

Small-business & Ag

HAPPENINGS

Business succession workshop is tomorrow

LA GRANDE — A workshop, led by experienced attorneys, will discuss the tax and legal benefits of selling a business to its employees as an employee-owned business. The May 30 class will provide answers to many questions about how employees can manage themselves and keep local businesses thriving. The free workshop is open to the public and will take place from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at EOU. For more information on specific location or to register, go to www.eventbrite.com/e/legacy-project-workshop-eou-tickets-60596446603 or contact John McNamara of the Northwest Cooperative Development Center at johnm@nwcdc.coop or 360-943-4241.

Methodist Camp and Retreat Center holds open house

WALLOWA LAKE — The Methodist Camp and Retreat Center at Wallowa Lake hosts camps, conferences and retreats for a variety of organizations. The facility is holding an open house from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. June 1 featuring self-guided tours of the lodge, cabin and grounds, plus information about planning your own event. Visitors are welcome to try out the center's facilities and enjoy refreshments. The Methodist Camp & Retreat Center is located at 84522 Church Lane, Wallowa Lake.

Webinar covers prevailing wages

BAKER CITY — A Prevailing Wages Webinar presented by the Oregon Bureau of Labor will begin at 9:30 a.m. June 4. All are welcome to attend. To participate in the webinar, email bonne@guyercpa.net. There is a limit of 19 webinar participants, but anyone can locally attend at The Hatch, 2019A Main St., Baker City. For more information, stop by or call Hatch at 541-519-5377.

Bank of Eastern Oregon among 200 top community banks in nation

HEPPNER — American Banker magazine ranked three Oregon banks among the top 200 community banks in the country, including BEO Bancorp of Heppner. The magazine, a trade publication based out of New York City, based the list on average return of shareholder equity between 2016 and 2018. Banks with less than \$2 billion in assets were eligible.

"We are extremely pleased with the recognition in American Banker magazine. We find ourselves in the company of some of the best run and most admired banks in the nation," said Jeff Bailey, president and CEO of Bank of Eastern Oregon. "This is testimony to the dedication of our employees and the tremendous support of our customer base."

BEO Bancorp is the holding company for Bank of Eastern Oregon, which operates 18 branches and six loan production offices in 12 Eastern Oregon and five Eastern Washington counties. There is a branch in Enterprise and a loan production office in Island City. The bank's website is www.beobank.com.

USDA reopens Conservation Reserve Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. — USDA's Farm Service Agency will accept applications beginning June 3 for certain practices under the continuous Conservation Reserve Program signup and will offer extensions for expiring CRP contracts. The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized CRP, one of the country's largest conservation programs. FSA had ceased accepting applications last fall for the continuous CRP signup when the 2014 Farm Bill authority expired.

Continuous signup enrollment contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration. Soil rental rates will be set at 90% of the existing rates. Incentive payments will not be offered for these contracts. A one-year extension will be offered to existing CRP participants who have expiring CRP contracts of 14 years or less. Producers eligible for an extension will receive a letter describing their options. More information and a full list of practices approved for this program is available at www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services.

Commercial Tire grand opening set



Ronald Bond/WesCom News Service

Commercial Tire, now located at 2910 Mulholland Dr. in La Grande, will have a grand opening celebration Saturday.

By Trish Yerges
For WesCom News Service

Commercial Tire has moved into its new six-bay building and invites the public to attend its grand opening between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. June 1 at 2910 Mulholland Dr. in La Grande.

Store Manager John Cederholm and Assistant Manager Ben Davidson, along with their staff, have arranged a fun-filled day at Commercial Tire and hope that people will come tour their new building, enjoy a free lunch and check out the exciting entertainment they have lined up.

"We have quite a few things going on, like a car show," Cederholm said. "The EOU football team will be washing cars for free, and there will be several nice giveaways, like Yeti coolers, Commercial Tire soccer balls and a free set of tires. The big attraction will be Big Foot the Monster Truck."

The monster truck will be crushing four to eight cars, donated by B & K Auto Salvage, on the adjacent property owned by Commercial Tire.

"It will crush the cars at 1 p.m., so you don't want to miss that," Cederholm said. "The monster truck will be on display Friday late afternoon and all day Saturday."

The public will be treated to free hot dogs, hamburgers and beverages. Visitors will be able to tour the new facility and see all the new features and state-of-the-art equipment including a balancing machine and a new lube station for oil changes.

The Pacific Empire Radio group will be doing onsite live broadcast as well, and Cederholm will be speaking on air about the grand opening and



Ronald Bond/WesCom News Service

Commercial Tire Store Manager John Cederholm pulls tires off the rack in the store's inventory.

new facility. Cederholm has been manager at Commercial Tire for the past 10 years, and he was part of the company's 50th anniversary celebration last summer. He's excited about the company's momentum and the direction it's going with the new building and location.

"We have six bays for cars and pickups, and we have a cover truck pad that will accommodate two full-size semis at one time. On the side of it, there's room for another truck so we could be working on three trucks at one time," he said.

He especially likes the business' accessibility and visibility at its new location.

"When you're driving down Island Avenue, you can see us now. The access of getting in and out is more than a 100 times easier," he said. "We have so much room that trucks with trailers have room to maneuver, and we have ample parking there."

Cederholm said he was told by an employee at the corporate office that the La Grande store is one of the best-looking stores in the tire chain.

"When I was told we were going to get a new store, it exceeded my vision and expectations of what we would get," he said. "It's a very nice store."

During the grand opening, Cederholm said, they won't be

conducting business as usual, but they will still take care of customers who have flat tires and emergency needs.

Commercial Tire employs 15 people, three of whom are part-time employees. Since the move from Jefferson Street into the new building, Cederholm has brought on two additional full-time employees, and he's looking to add to the crew, "mainly mechanics, someone well-rounded who can do some of everything," he said.

The staff includes Kyle Ritch, who handles inside sales; Marcus McKinney and Brandon Cederholm, both Commercial specialists who deal with semis and agricultural mechanics; Lily Desenberg, customer service rep at the front desk; Marshal Hoffman, lube tech; Jarred Cooper, Commercial service tech; and tire technicians, Tyler Bales, Kade Bartlett, Cody Gray, Evan Leary, Brian Howell and Maree Wynn.

"Maree is a recent hire, and the first (female) tire technician I've ever hired (in 10 years), and the fourth in the company," Cederholm said.

Commercial Tire not only sells and services tires, the business also offers auto repairs, oil changes and front-end work like alignments.

"Come down Saturday and see our store, the facilities, ask questions and have a good time. Enjoy the freebies while the supply lasts," Cederholm said.

For more information about Commercial Tire, contact the manager or assistant manager at 541-963-2887 during business hours: 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

Oregon Wheat calls for USMCA ratification

Oregon Wheat Growers League

PENDLETON — The Oregon Wheat Growers League and Oregon Wheat Commission applaud the Trump administration for its progress in bringing the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement forward for ratification and call on the administration and Congress to move quickly to ratify the agreement.

The U.S. International Trade Commission has completed the required report of the potential impact of USMCA and it confirms the agreement has significant economic and employment benefits for the U.S., including more than \$2 billion in increased agricultural exports. The administration has negotiated a resolution of the tariffs on steel and aluminum imports from Mexico and Canada, removing a key hurdle blocking ratification. Mexico has already passed legislation adopting key labor reforms called for in the agreement, demonstrating its commitment to the terms of

USMCA. Finally, the administration has held numerous briefings for Congress to explain the agreement and address legislator concerns.

OWGL believes USMCA provides clear benefits and improvements over the original North American Free Trade Agreement implemented in 1994, and believes it is critical these benefits be locked in by ratifying this agreement. The wheat growers urge the administration to complete and submit the draft implementing legislation for USMCA to Congress as soon as possible, and calls on Congress to follow the timelines set forth in the Trade Promotion Authority law to bring the agreement to a vote this summer.

With 85-90% of Oregon's wheat going into export markets around the world, customers — including those in Japan, China, Korea, the Philippines and Indonesia — need to see that the U.S. can negotiate and complete new trade agreements. Wheat Growers

knows customers will be encouraged by completion of USMCA and believes completion will send a strong signal to our markets and help strengthen wheat prices.

The Oregon Wheat Growers League is the primary representative for Oregon's wheat growers, working to enhance the profitability of wheat growers by communicating with and educating growers and the public, assuring markets, conducting important research and advocating for sound business, trade and environmental policy.

The Oregon Wheat Commission is a producer-funded and governed check-off program. Its mission is to improve the profitability of Oregon's wheat growers through marketing, research and grower education programs designed to find solutions to immediate and long-term issues faced by the wheat producers of Oregon.

For more information visit www.owgl.org.

