

Lavender farm near Klamath Falls could help agritourism bloom

BY ALEX SCHWARTZ

(Klamath Falls) Herald and News

It's hard to tell by looking at it this time of year, but at the height of summer, Cliff and Diana Warrick's yard flushes with purple. As hundreds of lavender shrubs bloom, an unmistakable sweet, floral scent wafts down the dry hillside.

With more than 650 lavender plants spanning approximately an acre, the Warrick's farm is likely the largest lavender-growing operation in the Upper Klamath Basin. Perched on a south-facing ridge just north of Klamath Falls proper, they can see Mt. Shasta while strolling past rows of violet-tipped bushes on a clear day.

"We thought this would be a beautiful place to grow lavender," said Diana Warrick, a former event planner who harvests the buds and flowers to extract essential oil and produce lavender soaps, lotions and other personal care products. She's been selling those items under the label "K-Falls Essentials" at local businesses and farmers markets for the past three years.

The Warricks bought their seven-acre property five years ago and got to work on the difficult task of making its rocky soil suitable for growing. The Klamath Basin's Mediterranean climate — with its hot, dry summers and wet, cool winters — is ideal for the herb. The first lavender crop the couple planted is expected to reach maturity this summer, and they hope to quadruple the number of plants on their land over the next two years.

As Diana got to know the community through selling her lavender soaps and potpourri, people kept wanting to experience the farm for themselves.

"The common question that we've been hearing for years is, 'When can we come see it?'" she said.

They weren't sure whether they wanted to open up their property to visitors, but given Southern Oregon's lack of lavender farms east of the Cascades, the Warricks saw an opportunity. The nearest such farm to Klamath Falls, at Mt. Shasta, closed four years ago.

Few can find something to dislike about lavender, and the vibrant, pleasant-smelling crop is a tourism driver in Eastern Oregon and the Willamette Valley. Warrick pointed to other communi-



ties with walkable lavender farms, where visitors stroll along rows of purple and harvest cuttings themselves.

"It takes off like wildfire. It'll put your name on the map," she said. "That means Klamath Falls is going to be on the map."

If all goes according to plan, Warrick envisions a pumpkin patch-style operation this summer, where the farm opens up to visitors for a couple of weeks from mid-July to early August when the lavender bloom is at its peak. Guests will carry baskets to harvest and eventually purchase their own cuttings and can have Instagram-worthy picnics among the flowers. Customers can learn about the different varieties of lavender that K-Falls Essentials grows and take classes on how to turn it into fragrant soaps and lotions, or they can purchase pre-made products at a small shop on the property.

"It's a little outdoor break from everyday life," Warrick said.

Warrick said she thinks the farm's location just off Highway 97 will make it popular with tourists visiting Crater Lake and other local destinations. She hopes K-Falls Essentials can become part of the Southern Oregon Lavender Trail, which includes several farms in the Rogue Valley, bringing lavender enthusiasts over the pass to the Klamath Basin. If things go well, Warrick envisions Klamath Falls' first-ever lavender festival, complete with live music and food trucks.

The first hurdle in opening K-Falls Essentials to the public involves applying for a home occupation permit through the Klamath County Planning Commission. Because the Warricks' home is

zoned for residential use, they need to acquire a permit in order to host customers and make business transactions on their property. They submitted their application this month, and a period of public comment period is currently active until Feb. 2. If the county approves the permit, K-Falls Essentials will be allowed to open up to the public on a yearly basis, given that they renew their permit annually.

"We wanted to do everything right," Warrick said.

Several county agencies are in support of the business. K-Falls Essentials received a Klamath County Economic Development Grant at the end of last year to build a small parking area, purchase a shop structure and signage for the farm, most of which has been completed. The application included letters of support from Discover Klamath, the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce and the Oregon Lavender Association.

Warrick said there may be neighbors concerned about increased traffic to the Sunset Beach area, but she hopes measures she and her husband have taken will minimize that as much as possible. She doesn't expect any major negative comments during the permit hearing.

"We're trying to make it as convenient as possible," she said.

Warrick said her venture could lead to similar operations locally, helping farmers and ranchers embrace agritourism.

Aiming to harness a place's agricultural production, agritourism can help visitors connect with where their food comes from. It can include touring a potato processing plant in Malin, strolling through a peach orchard in Hood River or plucking fragrant lavender from the source in Jacksonville.

Raena Rodgers, marketing manager for Discover Klamath, said farm visits and farm-to-table dinners have driven tourism dollars to local economies in those areas.

"Areas similar to us have been able to capitalize on agritourism," she said.

Rodgers said Discover Klamath, along with SCOEDD, Rural Klamath Connects and Discover Siskiyou, has been working on ramping up agritourism in the Klamath Basin since 2017. But many ag producers are too busy running their operations to open them up to the public.

Solve these puzzles on C4

SOLUTION TO TODAY'S SUDOKU

4	6	2	1	5	8	3	7	9
8	3	1	4	7	9	2	6	5
9	7	5	2	3	6	8	1	4
2	9	3	7	8	4	6	5	1
6	5	8	9	2	1	7	4	3
7	1	4	5	6	3	9	2	8
1	8	6	3	4	7	5	9	2
5	4	7	8	9	2	1	3	6
3	2	9	6	1	5	4	8	7

SOLUTION TO TODAY'S JUMBLE

JUMBLE

Answer:

VOYAGE EXOTIC FRUGAL
WINNER VIABLE EASILY

Some people may have been initially doubtful about bifocals, but —

SEEING WAS BELIEVING

NYT CROSSWORD SOLUTION

C	L	O	S	E	B	B	C	B	A	T	O	R	A	B	U	T			
R	E	M	I	T	A	L	A	A	R	E	N	A	S	C	A	M	O		
O	V	E	R	H	E	A	R	S	O	N	O	M	A	I	S	P	Y		
W	I	G	E	V	E	R	T	I	M	O	E	G	A	D	S				
E	T	A	R	A	D	I	C	A	R	T	E	T	W	O	R	K			
D	Y	S	O	N	V	E	E	S	S	I	D	T	A	B	O	O			
F	E	S	T	E	R	S	T	A	L	L	S	S	O	A	P				
L	E	F	T	T	O	P	L	E	X	E	T	C	H	E	R	S			
A	I	M	E	E	U	G	E	N	I	E	A	S	E	A					
G	L	O	R	I	R	E	D	K	U	R	D	A	R	C	A	N	A		
R	A	T	E	D	R	T	I	D	E	P	O	D	M	I	O	T	I	C	
A	C	E	D	I	T	E	T	O	N	S	T	R	O	B	E	C	T		
N	O	A	M	P	E	A	S	O	U	P	M	A	H	I					
G	A	S	M	A	I	N	M	E	W	L	D	E	B	A	T	E			
R	I	C	O	S	T	A	I	D	P	I	N	E	N	U	T				
A	D	H	O	C	I	R	S	A	O	N	E	M	E	S	O	N			
B	A	N	A	R	T	I	S	T	S	V	O	L	G	A	W	O	E		
O	P	R	A	H	O	A	S	A	D	A	I	R	I	C	E				
A	C	A	I	R	E	F	U	T	E	D	A	Y	T	I	M	I	T	Y	S
L	U	N	E	F	I	L	E	S	E	D	U	D	I	T	T	O			
L	E	S	S	T	E	A	R	S	S	A	P	E	B	S	E	N			

LAT CROSSWORD SOLUTION

H	A	R	L	E	M	I	D	E	E	A	F	B	P	T	U	I				
O	N	E	O	N	E	M	R	E	D	S	O	U	T	A	U	N	T			
K	I	C	K	E	D	U	P	A	R	U	C	K	U	S	O	R	R	I	S	
E	S	A	I	I	N	I	G	O	A	I	R	Y	M	I	N	C	E			
Y	E	P	S	C	I	S	R	N	A	P	A	S	T	E	L					
S	H	O	T	H	I	S	B	I	G	M	O	U	T	H	O	F				
S	H	I	V	A	M	I	E	N	A	N	O									
S	A	V	E	D	I	T	F	O	R	L	A	T	E	R	S	C	A	N		
A	D	E	N	M	E	E	K	E	M	S	B	L	A	M	E					
E	A	R	L	U	N	C	A	P	E	E	L	E	R							
T	H	R	E	W	C	A	U	T	I	O	N	T	O	T	H	E	W	I	N	D
R	O	U	T	E	C	H	E	W	S	W	I	M	P							
E	D	G	A	R	A	C	E	O	E	N	O	O	P	E	L					
S	A	S	S	R	A	N	F	O	R	P	R	E	S	I	D	E	N	T		
W	I	L	I	R	A	E	M	O	T	O	R									
C	A	U	G	H	T	A	F	A	L	L	I	N	G	S	T	A	R			
A	D	R	O	I	T	I	L	L	D	E	E	M	S	P	A					
S	M	A	R	T	A	N	T	E	A	P	A	R	T	O	L	A	Y			
B	I	N	G	E	S	K	A	T	E	D	O	N	T	H	I	N	I	C	E	
A	R	I	E	S	H	E	R	P	E	G	S	Y	A	M	M	E	R			
H	E	A	D	E	D	S	A	S	O	K	S	N	E	E	R	S				

ENTER TO WIN THE VALENTINE'S GIVEAWAY!

Win one of five \$100 gift certificates to Pastini in The Old Mill District! You can enter online, by email, or by mailing the form below.

VALENTINE'S GIVEAWAY ENTRY FORM

First & Last Name

Email Address Phone Number

Mailing Address

Date of Birth Please check here if you would like to be contacted about subscribing to The Bulletin.

MAIL YOUR ENTRY FORM TO:

Enter to Win!
C/O The Bulletin
P.O. Box 6020
Bend, OR 97708

SEE CONTEST DETAILS AND ENTER ONLINE AT www.BendBulletin.com/offers or email your entry to enter-to-win@bendbulletin.com No purchase necessary to enter. All entries must be received by 2/7/2021.

SPONSORED BY:



The Bulletin
EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY

PROUDLY PROVIDING ENT CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 1970

We are Central Oregon's premier providers for ear, nose, and throat and hearing care .

SAME-DAY APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE FOR:

- Ear/sinus issues
- Vertigo episodes
- Earwax removal
- Abscesses
- Nosebleeds
- Hearing test
- Allergy consultation
- Telehealth appointments

541.526.1479

NO REFERRALS NEEDED!*



Central Oregon Ear, Nose & Throat is excited to announce same-day appointments available!

Myra Baker, PA | Physician's Assistant

central oregon
EAR | NOSE | THROAT

Bend | 2450 NE Mary Rose Pl, Ste 120
Redmond | 1020 SW Indian Ave, Ste 102

COENT.com | *Call for details