

Thanksgiving to go

Annual Elks Lodge meal serves over 400 pounds of turkey

By Steven Mitchell
Blue Mountain Eagle

With COVID-19 infection rates rising rapidly in Oregon and Grant County, the John Day Elks Lodge was closed to the public for its annual Thanksgiving meal.

However, that did not stop over 30 volunteers from serving upwards of 300 Thanksgiving dinners.

Elks Lodge member Chuck Howe said the volunteers served over 400 pounds of turkey, 60 pounds of ham and all of the fixings, including mashed potatoes, gravy, green bean casserole, sweet potatoes, rolls, stuffing, cranberries and pies.

The annual event, free and open to the public, was by takeout or delivery only. Recipients placed orders ahead of time by calling in.

Lynda Christensen said the volunteers came in the day before and as early as 6 a.m. on Thursday.



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell

Lynda Christensen, right, serves up Thanksgiving dinners Thursday at the John Day Elks Lodge.



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell
LEFT: Volunteers pack up Thanksgiving dinners Thursday at the John Day Elks Lodge.

RIGHT: A stack of pies sits ready to be delivered or picked up for over 300 people Thursday.



Black Friday foot traffic down because of the pandemic

By Steven Mitchell
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With an ongoing pandemic and recession, Black Friday looked much different this year.

At Java Jungle, owner Janet Hill said she kept busy throughout the day and that Black Friday seemed more active than in 2019.

"I am not sure where everybody came from," she said. "But I was happy they were coming in the door."

Hill said she attributed the uptick in business to the nice weather and people out "tooting around."

Len's Drug owner Marla Armstrong said she has been so busy with so many other things, including a store remodel, that she couldn't compare this year to last year. She also said she has not had time to compare last year's

numbers to this year's. "I can't compare apples to oranges," she said. "If I would have been without the remodel I could have compared apples to apples."

According to preliminary data from Sensormatic Solutions, a retail analytics firm, foot traffic at retail stores tumbled by 52.1% as people avoided malls and stores, choosing to shop online instead.

"Due to COVID-19 and social distancing requirements, shoppers were more purposeful in their in-person Black Friday shopping, causing significantly less crowds than we've seen in the past," said Brian Field, senior director of global retail consulting, in a Nov. 28 press release. "This was compounded by retailers not offering as many in-store doorbusters and the increasing adoption of e-commerce."



The Eagle/Steven Mitchell

Johnna Milner, right, rings up a customer Friday at Len's Drug in John Day.



Tanni Wenger, left, and her daughter Lauren put together a display Friday at Java Jungle in John Day.

The Eagle Steven Mitchell

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