



WALLOWA COUNTY CHIEFTAIN



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M Crow owner eyes unique brewery

Tyler Hays envisions brewing, woodworking and ceramics business

By Steve Tool
Wallowa County Chieftain

If native son Tyler Hays has his way, a new microbrewery in Joseph may help boost Wallowa County's employment statistics.

Hays is the owner of BDDW, a very successful East Coast arts and design company, as well as the M. Crow & Co. store in Lostine. He maintains his Wallowa County roots by frequently visiting the home he owns here.



Hays

Hays says he's very concerned about the long-term economic disruption caused by the closure of the area's sawmills. He purchased the M. Crow & Co. store in Lostine that was in imminent danger of permanent closure. Now, he hopes to bolster the Wallowa County economy by building a microbrewery and has already purchased a 22-acre Joseph property with plans of eventually adding a commercial woodworking/ceramic workshop.

Hays said the project was about three years in the making. The working title of the beer is simply "M. Crow". Hays plans to start off brewing and possibly selling the boutique beer out of the shop as well as the M. Crow and Co. store and his online site.

He said the building is not a multi-million dollar enterprise, but a small operation — at least at the outset.

"We have a lot of good contacts and a lot of good people behind it. We want to keep our growth slow and stable.

"It's going to be more than just beer. I'm working with (local rancher) Alan Klages, who is growing Heritage Barley, a strain invented by his great uncle."

Hays said a two-year search led him to a farmer growing the seed in southern Oregon. Hays purchased 500 pounds for Klages to sow. Half of the total is slated for the brewery and the other half for more sowing.

The idea of being a big-shot employer in the county doesn't appeal to Hays, but he is aware of the scarcity of family-wage jobs in the area.

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Quinoa rising



A kitchen staffer at Veritable Quandary of Portland pours out a mountain of freshly cooked quinoa to be served in a dish with duck. It is a dish that will be served with Wallowa County quinoa in the future.

Ellen Morris Bishop/For The Chieftain

IN WALLOWA COUNTY, THE POPULAR GRAIN IS 'A THING'

By Kathleen Ellyn
Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County officially is in the quinoa business. It's been a couple of years coming but last year second-generation quinoa seed was planted on the Daggett Ranch property on the East Moraine where Patrick Thiel grows his organic crops — and they're liking what they see.

"They" in this case is not just Patrick Thiel and his marketing partner Ted Golder of Enterprise. It also refers to Washington State University, which has a seed trial for quinoa underway, financed by Lundberg Family Farms.

The Idaho branch of Pacific NW Grain and Feed Association also is looking at quinoa as a rotation crop on significant acreage if all the parameters could be worked out for processing and getting a consistent production.

Those last two "if all the parameters could be worked out" questions are the big ones: processing and consistent production. Consistency looks like it's coming. But processing is a not a job that one guy with 60 acres on the moraine can work out on his own.

"The goal is to have 1,200 to 1,500 acres of organic production in the upper valley and a facility that will allow for processing and packing our products," Thiel said.

"Our" product is the key word in that sentence. Wallowa County Quinoa growers will not want to send their quinoa to a large out-of-state production facility because Wallowa County quinoa is already too good, too distinct, to be mixed in with quinoa grown in other places.

If 20 years of marketing Wallowa County organic products has taught Thiel anything it's the value of what we have.

"I know we have a value in our Wallowa County products — and it is flavor," Thiel said. "Quinoa is like my porcini powder; I can sell a small bag of porcini powder to a chef in Portland and he or she can earn the James Beard Award. It's the secret ingredient. Quinoa is like that. We're sitting on something that there is a high



Ellen Morris Bishop/For The Chieftain

Chef Annie of Veritable Quandary and Patrick Thiel.

demand for."

And you don't find that flavor just anywhere.

Chefs on Thiel's marketing route are drawn to Wallowa County quinoa because of Thiel's reputation and their personal experience.

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“ I KNOW WE HAVE A VALUE IN OUR WALLOWA COUNTY PRODUCTS — AND IT IS FLAVOR. ”

Forest Plan discussion draws crowd

Show featured Thursday on OPB's 'Think Out Loud'

By George Plaven
EO Media Group

An overflow crowd of about 100 people gathered Wednesday evening at Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton — coming from as far as Baker City, Joseph and even Bend — looking for answers to the same basic question.

Who should be allowed to do what, and where, on the Blue Mountains national forests?

Those decisions are ultimately guided by the Blue

Mountains Forest Plan, which is undergoing its first revision since 1990. It has been a slow, laborious process as the Forest Service attempts to balance all manner of public interests, from access and recreation to logging and conservation.

The stakes were laid out during Wednesday's discussion of the forest plan, which was recorded and aired Thursday on "Think Out Loud" on Oregon Public Broadcasting.

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E.J. Harris/East Oregonian

Steve Beverlin, supervisor of the Malheur National Forest, gestures to the audience while answering a question while sitting on a panel of experts during a taping of OPB's "Think Out Loud" on Wednesday at BMCC in Pendleton. The topic of the show was the highly controversial Blue Mountains Forest Plan.



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