

Taste testing begins at the Blythe Cricket

I stopped by the Blythe Cricket last week to see just how close the new restaurant on Joseph's main street was to a grand opening. What I got a scrumptious tease.

Co-owners Margaret Lamm and Rachel Nutter had hoped to open the Italian restaurant the end of December, but made no promises. Now, they're hoping for late January but said "let's just say in 2019, we feel confident with that."

It's a joke, of course, meant as a nod at the hundreds of small things that must be done before an opening, and the necessary focus on other things (like family) during the holiday season.

But the progress report made my mouth water.

They've just finished three days of barista training and selected their "trademark coffee." They'll be serving Nossa Familia Coffee.



Kathleen Ellyn

Nossa Familia is a small family company out of Portland by way of Brazil. And I just happened to have been introduced to Nossa Familia Coffee the last time I visited Portland. My coffee-obsessed brother said, "Stumptown is over. I'm taking you to Nossa Familia, it's a family place, their relationships with coffee growers is personal, and the coffee is roasted and freshly ground."

Fresh is very good. I also noticed kitchen staff at work as I drove down the Main Street a few days ago.

You can see the kitchen through the big windows that face the highway. I'd guessed they were testing their recipes and wondered if I ought to turn in and volunteer as a taste-tester. Lamm confirmed my guess.

"We're perfecting our menu items," said Lamm. "Every oven is different. The cinnamon buns (that's buns, not rolls) are our favorite baked item."

Oh yeah, I should have stopped and volunteered.

I remembered they'd said something about homemade pasta dishes, so I decided to hone in on the "homemade" claim and found out that their pasta noodles are handmade from scratch.

And the creation of a unique flavor palette doesn't stop there.

"We make all the seasonings and flavorings and special touches that make it mouth-watering," said Nutter.

Produce will also be locally sourced, as much as is possible with Wallowa County's short growing season. Nutter and Lamm have already purchased locally sourced beef, too.

Dinner and dessert seem well in hand, but what about the compliment of the right wine or other adult beverage? Not to worry, although the liquor licenses are still being acquired. Lamm and Nutter expect to be able to serve cocktails with brunch, and wine and beer with meals.

Now for the name: it is Blythe with a "y." I got "corrected" last time I wrote about the restaurant and said it was as Blythe with a "y." I was told by a proofreader that was the name of an actress but the correct spelling of blithe that means "happy" was with an I. Well, we were all right. It is Blythe with a 'y' (yeah me!) because it's the middle name of one of the owners.



Artist Sam Collett

Collett offers "Art Care" service

By Steve Tool

Local artist Sam Collett is known for his realistic artwork and his stunning portraits. Now he wants to offer the opportunity to help others. Collett is starting what he calls an "art care" business.

According to Collett, the genesis for the idea came over the summer while giving private art lessons. He originally conceived of the idea as a way for senior citizens to connect with art.

"I thought that with having a background with seniors in the health industry that this would be a really good idea," he said. "It's not for everybody of course, but for those who an interest, it can give them a new skill

to learn, a new activity to keep them engaged in something other than their health."

Lessons are available to anyone from teenagers on up.

The lessons are one-on-one with a sketch pad. The investment in materials would be about \$10. Collett can provide the materials as well. The sessions will focus on representational art.

The artist spent the past five years as a Certified Nursing Assistant at Wallowa Memorial Hospital, but that's not really part of the package as he recently suffered a severely injured shoulder.

"Home care is not what I'm trying to do," he said. "I'm really focused on the art

because that's what I really have to offer."

"What I do have to offer is my background in teaching, which is a long 40 years in Salt Lake City and here," he said. "I believe that exploration of art, first through drawing, would spark new interest, joy and the fulfillment of developing a new skill." He added that he doesn't consider what he offers as "art therapy," but it therapy could be a byproduct of active art engagement.

Collett charges \$25 per hour for the one-on-one sessions usually lasting about two hours depending on how many projects the client is working on. Collett can be contacted through his website: samcollettfinart.com or by phone at 541-377-3616.

Free business workshop offered in Enterprise

ENTERPRISE, Ore. – Northeast Oregon Economic Development District is offering a free, six-week workshop series in Enterprise to help entrepreneurs and small-business owners build the basis for a successful enterprise.

Register by Friday, Jan. 11 to reserve your seat.

Lisa Dawson has taught the "business foundations" class for more than ten years. It covers the basics of running a successful business: overhead and inventory costs, goal-setting and sales projections, marketing, taxes and licensing, and other considerations, and brings it all together in a business plan.

Classes in Enterprise are from 6 to 9 p.m. on Tuesdays, Jan. 22, 29; Feb. 5, 12, 26 (no class Feb. 19) and Mar. 5 at Building Healthy Families, 207 E Park St.

Other classes are held in Baker City and La Grande. Register by Friday, Jan. 11 at <http://www.ignitemybusiness.org/en/events>, or contact the office at 541-426-3598, 800-645-9454, or kristyathens@neoedd.org.

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- When a loved one is unconscious or unresponsive
- When you suspect a heart attack - chest pain, shortness of breath, etc.
- When you suspect a stroke - facial droop, weakness on one side, slurred speech
- After an accident or injury where you suspect a concussion, broken bone, internal injury, or other serious condition.

For most other health concerns, call your primary care doctor or provider. For life-threatening emergencies, call 9-1-1.

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