

NEW OWNERSHIP

La Grande couple takes reins of Local Harvest Eatery and Pub

By TRISH YERGES • For The Observer

LA GRANDE — Joe and Jamie Cox of La Grande are the new owners of Local Harvest Eatery and Pub, 2104 Island Ave., in La Grande.

“We bought the business in January, and we took over on February 1,” Joe said.

Joe Cox left his railroad job to open the pizzeria with his wife, he said. The couple are new to the restaurant business, but they felt confident taking over a well-established pizzeria developed in 2016 by former owners Harvest Rogers and her father, Bruce Rogers. It was Bear Mountain Pizza and Klondike Pizza and Restaurant before that.

Joe and Jamie Cox decided to retain the business name, Local Harvest, for the time being due to their dealings with the Oregon Lottery.

“However, we’ll probably be changing the business name down the road because we’re looking at making a theme change,” he said.

They specialize in pizza and wings with a large selection of salad and beer choices.

“Of course, pizza and beer — those are like bread and butter,” he said.

The next most popular food item on their menu is the huge 50-topping salad bar and also their chicken wings.

“We also have hot sandwiches and some fried foods,” he added.

They serve sandwiches hot on a Ciabatta bun with a side order of fries or a small salad bar. Sandwich choices include apricot chicken, Philly roast beef, plain roast beef, The Italian, and pesto chicken. Of course there are also desserts on the menu.

Joe Cox works full-time at the restaurant, one of four full-time workers out of 20 employee positions.

Jamie Cox works at the business administrative duties — “all the not so fun stuff,” her husband said.

She also works at the Oregon State Extension office on North McAlister.

“She teaches healthy eating to kids in schools, among the other things,” he said.

Party room and arcade

Local Harvest offers a party room for group dining and gatherings, which can be reserved by customers.

“We do a lot of business with buses of high school and college sports teams,” Cox said. “We have enough parking to accommodate about 30 vehicles and some buses.”

The Coxes have done quite a bit of renovation, and they have a lot more in the works.

“We added new pinball machines in our arcade and more arcade games are on order and coming. Our lottery machines should be operational again soon.”

Joe and Jamie Cox would like to welcome everyone to their pizzeria to



Isabella Crowley/The Observer

New owners Jamie Cox, left, and Joe Cox pose outside of Local Harvest Eatery and Pub on Tuesday, June 21, 2022. They will keep the name Local Harvest for the time being, but the restaurant may get a new name in the future.

enjoy delicious pizzas, chicken wings, a great salad bar, hot sandwiches and beverages.

“We are family owned and take pride in the quality of our products,” he said.

Survey: Food costs put pinch on holiday

Cost of July Fourth cookout higher than last year, but farmers aren't cashing in

By SIERRA DAWN McCLAIN
Capital Press

SALEM — Hosting a party of 10 for a Fourth of July cookout could cost between 11% to 17% more in 2022 than last year, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation and Wells Fargo.

A Farm Bureau survey found that U.S. consumers feeding a party of 10 will pay \$69.68 for Independence Day foods, including cheeseburgers, pork chops, chicken breasts, potato salad, strawberries and ice cream. The overall cookout cost is up 17%, or about \$10, from 2021.

“The impacts to consumers are significant,” said Roger Cryan, chief economist for the Farm Bureau.

A similar survey from Wells Fargo, which analyzed popular Fourth of July food categories, showed an overall 11% cost increase.

Higher food prices, however, doesn't always mean higher farm profits.

“This is not a windfall for farmers and ranchers,” said Cryan, AFBF's economist.

Farmers generally receive a small portion of each dollar spent on food.

According to USDA's “food dollar series,” off-farm costs including marketing, processing, wholesaling, distribution and retailing account for 84 cents of every food dollar spent in the U.S.

About a decade ago, American farmers received 17.6 cents of every \$1 consumers spent on food. By 2019, that had fallen to 14.6 cents. This June, a USDA statement said “just 14 cents of the food dollar go to producers on average.”

For years, USDA's Economic Research Service has tracked the share of retail food prices that farmers receive by comparing prices consumers paid for foods with prices farmers and ranchers received for commodities.

INDIVIDUAL PRICES FOR SUMMER COOKOUT

Prices 2022 compared to 2021

2 pounds of ground beef,	\$11.12 (+36%)
2 pounds of boneless, skinless chicken breasts,	\$8.99 (+33%)
32 ounces of pork & beans,	\$2.53 (+33%)
3 pounds of center cut pork chops,	\$15.26 (+31%)
2.5 quarts of fresh-squeezed lemonade,	\$4.43 (+22%)
2.5 pounds of homemade potato salad,	\$3.27 (+19%)
8 hamburger buns,	\$1.93 (+16%)
Half-gallon of vanilla ice cream,	\$5.16 (+10%)
13-ounce bag of chocolate chip cookies,	\$4.31 (+7%)
2 pints of strawberries,	\$4.44 (-16%)
1 pound of sliced cheese,	\$3.53 (-13%)
16-ounce bag of potato chips,	\$4.71 (-4%)
Total:	\$69.68, up about 17% compared to 2021

Source: American Farm Bureau Federation

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RimRock Inn reopens after being closed for a year

Canyon overlook draws guests from far away

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

FLORA — After being closed for a year, the RimRock Inn near Flora reopened earlier this month for a unique lodging and dining experience — unique even for Wallowa County.

“A lot of the locals recommend it to the tourists,” said co-owner Cabot Carlston, who has the inn since 2016. “They’ve had the TG (Terminal Gravity) or they’ve eaten at the lake. They’ve looked up at the mountains — the Wallows are there, the Eagle Caps are there. It’s great, but this is just a different vibe, a different view.”

The experience RimRock offers is a bit different, Carlston said.

“It’s canyonlands, in the mountains. I’d been coming (to the county) for 15 years — Hurricane Creek, Lostine Canyon, the lake, and I’d never come out here for 15 years,” he said. “Finally, we came out here and I was like, it’s cool out here. So we came out here



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Cabot Carlston, who with his wife, Kim, owns the RimRock Inn, points to the view of Joseph Creek Canyon from the back yard of the inn Thursday, June 16, 2022.

and had a steak dinner and saw the tepees and thought, ‘Oh my gosh, this is awesome. We could stay in a tepee.’ And then we were talking to someone in town and learned the place was for sale, so we bought it a year later.”

‘God’s country’

Normally open from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day weekend, the weather slowed this year’s opening.

“It’s a good thing we didn’t

open Memorial Day because it’s been raining ever since,” Carlston said.

He said he had guests booked and RimRock is usually full all summer long.

The unique setting atop an overlook to Joseph Creek Canyon is one of the inn’s greatest draws.

“This is God’s country. Carved right out of the rocks,” Carlston said, looking at the geological formations of the canyon.

He pointed out a windy ranch

road to the bottom of the canyon that he said is mostly used by ATVs and horses.

A short hike about 20 minutes from the inn gives guests a grand view not only of the canyon but of much of Wallowa County.

“Once you get to the edge, you can see the river more clearly and the cool thing is you can see Zumwalt Prairie and the snowcapped Wallowa Mountains,” he said. “It’s the best view of the canyonlands I know of.”

Carlston also emphasized the wildlife, both flora and fauna. Deer are regulars at the inn and they see a few elk. He said they’ve seen one bear and even found a cougar skull.

“There’s fish in that creek, but no fishermen,” he said with a laugh. “I just love the ruggedness of it. Look at the cliffs.”

Carlston is fond of the many wildflowers in the area.

“I’ve identified 22 different wildflower species out here and every year’s different,” he said. “This year, we have more prairie smoke than usual. A few years ago, it was more larkspur. Everything depends on the temperature and the rain, I guess.”

Gourmet dining and lodging

After enjoying the scenery, guests can come in for a gourmet dinner. Carlston is the cook, assisted by his son, Tristan.

Guests are treated to coffee beginning at 7:30 a.m. and breakfast at 8 a.m. They can order dinner from 5-7 p.m., as can nonguests who make reservations.

For lodging, the inn has one indoor suite, three tepees and a trailer. One of the tepees, with its private parking, is unofficially known as the “honeymoon tepee,” Carlston said. Officially, it’s the Appaloosa Tepee, while the others are the Bison and Dreamcatcher tepees.

For sale

After enjoying operating the inn since 2016, the Carlstons are putting it on the market.

Built in 1940, the RimRock Inn was originally known as Lorer’s Inn. Then it was sold to Calen and Wilma Raymond, who sold it to Rahn and Becky Hostetter, Carlston said.

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