

Simply Sandy's will remain a Main Street staple

The good news on Joseph's Main Street is three fold this week.

First, Simply Sandy's at 305 Main Street in Joseph has been sold to new owners who plan to continue the successful business of supplying locals and tourists with home decorations, remodeling accessories, reclaimed and "western style" furniture, metal yard art, custom wood furniture pieces and the work of local artisans.

We'll still have that attention-grabbing business attracting those tourists and we'll still have one of our favorite décor and gift shops.

Second, the new owners are local people you know: Jill McLaran and Emily Cunningham are the new co-owners and Judy Botham and Jessie Kassahn remain your clerks.

Continuity is good and we're always glad to have local folks keeping businesses vital.

Third, a holiday open house is set Nov. 11 and Sandy Warnock will serve homemade cinnamon rolls, so you'll have the opportunity to congratulate her on building a great business over the last 15 years and the good luck to find local buyers for the business when she was ready for something new.

No big changes are planned for the business, according to McLaran and Cunningham.

"We'll sell with love," said McLaran. "That's going to be our mission."

"Just loving people that come through the door," added Cunningham.

"That goes back to Sandy's customer service tradition," McLaran said.

They'll continue to feature shabby chic,



Kathleen Ellyn

eclectic, unique finds for the home and garden, and some western décor in the Red Barn annex.

Sandy did a great job with this business and one of the ways she really excelled was in creating an online presence: You can follow Simply Sandy's on email, Facebook, Pinterest or at Simply Sandys.com. Another thing Sandy really did right was in cultivating her online sales and taking care of shipping for her customers. It's no small thing to get those things organized and keep up on them, but it can make a big difference for a small-town business.

Hours for the business will be 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and closed Sunday.

McLaran said she was looking for something different than ranching at least half-time and the McLaran ranch will be well looked after by her sisters Maggie and Beth and her father, Scott.

Cunningham, a hairdresser, is wife of Jason Cunningham. Jason has worked off and on for McLarans for at least seven years and Emily and Jill were friends.

"I decided the business was going to be a little much for one person, so I called Emily," said McLaran. "I thought she would be a good business partner and she's always been interested in



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Emily Cunningham and Jill McLaran are ready to welcome you to the new Simply Sandy's. The duo purchased the business and have planned a Nov. 11 Open House.

home décor and antiques."

As important as the tourist dollar is, Simply Sandy's will remain a hometown business with a hometown focus. Local customers are the heart of the business and Wallowa County is the brand. If anyone can understand branding, it will be these gals with ranch heritage.

"I think one thing both Jill and I want to do through the business is share our heritage of ranching in Wallowa County," said Cunningham.

McLaran agreed. "We want to tell the Wallowa County Story," she said.

Christoffersen is 'Realtor of the Year'

Anette Christoffersen, principal broker in the Joseph office of Wallowa Mountain Properties, has been named "Realtor of the Year" by the Northeast Oregon Board of Realtors. Christoffersen was presented with the award and a plaque by current board president Sharron Langdon at a ceremony Oct. 20.

"I was honored to be recognized," said Christoffersen, who won the award based on a variety of criteria, including professional accomplishments, continuing professional education and certifications and community involvement. Christoffersen has served as a Wallowa County representative to the board for the past three years, teaches the real estate section of a free class for first-time home buyers offered by Community Connection and is an active member of The Rotary Club of Wallowa County.

Born and raised in Norway, Christoffersen received an undergraduate degree in interna-



Paul Wahl/Chieftain

Anette Christoffersen has been named "Realtor of the Year" by the Northeast Oregon Board of Realtors.

tional marketing from the Norwegian School of Marketing when she met her husband Nils. The couple made their home in Zimbabwe, Africa, where their two children were born, later moving back to the United States and landing in Wallowa County in 1999, when Nils accepted a job at Wallowa Resources.

"It didn't take us long to fall in love with Wallowa County," said Christoffersen.

"We love the outdoors, and we enjoy being able to hike, bike, ride horses, backpack and ski here. But most of all we love the people who live here." Christoffersen is involved with the Eagle Cap Ski Club and heads the annual Ski Swap fundraiser.

Christoffersen became a real estate agent in 2005, after working as a marketing consultant for several years.

"My marketing background was really beneficial," Christoffersen said. "It shortened my learning curve quite a bit."

Himes hangs up her EMT career

Joyce Himes is retiring as an EMT with Wallowa County Health Care District after 26 years.

Himes and her family moved to Enterprise in 1991. She was granted reciprocity from Montana, allowing her to volunteer as an EMT Basic for the district. In the late '90s, she advanced her career and became an EMT-Intermediate. In 2006 she became a full time employee for the district.

In 1979, Himes was involved in creating a Quick Response Unit in the remote area of Montana where she lived. She was an EMT Basic and responded out of a station wagon that was used to store and transport equipment. The QRU unit is in operation today and has a fleet of ambulances serving the remote areas



Himes

of Montana.

Himes was awarded the State of Oregon Lifesaving Medal in 2016, which is given to an EMT who makes an "extremely noteworthy contribution to efforts that result in

the saving of a life while in an off-duty or volunteer capacity."

The award grew out of an experience where Himes walked into a restaurant with her husband and friends to have dinner. She noticed a commotion at a table and heard a man yell, "Are you choking?"

She discovered a woman who could not breathe and was turning purple. Himes quickly identified herself as an EMT and performed the Heimlich maneuver until the obstruction was dislodged and the woman's breathing resumed.

Himes has three children, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. In her spare time she grows a bountiful garden, quilts and is an avid hunter.

She also teaches CPR and first aid class.

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