

Silver Spur is back in the saddle

Mt. Vernon restaurant returns

By Angel Carpenter
Blue Mountain Eagle

The Silver Spur Cafe in Mt. Vernon is back, and the coffee is on, with a menu full of traditional, stick-to-your-ribs fare.

Owners Michelle and Kristofer Johnson opened the Silver Spur in March and held a grand opening this weekend.

The restaurant, at 150 Ingle St. in Mt. Vernon, is open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays.

"The theme of the restaurant is Western culture, ranching and farming, which is big in this area," Michelle said, adding the atmosphere is family friendly.

Favorites from the menu include hamburgers, chicken-fried steak and enchiladas.

"We hand-bread the chicken-fried steak, and we run out as soon as we make them," Michelle said.

She said the custom milkshakes and homemade pies are also popular.

"A lot of people come here for the milkshakes," Kristofer added.

Pies, soups and gravy are made fresh daily, with biscuits baked in-house.

Michelle grew up in Mt. Vernon and has a bachelor's degree in business administration with a minor in management. She's been in the restaurant industry for two years as a waitress and cook.



Michelle and Kristofer Johnson offer a traditional menu at the Silver Spur Restaurant at 150 Ingle St. in Mt. Vernon.

She said she looks forward to providing good jobs, and hopes to be involved in the community.

Kristofer grew up on farms in Wisconsin and Baker City.

His parents own the Haines Steakhouse, where he was head chef for eight years, and he drove long haul trucks for two years before starting the new business.

As kitchen manager, Kristofer cuts the meat fresh each day at the Silver Spur.

"I like the loyalty we have from our customers," he said. "They keep coming back, and it shows they like our food and our prices. Before we get here in the morning, they're here waiting for us."

For more information, call the restaurant at 541-932-4545.



Michelle and Kristofer Johnson, owners of the Silver Spur Restaurant in Mt. Vernon, welcome customers with their Western theme and traditional menu.

OTEC receives safety award

Blue Mountain Eagle

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative has received first-place honors at the 2016 Northwest Public Power Administration Safety Awards competition.

OTEC was up against utilities across the Pacific Northwest, Alaska and California in the annual safety contest, in which awards are based on a review of each utility's incident rate, which is the number of recordable injury/illness cases, and the severity rate, which is lost work days.

Jeff Anderson, OTEC's Manager of Safety and Loss Control, said it was a great honor to be recognized.

"This award acknowledges that OTEC's safety record is well above average and that is attributed to the culture of care we have for one another and a healthy respect we have for the incredible power of electricity," said Anderson.

"It is constantly at the forefront of all of our operations — whether our crews are working out in the field on top of a power



Contributed photo

OTEC Manager of Loss Control Jeff Anderson and Director of Human Resources Debby Ray were all smiles as they accepted the first-place Northwest Public Power Administration safety award for 2016.

pole or processing documents in the district offices," he said.

In 2015, between the 150,001-500,000 hour category, OTEC had no lost time accidents. This, paired with the lack of injury cases, is what put OTEC in the lead for the recognition.

The awards competition was held at the Engineering and Operations Conference in Spokane, Washington.

Unemployment rate drops to 7.6 percent

Blue Mountain Eagle

Grant County experienced its lowest unemployment rate for the month of May this year since 2007.

The seasonally adjusted rate fell from 8.8 percent in May of 2015 to 7.6 percent in May of 2016, according to an economic indicators report released by the Oregon Employment Department Tuesday.

Grant County gained an estimated 60 jobs over the year. The private sector added 90

jobs, including 20 in mining/logging, 20 in retail trade, 20 in private education/health services and 10 in professional/business services. No private industries lost jobs.

The public sector decreased by 30 jobs, with losses in federal and local government — 20 each — outpacing a gain in state government.

Grant County still has the highest rate in the state.

The statewide unemployment rate is 4.5 percent, and the national rate is 4.7 percent.

Dental care service aims to help people in need

Steer raffle benefits Greater Smiles

Blue Mountain Eagle

A new dental care service, Greater Smiles of Eastern Oregon, hopes to put bright smiles on the faces of people who need it most.

The charity, based in John Day, will be a cooperative agreement with dentists in private practice to provide services to people who meet a certain criteria for need, such as sliding scale federal poverty financial guidelines, according to board of directors member Craige McMillan of John Day.

Priority will be given to veterans, domestic violence abuse victims, the working poor and children who have no other options for dental care, McMillan said. Bad teeth often hold people back in life and result in health, employment and self-esteem issues, he added.

"For those without insurance, restoring normal chewing function, treating chronic infection or restoring even a simple smile can seem impossible," McMillan said.

He said, for some people, a new smile alone might not be enough to provide the necessary turnaround in life. Through assessments, Greater Smiles will be able to partner with other organizations to

Steer for smiles

What: Steer raffle to benefit Greater Smiles. When: Drawing will be Sept. 30.

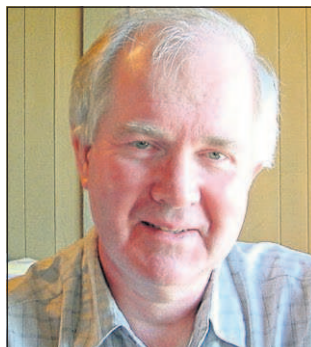
Cost: Tickets are \$10 each, three for \$25, 6 for \$50, plus a bonus ticket; or 12 for \$100, plus two tickets.

Where: Tickets are available at the Austin House, Prairie Gifts and Hardware, True Value Hardware, Ace Hardware, 1188 Brewing Company, Squeeze In, Russell's Custom Meats, Canyon City Shell, Grant County Chamber of Commerce, Virginia McMillan DDS, Silver Spur in Mt. Vernon, OK Garage in Long Creek and Boyers Store in Monument.

help with other issues the person might have.

Greater Smiles is an outreach of Christian Communication and Ministry, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. McMillan's wife, Virginia, is a John Day dentist and also on the Greater Smiles board.

The pilot phase of the project will start in Grant County. After the first year, the organizers plan to expand the service into Harney County, followed by other areas of Eastern Ore-



Contributed photo

Craige McMillan is one of the organizers of Greater Smiles, a new dental care service that aims to put smiles on the faces of those in need.

gon, Idaho and Eastern Washington.

McMillan said fundraising for Greater Smiles will be a two-step process.

He said there are many private foundations in Oregon available to help fund such services as Greater Smiles. However, to get the plan before those foundations, organizers have determined a need of \$12,000 for specialized software and fundraising experience.

They plan to raise that money locally, with the raffle of a steer raised by the Voigt ranch, as the first fundraiser. The prize includes cutting, de-boning and wrapping by Russell's Custom Meats in John Day.

Tickets are on sale at various locations. The drawing will be Sept. 30.

However, people can win prizes even before the big drawing. Everyone who purchases a ticket gets a big, shiny red button advertising the steer raffle. Fundraiser organizers are out and about looking for people wearing the buttons and are ready to award them a prize on the spot.

Terry Williams, who was "caught" leaving the Squeeze In in John Day, won a gift card for lunch for two — coincidentally, at the Squeeze In. Toni McCollum, a waitress at the Squeeze In, was wearing her button and won a gift card for chocolate from Flower Shop and More.

McMillan said no one in the organization is taking a salary this year, "so almost all the money we raise will go for the

tools to target Oregon foundations for the funding to take this project across all of Eastern Oregon."

To make a donation, volunteer or for more information, call Eddie Smith at 541-620-1895 or contact Greater Smiles at 541-628-7866 or donor@greatersmiles.org.

Visit Greater Smiles at greatersmiles.org.

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THE LEGEND OF TARZAN PG-13
Tarzan, having acclimated to life in London, is called back to his former home in the jungle to investigate the activities at a mining encampment.
FRI-THURS (4:10) 7:10 9:45

INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE PG-13
Two decades after the first Independence Day invasion, Earth is faced with a new extra-solar threat.
FRI-THURS (4:00) 7:00 9:40

FINDING DORY PG
The friendly-but-forgetful blue tang fish reunites with her loved ones, and everyone learns a few things about the real meaning of family along the way.
FRI-THURS (4:20) 7:20 9:35

\$9 Adult, \$7 Senior (60+), Youth

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