcoholic "butterbeer" — area food trucks will sell smoked turkey legs, burgers and lemonade, among other options, Jennifer said.

While it is not necessary in order to attend, guests are encouraged to dress in any flavor of medieval or fantasy costume they wish. Costume weapons, including swords, are allowed, and a handful of people will be monitoring the event to ensure that guests are safe.

Firearms are not permitted.

No outside food or drink will be permitted except for water. Attendees are welcome to bring their own lawn chairs, although seating will be available for up to 100 guests.

About Dragon's Gate

Jennifer, who grew up in the area, and her husband Adam realized in the early 2000s that they wanted to open a brewery back in the Milton-Freewater-area.

Not wanting to go the obvious route of naming the business "the Milton-Freewater Brewery," and always big admirers of medieval and renaissance styles, the word "Dragon" started to be floated as a possible name befitting their future business. Over beers one afternoon, it came together: Dragon's Gate, symbolizing both their love of the genre and the gates holding back all their themed beers and characters of lore.

Many of those beers are brewed with estate grown hops and local spring water, such as the Arthurian Morgan Le Fey wheat beer and Pendragon Belgian Quad, or the Blood of the Dragon blood orange saison, Pixie Slayer Belgian pale and The Green Man IPA. The Dragon's Gate Brewery specializes in Belgian-style ales, but also offers some more typical American fare such as IPAs and a porter.

The owners had long wanted to host their own renaissance faire on the 10-acre farm, which is also home to a number of Friesian horses, Jennifer said, which they raise as hobbyists. They have previously hosted a number of other magical events, such as Witches Tea and Harry Potter-themed parties, the latter of which they hope to relaunch this fall.

But Saturday's faire will be the first such event to take place since the beginning of the pandemic.

"We just want to welcome everyone to dress up and have a really good time, or even if they just want to people watch," Jennifer said. "I think with the first year it's going to be interesting, as far as seeing what we can grow on."

PENDLETON DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Budget, street repair bids get the green light

By JOHN TILLMAN
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Pendleton Development Commission approved its 2022-23 budget at its meeting Tuesday, June 21, as well as bids for street reconstruction projects. Then the Pendleton City Council adopted changes to the city's street tree ordinance.

Pendleton city councilors also serve as the city's development commissioners.

The PDC adopted a budget of almost \$5.47 million, including reserves, then approved two bids for street work.

One was for partial widening and reconstruction of Southeast Byers Avenue from Seventh Street to Main Street. The other was for work on Southeast Fourth Street from Byers to Court avenues. Humbert Asphalt Inc. of Milton-Freewater, was low bidder for both projects, at just shy of \$1.59 million.

Following the PDC meeting, the city council held a public hearing to consider changes to Pendleton's street tree ordinance.

"The council approved unanimously every item on the agenda," city manager Robb Corbett reported.

The tree commission recommended separating the prohibited and discouraged tree list from the body of the ordinance. The commission updated its list of trees unsuitable for public rights

of way. It argued that updating the list of prohibited and discouraged trees would be easier if separate from the ordinance.

Discussion of the city's taxi contract for transportation services, plus its Dial-a-Ride and Bus Route Contract, were on the council agenda, too. Elite Taxi Inc. and city finance director Linda Carter have negotiated a dial-a-ride rate increase. The city planned to cover the rate increase instead of passing it on to riders.

Former USFS offices under conversion to apartments

By JOHN TILLMAN
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The former U.S. Forest Service building, 2601 S.W. Hailey Ave., Pendleton, is under conversion to a 33-unit apartment complex.

The Pendleton Planning Commission approved the project in December 2019 for Justin and Megan Pratt of the Tri-Cities, doing business as Hailey FSB. Justin Pratt told the commission then why he was pursuing the project at a building that hadn't been in use since 2012.

"There's a pent-up demand for apartments here," he said at the time. "That's one of the things we saw when we were considering doing this. You go to a website like apartments.com and there's 10 different apartment complexes and they all say, 'No vacancy.'"

Site foreman Leon Sauers on Tuesday, June 21, was unsure when the project will be completed.

"I've worked for the Pratts for six years," Sauers said. "Usually it's flipping houses. This is the biggest project yet."



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian
From left, construction workers Leon Sauers, Terry Johnson and Joe Tenbusch work Tuesday, June 21, 2022, to convert the former U.S. Forest Service building at 2601 S.W. Hailey Ave., Pendleton, into an apartment complex.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Irrigon motorcyclist injured in crash near Pasco

PASCO — An Irrigon motorcyclist was injured Tuesday morning, June 21, in a crash near Pasco that involved a truck driver from Weston.

Washington State Patrol reported Rodney Sackett, 64, of Irrigon, was driving a 2008 Honda motorcycle east on Highway 730 when he turned

onto westbound Highway 12 about 13 miles east of Pasco and struck a Kenworth semi-trailer.

Sackett was wearing a helmet, according to WSP, and an ambulance took him to Kadlec Regional Medical

Center, Richland. The driver of the semi, John Mattila, 55, of Weston, was not injured.

Washington State Patrol also reported charges are pending against Sackett.

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Elvis (PG13)
1:20p 4:40p 8:00p

The Black Phone (R)
12:40p 4:00p 6:00p 8:50p

Lightyear (PG)
1:40p 3:10p 6:30p 8:30p

Jurassic Park Dominion (PG13)
12:50p 4:20p 7:40p

Top Gun: Maverick (PG13)
2:50p 5:40p 8:40p

STARTING JUNE 30
Minions: The Rise of Gru (PG)
2:00p 4:10p 6:20p 8:40p

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