

# Good deed equals good karma for Hayes Bros.

By Steve Tool

Wallowa County Chieftain

The Hayes Bros. Racing Team was traveling to Wenatchee, Wash., for a July 28 Northwest Pro4 race when the caravan came around a corner to see a school bus of summer camp kids and their parents parked along the road. Reflectors were up, and a woman was waving for help. The temperature was nearly 100 degrees.

"We thought it was a flat tire we could help them with," said pit-crew member Jerry Hayes. "We pulled over, and she said they'd been there two hours. They had no water or anything, so we gave them all our water and Gatorade."

The bus driver assured the crew that help for the mechanical breakdown was on its way, so the Hayes team departed.

"We figure we got good Karma for saving those children from certain death," Hayes said with a laugh.

Karma or not, the Hayes



In the heat of the day July 28, the Hayes Bros. Racing Team (black t-shirts in front to bus) of Enterprise distributed all the team's water and Gatorade to a stranded summer camp bus full of parents and children. The team earned its highest finish of the season when results were posted that evening.

team ran a successful race.

"It's our best finish in this series," said Jerry. The race took place on a quarter-mile banked oval track, which has its good and bad points.

"It's a tight little track with good banking on the corners, but the wall loves to collect cars," he said.

He added that the team had never done well in Wenatchee.

Hayes said that it took some tweaking to get the car up to snuff for the race. Brother James Hayes, the driver, noted front-end chatter during practice laps, which necessitated

“They had no water or anything, so we gave them all our water and Gatorade.”

— Jerry Hayes  
pit-crew member

quick work, as well as regearing the car because of a lack of RPMs. The second set of laps saw more chatter, although the RPM situation appeared solved.

The team did qualify for the main race through heat races, although Jerry said some issues were difficult to resolve.

"We never qualify well," he said. "We don't get enough prerace time on the track to set things where we need them. We ended up qualifying in the back of the field."

The car still had some steering issues, and Jerry said that his brother described the car's handling "like trying to drive a high-powered washing machine."

Not all of the competitors finished due to technical difficulties. One car blew its engine on the track while another was "black-flagged" because it lacked a spotter. Because drivers have a very limited field of view, they need spotters who communicate the positions of various cars and where it is safe to drive.

"We were up to fourth one time and ended up in fifth in the race," Jerry said. "Overall, we did pretty good. Brian, (Finch, the mechanic) did such a good job building this engine that it's just going great guns."

The Hayes Bros. and their car will participate in the Show n' Shine in Enterprise over the weekend of Aug. 17-18 and will next race in Roseburg at the Roseburg Super Oval track Sept. 8.

## Joy-infused creations highlight new in-store Joseph bakery

### Former Portland residents owner of Vanilla Stag

By Kathleen Ellyn

Wallowa County Chieftain

Cooking is a magical process. That's one of the four foundational beliefs that make Paula Austin of Joseph the thoughtful chef she is.

The others are as simple. Cooking is a system of communication; cooking is a keeper of tradition; cooking is an act of love.

Austin folds those beliefs into each recipe along with the other carefully selected ingredients each time she cooks — and the goal is joy.

"I don't think that anybody that has a piece of cake in front of them doesn't smile," she



Kathleen Ellyn/Chieftain

Paula Austin of Joseph prepares to place these gluten-free carrot cakes in the display case at Vanilla Stag Bakery inside the new Market Place Fresh Foods store in Joseph. Austin, a member of the slow foods movement and a trained chef, specializes in tasty foods for all palates.

said. "I think it's an instant joy and transports them to a different experience."

Austin has baked herself into the joy of food from child-

hood, deepening her experience through a variety of experiences along her path to opening The Vanilla Stag bakery inside Market Place Fresh Foods in Joseph.

"As a child, I loved watching the crafting of the menu, the careful selection of ingredients and all the magic that followed in the kitchen — how something simple could be transformed into something special and how much joy careful cooking brought to those around the table," she said.

Her understanding of what made a good meal was spicy, too. She grew up in a large city, so she was exposed to a variety of foods and flavors and learned how to surprise and please the palate, she said.

She attended a boutique cooking school in Portland called The Chef's Studio where she was able to work closely

with ingredients. Then she and a classmate took their talent to performance level with a pop-up dining experience called "The Irreverent Spoon."

"I have a degree in theatre design so the first thing I did was create experiences," Paula said. "There was the magic of opening the curtain and there's this whole world that is created that is just there to enjoy. We can walk away from our everyday life to enter a different environment."

That experience allowed 40 people, sitting at long tables for a communal dinner, to observe the chefs at work.

"People love to see the cooking aspect," Paula said. "They loved to see that we were working. My partner and I were great at that, we danced in the kitchen together very well, we knew our space and it was a wonderful partnership."

She continued to challenge herself and broaden her skills in a variety of settings, including working as a pastry chef at a gluten-free restaurant in Washington state.

The gluten-free work brought her more joy, she said.

"People that couldn't have desserts for a long time would come, and I would be called out of the kitchen to talk to customers who said "I haven't had cake in so long a time and now I'm able to have it!" There was a meaning to what we were doing that was not about making a buck; (it was about) people that haven't been able to enjoy sweets or treats."

Her skill with gluten-free cooking is such that two of her most popular desserts at Vanilla Stag are gluten-free, but 80 percent of the customers who buy it are not on gluten-free diets.

She and husband Bodhi moved to Wallowa County for a simple life in touch with nature a year ago and became involved in the county's Slow Food Movement.

Opening a bakery wasn't in their plans, but she was invited to come aboard at the newly remodeled Market Place Fresh Foods in Joseph. Her slow food dedication means that she purchases her herbs from Nathan Slinker's greenhouse on Alder Slope and her farm fresh eggs from a neighbor down the road.

Her intention and attention in using wholesome "live" ingredients with respect simply deepens the joy for chef and customer alike.

"This is my chance to bring magic into the world in a larger scale than ever before and share my passion for cooking with the community that is my home," she said.



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