

The 'Bow gets new bosses

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Pendleton's most famous bar is under new ownership.

Business partners Tanner Hawkins and Chris Zimmerman bought the historic Rainbow Cafe late last year, taking over for the McGee family. Hawkins, a farmer north of Pendleton, and Zimmerman, an office manager for his father's chiropractic office, officially bought the Rainbow on Dec. 28, the Rainbow's New Years celebration acting as an unofficial coming out party for the bar's new owners.

Hawkins and Zimmerman view themselves as stewards of one of Pendleton's oldest businesses, and are looking to maintain the spirit of the Rainbow that's been established over the decades.

"It's more than just a bar and cafe," Hawkins said. "It's an iconic little piece (of) downtown Pendleton. If it was any other business, I don't know that Chris and I ever would have pulled the trigger."

The Rainbow, the oldest continuously operating bar in Oregon, began its life in 1883 as The State Saloon and Banquet, its business including both a brothel and opium den. After operating as a cigar shop during the Prohibition years, the business relaunched as the Rainbow, gaining its iconic neon sign and Irish themes in the early 1940s.

An accomplished drag car

racer and longtime auto shop owner, Steve McGee moved from Lake Oswego back to his hometown of Pendleton in 1999 and bought the Rainbow with his wife, Joanne. McGee died in 2017, but Joanne continued to run the bar until selling it to Hawkins and Zimmerman.

The pair said they didn't buy the Rainbow looking to make money. They're keeping their day jobs and plan to reinvest any profits they make from operating the Rainbow back into the business. Hawkins said the new owners plan to renovate the Rainbow's bathrooms and are looking into converting the building's second story space into a vacation rental. But otherwise the core look and service that the Rainbow has been offering for decades will remain.

"We're not going to turn it into an Applebee's," Hawkins said. "It's gonna stay what it is. We're going to upgrade the bathrooms. (They) really need it. There's a lot of wear and tear that can be upgraded. But the Rainbow itself is not is not going to change."

The Rainbow is open from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. six days per week (it closes at midnight on Sundays), meaning it serves both the early-morning coffee klatches and the late-night bar crowds. Zimmerman and Hawkins said they've been on both sides of the customer spectrum and wanted to respect the views of long standing patrons.

Hawkins said the pair consulted with regulars and staff to make sure they got the tra-

ditions and decorations right during St. Patrick's Day, one of the Rainbow's biggest days of the year. Following two years of COVID-19, Hawkins said they were happy with the packed house they saw on March 17.

The partners credited staff for ensuring the business stayed open during the ownership transition. Hawkins compared the learning curve of operating a restaurant and bar to "drinking out of a fire hose," but he and Zimmerman have been able to lean on the Rainbow's workers to help teach them the ropes, from working with vendors to contacting temporary employees who help out during busy times.

Hawkins and Zimmerman said their workforce ranges from 12-15 employees, but they would like to hire more permanent workers to help keep their staff from getting stretched too thin. When a dishwasher called in sick one day, Zimmerman said he washed dishes for five hours at the Rainbow to help keep things moving.

While the new owners' first St. Patrick's Day is already in the books, summer event season is right around the corner. Hawkins said the Rainbow made a deal with Jackalope Jamboree to become the June music festival's official afterparty.

The Rainbow also is keeping an eye on the culmination of Pendleton's event season: the Round-Up. In the eyes of the Rainbow, Round-Up is "three or four St. Patrick's Days" put together.

Senate passes shipping reform bill

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

WASHINGTON — Agricultural exporters are closer to getting some relief from significant supply-chain disruptions with the Senate's unanimous passage of the Ocean Shipping Reform Act.

The legislation to help fix the supply chain and ease shipping backlogs passed by voice vote on Thursday, March 31.

It was introduced by Sens. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., and John Thune, R-S.D., with 29 cosponsors. Companion legislation led in the House by Reps. John Garamendi, D-Calif., and Dusty Johnson, R-S.D., passed the House in December by a vote of 364-60.

"Congestion at ports and increased shipping costs pose unique challenges for U.S. exporters, who have seen the price of shipping containers increase four-fold in just two years," Klobuchar said.

"Meanwhile, ocean carriers that are mostly foreign-owned have reported record prof-

its. This legislation will help American exporters get their goods to market in a timely manner for a fair price," she said.

The bill will make it harder for ocean carriers to unreasonably refuse goods that are ready to export at U.S. ports, Thune said.

The Ocean Shipping Reform Act will:

- Require ocean carriers to certify that late fees — known as "detention and demurrage" charges — comply with federal regulations or face penalties.
- Shift the burden of proof regarding the reasonableness of "detention or demurrage" charges from the invoiced party to the ocean carrier.
- Prohibit ocean carriers from unreasonably declining shipping opportunities for U.S. exports, as determined by the Federal Maritime Commission in new required rulemaking.
- Require ocean common carriers to report to the commission each calendar quarter on total import-export tonnage and loaded and empty 20-foot

equivalent units per vessel that makes port in the United States.

- Authorize the commission to initiate investigations of a ocean common carrier's business practices and apply enforcement measures, as appropriate.
- Establish new authority for the commission to register shipping exchanges.

The legislation is endorsed by more than 100 organizations, including the American Association of Port Authorities and the Agriculture Transportation Coalition.

Once implemented, the bill will provide urgently needed relief to all exporters and importers, in particular agriculture exporters, the coalition said in a press release.

"The transportation crisis for U.S. agriculture products has become increasingly dire. Many agriculture products produced in the U.S. experience significant competition from other countries. If we cannot deliver our products dependably, our foreign customers will find alternatives to our exports," the coalition said.

A recent coalition survey found that, on average, 22% of U.S. agriculture foreign sales could not be completed due to ocean shipping disruption, higher costs and carrier practices.

The reform act "specifically addresses these practices, which are causing so much hardship to U.S. agriculture and threaten our global competitiveness," the coalition said.



Dean Guernsey/The Bulletin

Librarian Pia Allende in the Elton Gregory Middle School library Thursday, March 24, in Redmond. Allende is one of three librarians in the country recently nominated for School Librarian of the Year by the School Library Journal.

A life full of stories

Redmond librarian amplifies culture, diversity in schools

By BRYCE DOLE
The Bulletin

REDMOND — Pia Allende says her passion for storytelling stems from her parents.

Libraries in her hometown of Santiago, Chile, were "pitiful," she said. Being a librarian in the capital city, which sits in a valley at the foot of the Andes mountains, was not a popular career choice. Books were expensive. Her family was relatively well-off, but her parents were stern, urging the family to be cautious with money.

Books and reading became a family treat, delivered on Sundays by Allende's father, a lawyer with high standards and a "strong but soft heart." Allende's father would read to the family from books he crafted with pieces of cardboard and kept in a basket in the closet.

This was how books became a guiding force for Allende, a librarian whose life and career have spanned multiple countries and impacted students, teachers and libraries around the world.

While school districts across the country are banning books about gender and race amid a national reckoning over equitable education, Allende is stocking shelves in Redmond School District libraries with books that illuminate the experiences of people from underserved and marginalized communities.

The 60-year-old Allende has played a major role in revamping libraries in the district, replacing withered old books with new ones and getting rid of literature that perpetuates racist stereotypes.

"I want to have books that represent them, not misrepresent them," said Allende, who serves as part of the Redmond School District Equity Task Force and is co-chair of the Oregon Library Association's (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) and Antiracism Committee. She added: "I feel that it's really, really sad that we, as school librarians, need to fight for kids to read."

Allende's work has not gone unnoticed. She is one of three librarians in the country recently nominated for School Librarian of the Year by the School Library Journal.

Allende's goal is to provide students with the option to explore the stories of people from backgrounds and cultures different from theirs. She wants to use storytelling to instill empathy and compassion, particularly for those students whose experiences have historically been ignored. She said, "Sometimes, the kids are invisible."

Recently, Allende helped the district obtain four grants amounting to more than \$25,000 to improve programs at libraries in Redmond schools that have higher concentrations of Hispanic and Spanish-speaking students. Those include Elton Gregory Middle School, where more than one in five students identify as Hispanic and one in 10 speak Spanish as their first language.

In addition, she raised more than \$2,500 by completing a 347-mile bike-packing trip through Oregon, just before her 60th birthday. The funds went to libraries across the district, she said.

Allende uses part of the grant funds to bring in Spanish-speaking authors and hold monthly bilingual family engagement nights where students and their families hear stories and play Latin American games. She said she wants to "foster the idea that their Spanish is good, that their culture is good, that whatever they do is good, and feel proud."

It was through her parent's storytelling that Allende found an interest in history. She attended a Catholic high school and university in Chile, but she grew bored. She wanted to go to America. She applied, and received a scholarship through the U.S. Fulbright Program, the flagship international academic exchange program meant to foster relationships between countries. With the grant, Allende traveled to New York in 1990 to study history at Stony Brook University.

The move was hard on her relationship with her parents, she said. But Allende fell in love with big city nightlife — and with a Spaniard from the Montana farmlands. After college, she struggled to find work because of language barriers. With her new husband and a child on the way, Allende moved back to Chile and to her childhood home. "We had nothing," she said.

After having children, Allende and her husband moved their family to a town south of Santiago. She worked at a private school, but Chile still wasn't where she wanted to raise her kids. The family headed back to the United States after obtaining work

visas. She landed a job as an interpreter at a school in Arlington, Virginia, where she became an advocate for families from Latin America.

There, she found a love for libraries.

Her commute to work near Washington, D.C. was long, requiring the family to leave their kids in day care for hours. So she proceeded to look for jobs elsewhere in the country. She eventually landed a job as a media library specialist at Redmond High School in 2006. Three years later, amid the nationwide housing crisis and ensuing economic meltdown, Allende was laid off.

Fortunately, she found a job as the head librarian at the International School of Seville San Francisco de Paula in Spain. Her family moved to Seville, where they remained for a decade. Allende helped modernize libraries and led workshops for librarians and teachers in places like Dubai, Budapest, Thessaloniki, Paris and Madrid. Meanwhile, her children, who had lost some of their knowledge of Spanish while living in the U.S., became bilingual, she said.

"That was pretty neat," she said of her kids. "I couldn't have done it."

In 2019, after Allende's children finished high school, the family returned to Redmond and moved back into their home on the Crooked River Ranch. After applying to nearly every school district in Central Oregon, she accepted a job as a library technician at a local elementary school in Redmond. Allende looked toward schools with more economically disadvantaged families and saw that many of the schools had outdated books. She wanted to help.

The pandemic only strengthened Allende's resolve to help struggling students. She made weekly videos for children and helped them engage with their schooling as they navigated online learning. She purchased a reading app for district students to have access to digital materials and pushed for bilingual videos. As one of the few Spanish-speaking teachers at the school, she wanted to foster the idea in students that "their countries, their cultures, matter."

She's moved to help them by a book she has in her home, a book written by a friend and mentor who once told her: "Everyone has a story to tell and if you don't write it, it doesn't exist."

But it's more than that. "Literature and its power," Allende said her mentor argues in the book, "are the only weapon capable of saving lives."

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