

Homegrown to host fifth seasonal dinner

Fundraiser to support school gardens will feature fresh local ingredients

BY JACK DAVIS
Siuslaw News

Homegrown Public House chef and owner Kelsey Terry will host the second annual Autumn Harvest Dinner this Monday, Nov. 16, at 5 p.m. Proceeds from this fundraising event will go to support the Siuslaw Elementary School raised garden program.

Jen Nelson, Homegrown’s produce manager and farm liaison, said, “We do a dinner every season to highlight the local farms and the seasonal foods that are available. We also want to bring awareness to the school garden and also raise some funds for them.”

The Monday night menu will include appetizers, beef bourguignon; wild mushroom and black rice pilaf; kale salad with winter squash, pumpkin seeds and cranberries; baked butternut squash kugel and pumpkin and apple pies for desert. All ingredients are from Oregon farms and foragers.

“We are getting everything as local as we can,” Terry said. “The wild black rice is from Arrowhead Farms in Mt. Angel in the Willamette Valley and the wild mushrooms are from local foragers. We will also be offering cheeses from Willamette Valley Creamery.”

Most of the produce will come from local farms near Florence, according to Nelson. “When we started these din-

ners, last fall,” Nelson said, “it was around the time the school garden was really getting going, so we decided to tie the school garden into the dinner because it is sort of a similar thing. It’s about educating our community about growing food, what you can grow here.”

In addition to the dinner, there will be a demonstration of a bio-char stove outdoors at the front of the restaurant.

“Bio-char is something that is great to use in your garden and composting,” Nelson said. “We are looking to tie the bio-char into the school garden and maybe some of the farms as well.”

Past seasonal dinners have raised between \$400 and \$500 each.

“This is our fifth dinner and the second annual school garden fundraiser,” Nelson said. “All but one of the last four dinners has sold out. We have gone through one full year – four seasons. If we could raise \$1,000 for the school garden, that would be awesome.”

The cost of the buffet style dinner is \$20 per person and will include one hot cider drink, either alcoholic or non-alcoholic. Seating is limited to 50. Call Homegrown at 541-997-4886 for tickets.

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Senator from 1A

Rickard added, “And, we have not been able to harvest shellfish on our coast for the whole summer.”

Dreiling said that Florence has recently lost 10 crabbing boats to Newport. Roblan cited these issues as concerns that must be addressed and further proof that coastal ports need to move away from historic revenue streams.

“Everyone agrees that the old historic uses (timber and commercial fishing) are not going to come back,” Roblan said. “It is something we really need to do. There will be some push back from the fishing industry.”

Roblan discussed his view of long-term economic recovery concerns.

“Since the 2007-08 recession we have had constant improvement,” he said. “But we are getting into a historically long recovery and a slower economic recovery. People are getting nervous that we could have some kind of a setback economically.”

Using port property for any kind of marijuana facility was brought up.

“Marijuana is a very interesting issue because of the dichotomy between the federal and state governments,” Roblan said. “They have to figure this out because more and more states are going to do it eventually.”

Greene said, “The actual crime rates in Washington and Colorado are down.”

Preisler added, “And the prison populations have dropped dramatically.”

“Which are all cost savers,” Greene concluded. “I was on the judiciary com-



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Port of Siuslaw project coordinator Richard Dreiling, interim port manager Dina McClure, Mayor Joe Henry, legislative advisor Rosie Shatkin, State Sen. Arnie Roblan, port commissioner Nancy Rickard and Florence City Councilor Ron Preisler take a break during the port tour and informational meeting held at the port Nov. 11.

mittee and we had a number of service members come in who had suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD),” Roblan explained. “They said that marijuana was the only thing that has worked. ‘Prior to that,’ they said, ‘I was a zombie because they were giving me all these really big time drugs and I didn’t have a life. I’m here to testify that this is what allows me to be normal and have my family back.’ I said, ‘wow, these people have found an answer to a problem.’”

Roblan said the tax on marijuana scheduled for 2016 would be the first sales tax the state has had for a very long time.

Rickard said she had a niece who is a nurse treating drug addiction patients.

“She is completely opposed to the legalization of marijuana, because she says it is a gateway drug,” she said.

“I have a brother who has been in and out of prison because of methamphetamines,” Roblan said. “Both alcohol and marijuana are gateway drugs to those people who have a tendency to have that problem. We need to make sure our kids grow up in environments that make them feel good about themselves and move forward. Part of our problem is that we don’t do a very good job of that.”

“The statistics on children using marijuana is really disastrous,” Roblan continued. “You should not have kids exposed to marijuana. Like alcohol, it stunts their brain development. It is a big problem. I was not in

favor of legalized marijuana personally because I’ve watched what happens with kids and the lethargy that takes place. I’m hopeful that we will treat this as seriously as we do alcohol, or more, about keeping it out of the hands of younger people.”

Roblan added that both Washington and Colorado have fewer people driving under the influence.

As the meeting concluded, Roblan said, “Ports can be economic drivers for communities, therefore there needs to be a close relationship between the city and the port. How do we coexist in a catalytic way? What can we do to help you? What can you do to help us? You also need to be engaged in port associations to find out what other people are doing and what seems to be working and not working.”

McClure said, “I learned so much from listening to the senator talk about economic development, the legislature, and current issues. When I asked his advice on what the port and city can do to move forward in a positive direction, the answer was what I was hoping to hear, that coastal ports need to work together and the ports and cities need to work together to bring visitors and businesses to the beautiful Oregon coast.

“I am grateful to Commissioner Rickard for inviting the senator and am disappointed the other commissioners were unable to join us,” she added.

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Chamber from 1A

“It’s a non-stop pace,” Applebee said.

The Florence Area Chamber of Commerce is contracted by the City of Florence to handle marketing and tourism. Through its contract with the city, the chamber receives money from the Transient Room Tax.

The rest of its budget comes from member dues.

Applebee is the only full-time position the chamber supports, though Sherri Bollinger was hired as a part-time event coordinator earlier this year.

“The reality in Florence is that this is a single or one-and-a-half person job, funding wise, because it’s all the community can afford,” Applebee said. “At the same time, people in the community expect the chamber to do a large variety of things. We have to rely on volunteerism, member buy-in and support from community to make those happen.”

Florence’s other strengths, such as its location, weather and history, are a big reason why Applebee chooses to stay involved.

“I always felt that Florence has done a great job at having the quaint, historic Old Town district, with a nice, vibrant highway district,” he said. “There’s so much to do and so many people who get engaged and get involved. That’s a huge part of what we like about

Florence.”

Applebee said he is proud that the chamber is such a strong advocate for business in the community.

“You can tell I do believe in the message,” he said. “We’ve accomplished a lot.”

The members of the chamber, and the board of directors, are a big part of that success.

“The more businesses that belong to the chamber, the stronger the chamber can be and do more things for the community,” he added.

The city’s current drive for economic development is one way to keep businesses active and engaged.

Another way is working with chamber members to host Business After Hours twice a month. This is a chance for chamber members to showcase their locations, products and services in a relaxed, social environment.

“There’s no doubt about the fact that the economy is turning up and doing better,” Applebee said. “I really hope that whomever the board brings in to replace me does some serious analysis of what the chamber can do and do well.”

The chamber board “regretfully” accepted Applebee’s resignation at its meeting on Nov. 5, according to Board President Jenna Bartlett.

“I am forever grateful to Cal for his leadership. He has contributed immensely to the stabilization and growth of the cham-

ber,” Bartlett said. “We wish Cal a long and happy retirement.”

In the meantime, the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce will begin a recruitment period. Once the board hires the new executive director, he or she will join Applebee on the job, shadowing him for a month.

And then? “Who knows what else I’ll do?” Applebee asked. “For now, I need the time off to ‘figure out what I want to be when I grow up.’”

He plans to go “RVing” with his wife and rest before getting involved again.

“I have not gotten to drive my Jeep in the Rhododendron Parade for five years now, so I’m due. I get to do a parade again, finally,” he said.

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Florence in Bloom

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

November 20th, 9am-4pm

Florence In Bloom would like to invite you to join us as we tastefully welcome the 2015 Holiday Season. We are grateful to the community of Florence for supporting Florence In Bloom and would like to offer 10% off any cash and carry purchase made on this special day. Join us for holiday treats, enter for a chance to win Flowers For A Year and pick up our gift to you: a 2016 Floral Calendar (supplies are limited)

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WORD ON THE STREET

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What is your favorite community event in Florence?

“Definitely the Rhody parade. Half the town is in it; and the other half is watching. It’s the perfect small-town parade.”
—DICK MASON, FLORENCE

“Of course the arts, because I’m an artist. I love that the library is really supportive of the arts. This January, Florence will do another celebration of the arts. I’m very excited for that.”
—TAMARA PHILLIPS, FLORENCE

“I like the Shamrock Run. I like seeing so many people out there running and supporting the middle school, people getting dressed up and the dog walk.”
—SAM GAUDERMAN, FLORENCE

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