

TOURISM

Continued from Page 1A

Known as the Great Dividing Range, the mountains that span most of Eastern Australia, including parts of Queensland at the continent's northeast corner, are not dramatically different from some of the ranges Copeman has seen this week during her first visit to Oregon.

Nor is topography the only similarity, Copeman said.

Just as the vast majority of Australia's population is confined to several cities along its eastern and southeastern coasts — Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide among them have about 55 percent of the country's inhabitants — so is Oregon's population density vastly greater in the Willamette Valley than elsewhere.

But travelers don't venture halfway around the world just to see places that remind them of home.

And one reason Copeman, along with about 30 other journalists and travel business operators from many countries, took in that stirring vista from the Interpretive Center Thursday morning was so they could try to entice their readers, and customers, to follow in their footsteps across Oregon.

This several-day "Road Rally" is an annual event coordinated by Travel Oregon. The purpose is to introduce, or in some cases re-acquaint, international writers and tourism officials with all Oregon has to offer visitors.

The ultimate goal, naturally, is to encourage people to visit.

"It's an exciting opportunity," said Timothy Bishop, Baker County's contract tourism director, who accompanied the group to the Interpretive Center.

The visitors, who started in Portland and traveled across the Cascades to Bend and

then through Central Oregon to Grant and Baker counties, spent Wednesday night in Baker City. They strolled downtown streets and sampled restaurants and shops.

Copeman, who writes articles for her company's quarterly travel brochures, among other publications, said she is "quite blown away by Oregon."

She believes Travel Associates will be able to sell Oregon, including Baker County, as a destination — particularly to clients who already intend to visit California.

Copeman shares a chuckle with Greg Eckhart, director of global sales for Travel Oregon and one of the Road Rally guides.

"Oregon is above California," Copeman says, meaning in a geographic sense.

"Above in every way," Eckhart completes a joke that has been repeated during the group's journey across the state this week.

Copeman said Oregon "ticks quite a lot of boxes" that her company's clients are interested in when planning a travel destination.

"There is a lot of history, culture and obviously a lot of scenic beauty here," she said, gesturing toward the sylvan scene outside the Interpretive Center.

Cultivating Antipodean tourists is a relatively new emphasis for Travel Oregon, said Corey Marshall, an account director for the agency who focuses on Australia and New Zealand (and, in a rather large geographic discrepancy, Canada).

Marshall, who works from Auckland, New Zealand, said that when Travel Oregon opened its office there it was the first time Oregon had been marketed in that region as a tourist destination.



Eckhart



Marshall

THEFT

Continued from Page 1A

The convictions stem from multiple incidents that happened between July 23 and Oct. 24 of last year in which Lopez used checks from closed ac-

counts at multiple Baker City businesses. The checks belonged to people who had not given her permission to use them.

Lopez had previously been



Lopez

sentenced to 18 months in prison for identity theft in Union County in 2015.

"We were able to get a long prison sentence in this case pursuant to the Oregon sentencing guidelines due to Ms. Lopez having a prior property

crime criminal history," Baker County District Attorney Matt Shirlcliff said in a press release. "The large number of victims in the case was also an aggravating factor. The victims were pleased with the result of the case."

BOTTLES

Continued from Page 1A

The program brings in between \$8,000 to \$10,000 per year, said Blankenship, who serves as the organization's treasurer and bookkeeper.

The center's annual budget is about \$30,000. In addition to the baby bottle drive, this year the Rachel Center received \$5,000 from the Leo Adler Foundation to purchase diapers and a \$1,000 grant from the Community 101 program, which operates through the Leadership program at Baker High School.

This is only the second year the center has received a Community 101 grant. Last year's award was \$400, Hoelscher said. Application must be made annually. This year's grant will be used to purchase hygiene items for distribution to clients, she said.

Other community donations make up the remainder of funding needed to operate the center.

Hoelscher said contribu-

tions to the annual bottle drive are vital.

"It is our primary fundraiser and it ensures that the doors of the Rachel Center stay open," she said.

Hoelscher says the Rachel Pregnancy Center offers church communities the opportunity to help.

"And we, in turn, encourage our clients to go back to church to hear about the good news and unconditional love of Jesus Christ," she said. "We really want to share with our clients the hope and peace that Jesus has to offer."

According to its mission statement, "Rachel Pregnancy Center is committed to upholding the sanctity of human life to anyone facing unplanned pregnancy and related challenges by providing physical, emotional and spiritual support while sharing the unconditional love of Jesus Christ."

Over the years, the center has drifted more toward helping families, but Board members hope to return to the

original focus, Grove says.

"We steer families in need to the Compassion Center," she said. "Our ministry is to young ladies who don't have a significant other and any abortion-minded clients so they can choose life and they have the support they need."

Toward that end, the Rachel Pregnancy Center now carries only baby and children's clothing up to Size 3. Maternity clothes are the only adult items available. All clothing is donated to the center.

"We are in need of gently used maternity clothes, especially extra large and extra, extra large," Grove said.

Clothing, diapers and formula are provided free on an as-needed basis.

Donations of clothing for children Size 4 and up and other adult clothing is forwarded to the Compassion Center for distribution, Grove said.

"We serve men and women facing a financial or emotional crisis due to an unplanned

pregnancy," she said. "We want them to choose life rather than abortion."

Grove and other Rachel Pregnancy Center volunteers are excited about the other changes taking place at the center as well.

The lobby has been updated with new colors and decor. A large colorful painting of Jesus sitting at the waterside surrounded by children catches the eye of those who enter the building.

"It's warm and welcoming and has a more professional look," Grove said of the lobby. "And it doubles as a classroom for large groups."

In addition to the group meeting room and storage for clothing and other supplies to help mothers and babies, the building includes one classroom and one counseling room where peer counselors meet with clients.

A new program titled "Earn While You Learn" is



Grove

being offered to enable mothers and fathers to be the best parents they can be, Blankenship said.

Linda Hudson, a registered nurse, is teaching prenatal and infant care classes. Billie McClure teaches parenting classes and Mary Andersen is teaching the class "Growing Kids God's Way." The three along with Grove also provide peer counseling.

Parents earn "baby bucks" by attending classes, which they spend at the center's store. It offers items such as baby furniture, bedding and other necessities. Vouchers also may be purchased for use at places such as the Kids Closet clothing store on Broadway Street, or to obtain child car seats available at the Baker City Police Department for a \$20 fee.

"We want them to be able to get things they need to encourage them to take the classes," Grove said.

The class lessons, most of which include videos, range from prenatal care for moth-

ers to infant and toddler care. A 15-lesson Bible study class also is taught, including 10 lessons on the Old Testament and five based on the book of John in the New Testament.

The classes are designed to be user friendly, Grove said. "We don't want our clients to be frustrated. We do want them to learn some responsibility."

Grove said research has shown that requiring people to take classes in exchange for purchasing items with tokens such as "baby bucks" builds self-esteem.

"It's not a hand out," she said. "It's a hand up."

The classes are 35 to 45 minutes each and two classes can be taken back-to-back with the potential of a client earning six baby bucks in one sitting.

"The teachers are quite flexible," she said. "They will do classes on days when we're closed."

"They are bending over backward to make it easy on these clients," Grove said.

The Rachel Pregnancy Center also provides pregnancy tests and counseling, abortion alternative counseling, post-abortion counseling, adoption referrals, free Bibles, prayer and referrals for other assistance.

The center does not provide abortion services or referrals for abortions.

Another service offered to anyone considering an abortion is an ultrasound provided by Hope Pregnancy Center in Ontario. Volunteers will transport any abortion-minded person to the Center for a free ultrasound, Grove said.

"It helps them see they do have a baby in there," she said. "Most decide (after having an ultrasound) not to abort their baby and choose adoption or keep their baby."

The Rachel Pregnancy Center at 2192 Court Ave. is open Wednesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed from noon to 1 p.m. on those days and closed on holidays.

More information is available by calling 541-523-5457 or by email at rpc.director1@gmail.com

SCHOOLS

Continued from Page 1A

A work session for continued discussion about improving district buildings will begin at the close of the special meeting, about 4:45 p.m.

The meeting, which includes an executive (closed to the public) session, will begin at 4 p.m. at the District Office, 2090 Fourth St.

During the closed session, as allowed under Oregon law, the Board will consider information or records exempt by law from public inspection and deliberate on real property transactions.

Other items on the special meeting agenda include discussion of restructuring the position of athletic director and consideration of a director of specific secondary programs.

The work session includes discussion of rates for bonds to help finance building improvements. The cost to remodel the Central Building, which the district closed in 2009 for safety reasons, will be considered.

And the cost to add square footage without moving grade levels at Brooklyn Primary School, South Baker Intermediate and the Helen M. Stack Building, which houses seventh- and eighth-grade students, also will be discussed.

Amber VanOcker of the LKV Architects firm in Boise will present information about the cost to remodel and reconfigure buildings to house Grades K-2 at Brooklyn Primary School and Grades 3-4 at South Baker Intermediate School.

Scott Rogers of the Wenaha Project Management and Consulting firm, which has an office in Pendleton, will present information on the cost of remodeling the Helen M. Stack building and reconfiguring it for Grades 5-6.

And Cassie Hibbert, also with the Wenaha firm, will speak about moving the seventh- and eighth-graders to Baker High School and the cost of remodeling the addition of those two grade levels to the existing Grades 9-12 configuration.

The Board will discuss the next steps in the process and the timeline for any proposal to seek voter approval of a bond measure that might be placed on the November 2019 or May 2020 ballots.

The Board also will consider retirement presentations to be made at its May 16 meeting. And a new date for the July Board meeting will be scheduled.



"You'll love the work we do. I guarantee it." - JR

GRUMPY'S Repair Trucks

225 H Street • East of I-84 • 541-523-3200 • grumpysrepair.com

ATTENTION HUNTERS

The FORSEA RANCH in Richland has regrettfully decided to discontinue public access and hunting rights on all Forsea land effective August 1, 2019.

Although we have a good relationship with Fish and Wildlife with our Access & Habitat Program, we are closing our property to public access for hunting because Baker County and its commissioners have been trying to push for a RS2477 road through our property, and we believe they are wrong. We feel this decision may be the only way the county will realize what it means to Baker County and Hunters not to have access and hunting on our property.

We encourage all hunters and other interested parties to contact the county commissioners and explain your concerns.

Dan Forsea, Owner
Dan L. Forsea & Sons Ranch

St. Jude Novena

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. St. Jude Worker of Miracles, pray for us. (Say this prayer 9 times a day. By the 8th day your prayer will be answered. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised.) Thank you St. Jude for granting my petition. MAW

May 10-16

ELTRYM HISTORIC THEATER

1809 1st St, Baker City • www.eltrym.com

POKEMON: DETECTIVE PIKACHU PG

FRI & SAT: (4:00) 7:00, 9:20
SUN: (4:00) 7:00 MON-TH: 7:00

AVENGERS: ENDGAME PG-13

FRI-SUN: (3:45) 7:30
MON-THURS: 6:30

UGLY DOLLS PG

FRI & SAT: (4:10) 7:10, 9:30
SUN: (4:10) 7:10 MON-TH: 7:10

(1)Bargain Movie

Show Times: 541-523-2522
Office: 541-523-5439

fires LES SCHWAB

FARM TIRES

Starting at \$111⁹⁹

6.70-15

PIVOT TIRES

Starting at \$167⁰⁰

11.2-24

We gladly make appointments

LEW BROS

210 Bridge
541-523-3679

AFTER HOURS:
541-518-7100