

Oregon hazelnuts popping up in a different pot

Ravioli filled with gorgonzola and hazelnut paste. A hazelnut pesto fettuccini. Fresh rack of lamb crusted with- you guessed it- hazelnuts. It sure looks like hazelnuts are not just for dessert anymore. It sure tastes like it too.

"In general, nuts have traditionally been used in dessert applications and continue to be," says Laura Barton, marketing specialist with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. "But Oregon's hazelnut industry is looking to increase usage in the U.S. by exploring other types of foods that can use hazelnuts, such as appetizers and entrees."

Oregon produces more than 99 percent of the nation's hazelnuts. Although some are exported, the domestic market remains a vital destination for the state's \$35 million hazelnut industry. The strategy is simple— increase the number of ways hazelnuts can be consumed and you increase the sales of Oregon hazelnuts.

Since promotional dollars for hazelnuts are short, the targeted audience for this new strategy is primarily confined to the ingredient and food service industries. Encouraging chefs to utilize the hazelnut could significantly broaden its appeal.

A recent scholarship contest involving would-be chefs enrolled at Portland's Western Culinary Institute inspired some deliciously-creative entrees involving Oregon hazelnuts. The Oregon Hazelnut Marketing Board offered \$8,000 in scholarship money to first, second, and third place finishers. Barton was one of the judges looking for presentation,

creativity, and taste.

"One student created a hazelnut tamale that would be nice for somebody who was a vegetarian," says Barton. "One of my favorite applications was a side dish of roasted asparagus drizzled with hazelnut-lemon mayonnaise. There were also a number of meat stuffings for poultry using hazelnuts. It was all delicious."

First prize went to the hazelnut-crusted lamb. Second prize went to the hazelnut-gorgonzola filled ravioli. Third prize went to a hazelnut-encrusted chicken breast with hazelnut pesto fettuccini. The judges got a belly-full and did not need to fix dinner that evening.

"Oregonians and other folks in the Pacific Northwest might know about hazelnuts already because they have grown up with it, but that's not true for the rest of the U.S.," says Polly Owen, administrator of the Hazelnut Marketing Board. "We realize that most of the chefs at the Western Culinary Institute will go to work in restaurants around the country and around the world. We want them to take that knowledge and appreciation of Oregon hazelnuts wherever they go."

The indirect target of inducing chefs is the home cook. By becoming familiar with hazelnut dishes in the restaurant, the industry hopes similar recipes will find their way into family meals. With the season of big holiday meals approaching, hazelnuts offer consumers a chance to "go nuts" with some of these recipes.

"Because hazelnuts are so versatile and their flavor enhances other flavors, they belong in all sorts of meals— everything from breakfast to

snacks to dinner to desserts," says Owen. "Just try throwing a handful of hazelnuts into your turkey dressing this Thanksgiving. You'll never stop using them that way in the future."

The holiday season also marks the peak of domestic in-shell hazelnut consumption. The demand is nearly always some 4,000 tons of hazelnuts in the U.S. Since that demand has not changed for years, the only way to increase domestic consumption is by finding uses for hazelnuts as ingredients that would be desirable 365 days a year.

There is no doubt that hazelnuts are doing well in confections and dessert items.

Thanks to the popularity of such gourmet items as flavored coffees and creamers, Americans are increasingly aware of hazelnuts and are starting to take more of a liking to them. But other parts of the world have been eating hazelnuts for a long time. Huge production in Turkey and Italy has a lot to do with that.

Some markets are even putting the hazelnut into a popularly branded product that normally uses a different nut.

"When I was in Europe recently, I saw the candy M&Ms using hazelnuts instead of peanuts," says Barton. "In Mexico, I've seen hazelnut Hershey bars."

In the U.S., those products haven't tapped into the hazelnut. But domestic shoppers can find cookies, cake mixes and ice creams featuring hazelnuts as a main ingredient. Burgerville restaurants seasonally offer a hazelnut milk shake on the menu. Some local microbreweries are even featuring hazelnut beer.

The export market continues to be important to

Oregon's hazelnut industry. In particular, China remains a big customer for the in-shell nut.

Still, it's the prospect of introducing the hazelnut to the main course that offers Oregon growers the best chance at increased domestic consumption and sales.

"There is so much room for the marketing of our hazelnuts to grow," says Barton. "We have a lot of very creative and enthusiastic chefs in Oregon that already recognize and love to use regional ingredients, including the hazelnut. We want to see more of that kind of thing."

As the versatility of the hazelnut becomes more apparent, so will its usage. Oregon growers are counting on it.

For more information, contact Laura Barton at (503) 872-6600.

Sheriff's Report

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) reports handling the following business:

Oct. 14: MCSO cited Adrian Nicholas Calder, 20, for Possession of One Ounce of Marijuana.

-MCSO cited a subject for No Operator's License.

-MCSO cited Benson Carver Jones, 27, for Exceeding the Maximum Speed, 90 mph in a 65 mph zone.

-MCSO cited Maria Cruz Salas Resendez, 22, for Violation of the Basic Rule, 76 mph in a 55 mph zone.

-MCSO received a request for deputy contact at Columbia Middle School regarding MIP-tobacco.

-MCSO received a report that someone had stolen

parts of the caller's tractor while it was parked in his Boardman orchard.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Irrigon that his bird feeder had been stolen sometime during the night.

-MCSO received a request for deputy contact from Irrigon Mobile Court regarding a lockout.

-MCSO, OSP, Boardman PD, received a report of an injured deer on the off ramp at milepost 168.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Irrigon that she had been getting threatening calls.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Heppner that some cattle were out of its field.

-MCSO received a report from a caller of a fire on Coleman Hill. US Forest Service advised it was a controlled burn.

-MCSO received a report from a caller in Ione that items were stolen off his farm in Gilliam Co.

-MCSO received a report of a dirt bike riding up and down the street in Irrigon.

-MCSO received a report of juveniles stealing corn and throwing the ears at their vehicle and residence.

-MCSO received a report of a \$14 drive-off from the 76 Station in Boardman.

-MCSO, Heppner Ambulance received a request for an ambulance at Heppner City Hall for a male in his 50s experiencing possible heart problems. Subject was transported to Pioneer Memorial Hospital.

-MCSO received a report of shots fired near an Irrigon residence.

-MCSO received a report of a pick-up on fire in Boardman. The vehicle was fully engulfed in flames.

-MCSO gave a male subject a ride to the Umatilla Co. line.

Oct. 15: MCSO cited a 40-year-old male subject, for No Operator's License.

-MCSO received a report from a caller that she had been contacted by mail from a subject she had a restraining order against.

-MCSO received a report of an audible alarm at Kegler's Sentry Market. Was determined to be an employee error.

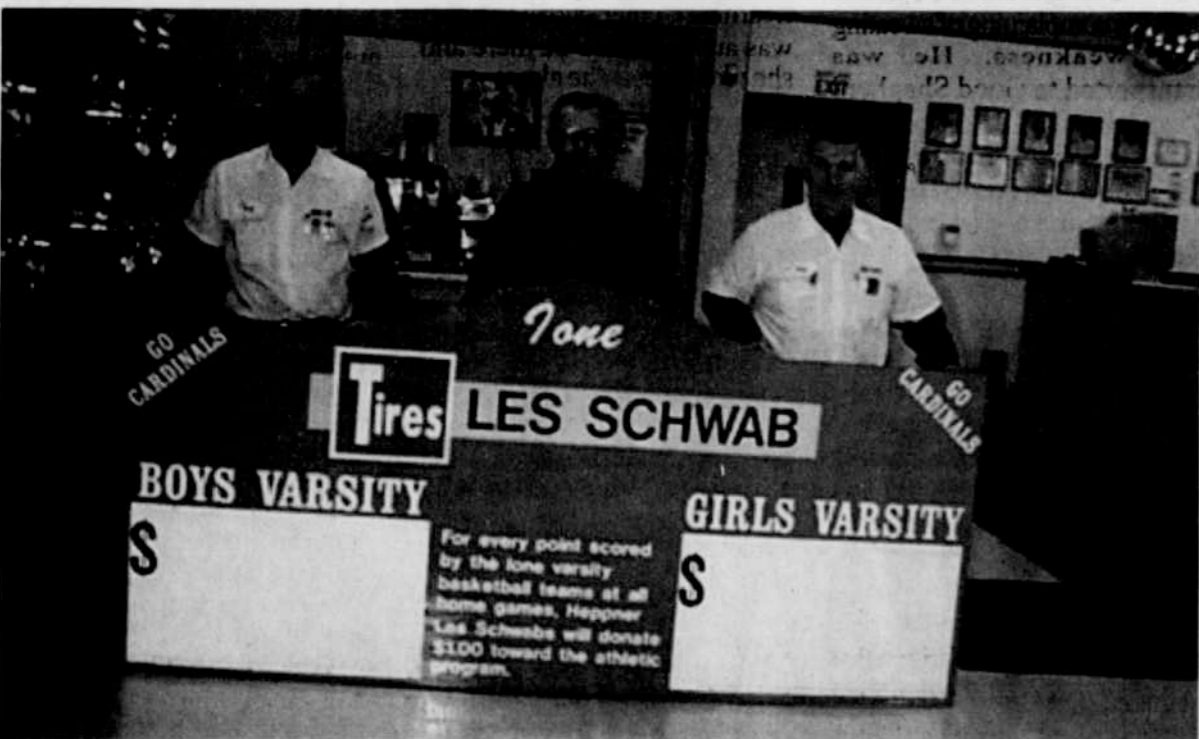
-MCSO received a report of a lost dog answering to the name "Spanky".

-MCSO received a report that a two-year-old toddler was in the road in front of Pettyjohn's. Was determined that the child escaped from the back yard, and was returned to the residence.

-MCSO received a report from a Boardman resident that his 14-year-old daughter was missing from school. A report was sent to surrounding agencies.

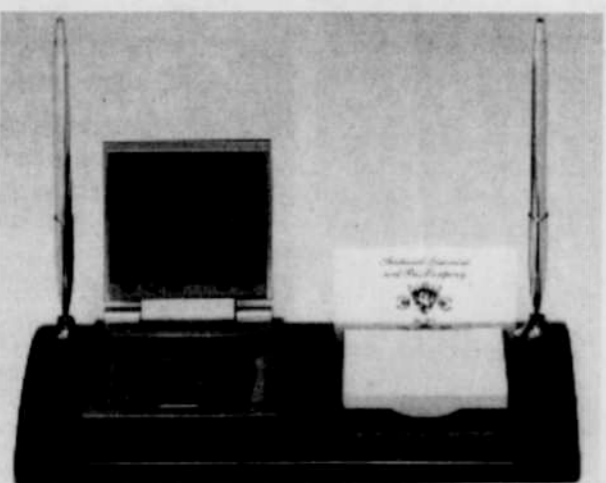
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Les Schwab donates point board to Ione



Les Schwab Tires in Heppner has started the dollar per point program for Ione High School's basketball season this year. For every point scored by the Ione girls and boys varsity basketball teams at home games, Les Schwab will donate \$1 to the school. The company also sponsors dollar per point at Heppner High School. Pictured above are from left Assistant Manager Jeff Shank, Ione Athletic Director Dean Robinson and Heppner Les Schwab Manager Glen Bridgmon. The Les Schwab company is also a sponsor of the state OSAA state playoffs this year.

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(l-r) Matt Holland, Kara Clay, Kate Kendrick, Brynna Rust, Eric Jepsen, Alex Carlson and Peg Willis at a recent fiddling trip.

It's Ireland or Bust for six young South Morrow County musicians who make up the group they call "Shenanigans." As the name Shenanigans implies, these kids have lots of energy, but they are getting known for their musical talent rather than mischievous activities. They've set a goal to travel with their director, Peg Willis, to Ireland and attend a weeklong summer music school in either June or July 2003. It would be the opportunity of a lifetime to learn the true style and performance of Celtic music from some of the world's best players. They would in turn bring back that Irish music to share with Heppner and surrounding communities.

The members of Shenanigans range in age from 10 to 12 years old. They may be young, but almost all of them have been taking music lessons since they were in kindergarten. They united as a performing group three years ago and have been practicing each Friday under Willis's instruction and have performed at many community events.

The group includes fiddlers Alex Carlson, Kara Clay,

Eric Jepsen, Kate Kendrick, Brynna Rust, and their accompanist on guitar or mandolin is Matt Holland.

In addition to taking fiddling lessons from Willis, the Shenanigans all take classical violin or guitar instruction from other teachers and are serious about becoming good musicians.

To reach their goal of Ireland, the students estimate that they'll need over \$1,400 each to pay for the trip and the music school fees. The Shenanigans are planning a variety of fundraising events which include: a concert to commemorate the anniversary of the Heppner Flood, a pop can drive, and a car wash next spring - to name a few. They have already accumulated almost \$900 in their bank account from money they've earned by playing at various Eastern Oregon events.

If anyone wants to donate cans, they can be dropped off anytime in a box near two of the Shenanigans' homes. In Heppner, a box will be at Matt Holland's door at 240 South Chase Street. In Ione, cans can be taken to Kara Clay at 330 E. Main.

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