

**Guest Editorial**

**Be a problem solver**

By Greg Smith

Every customer who comes into your business has a problem and they are looking for you to help solve it. Perhaps they need a dress for their daughter's wedding or a special gift. They have a flat tire or need a specific tool for a project. Their faucet is dripping, their pickup's engine light came on, their septic tank needs pumped, they need a loan to buy a house or are being sued.

What problem does your business solve and how do you accomplish this more effectively than your competitors? Have you thought about this and do you need to make any adjustments?

Here are some basic things you may want to consider:

-Are you open when your customer needs you? (I know of a hair stylist who only works in the evenings and on Saturday and Sunday, because that's when her working clients and students are available and is something her competitors won't do.)

-Do you offer quality products or services at the right price point?

-Is your website complicated? (Remember, if it takes more than three clicks to find the information a customer wants to know, they will leave your site—and likely won't return.)

-When a customer calls is there a complex automated system they must navigate?

-In short, is it a hassle to do business with you or are you the first business they turn to when seeking an answer to their problem?

The answers to these questions sound simple yet are often the root cause for slow, or no, business.

On the other side of the equation, employers want employees who are prob-

lem solvers, not problem creators. I have addressed the importance of "soft skills" in a previous article, but the reality of this cannot be over-stated.

Employees, regardless of their skill set, are not employed long if they create problems. The number one complaint (i.e. problem) I consistently hear about from employers is they cannot find people who want to work and who will show up to work on time—or at all.

Perhaps you don't consider yourself a problem creator but take a moment and ask yourself these questions:

-Are you dependable?

-Do you cause strife in the workplace?

-Are you busy texting instead of looking around to see what needs to be done—and doing it?

-Do you complete your work on time? Does your boss have to come behind you and double check to make sure the task has been done correctly?

-Do you access resources to answer the questions you might have, or do you consistently interrupt the workflow of others?

Identifying a need whether as a business owner or employee and utilizing your unique skill set is one of the most important keys to success, profitability, and longevity in the workplace. Being a creative problem solver is not just something beneficial in the workplace, but in society, as well and is something each of us can contribute to in some way.

Greg Smith is the director of the Eastern Oregon University Small Business Development Center located at 1607 Gekeler Lane, Room 148 in La Grande, OR. If you are seeking free, confidential business advising, please call 541-962-1532 or email eousbdc@gmail.com.

**Plant based cooking class scheduled**

The vegetarian cooking class for this month will be held Tuesday, October 29 at 7 p.m. at the Heppner Seventh Day Adventist Church gym. All are welcome to sample each recipe and take

home a copy. The theme this month is casseroles as a main dish or sides around it. For additional information or to RSVP contact Cynthia at 541-561-9132.

**Obituaries**

**Jeffrey (Jeff) Scott Huston**

Jeffrey (Jeff) Scott Huston, died October 14 at his home with his significant other, Lisa, by his side after a battle with cancer. He was born in Heppner on January 31, 1964.

Jeff worked for J & M Eagle Manufacturing in Umatilla for 21 years and had just recently received his electrical license.

He was an avid hunter and fisherman and enjoyed camping. He spent many hours fishing and hunting in the Blue Mountains. Jeff loved the outdoors, whether it be cleaning one of his beloved vehicles or Harley Davidson and could often be found working on a project in his shop. He loved anything motor sports, trucks, cars and motorcycles. He was an incredible mechanic who could fix anything, and an expert welder. Lisa often referred to him as Jeff of All Trades.

He was a huge Seattle Seahawks fan, so much so, he would record every game and during the off season would watch them

over and over again. He was an excellent cook and he affectionately called himself "Jeff Boyardee." According to his family, Jeff had a quick wit and was loved by all whose lives he touched. He will be greatly missed.

Jeff is survived by his parents, Carolyn J Cutsforth of Heppner and William Omer Huston Sr. of Irrigon; his significant other, Lisa Rodighiero, Milton-Free-water; brother, William O Huston, Jr, Freehold, NJ; step siblings, Kathryn Cutsforth, Kim Cutsforth and Kraig Cutsforth of Heppner. He had two nephews, Will Huston, Eugene, OR and Taylor Huston, Freehold, NJ as well as many aunts, uncles and cousins.

A graveside service and celebration of life will be held at a later date. The family suggests donations to be made to American Cancer Society in lieu of flowers.

The online condolence book is available at [swee-neymortuary.com](http://swee-neymortuary.com).

**Planning commission holds hearings**

The Morrow County Planning Commission held public hearings on August 27 and September 24. At the August hearing two actions were approved: a hardship variance to allow an RV as a dwelling for an infirm relative and a conditional use permit that would allow a home occupation to support towing and short-term storage of vehicles. At the September hearing a variance was approved that will allow a double wide manufactured home older than 10 years.

During the months of August and September, Morrow County Planning Department staff issued 20 developmental approvals that will allow seven new homes, three shops, an addition to a shop, a new data center, an office building, a transmission line, a drying facility with a storage building, a substation complex, a truck scale, two deck upgrades and an electrical building.

In June the Board of Commissioners authorized the formation of a Code

Enforcement Task Force, made up of fifteen individuals who have some responsibility for code enforcement activity in Morrow County. This group has met three times and presented a report to the board at their meeting on October 16. If you have an interest in this topic, please contact Carla or Shambra at the planning department.

The next Morrow County Planning Commission public hearing will be held on October 29, in Boardman at the Riverfront Center where they will consider a land partition, a land partition/replat and an application to rezone property near the Paterson Ferry interchange to Port Industrial to allow industrial type uses.

The Morrow County Planning Department encourages you to visit our website for information on the planning commission, code enforcement, transportation and much more. You can find the website at <https://www.co.morrow.or.us/planning>.

**VA to hold town hall in Boardman**

The Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center (Walla Walla VA) is holding a town hall meeting and open house on Friday, October 25, from 10:30 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. at the Port of Morrow Conference Center (2 Marine Dr.). The open house starts at 10:30 a.m. and Veterans/community will have an opportunity to view the Morrow County Telehealth Clinic and visit with Walla Walla VA leadership and staff. The town hall will start at approximately 11:45 a.m. Lunch will be served during the town hall. The lunch and cake will be provided by Morrow County Veteran Services and Walla Walla VA's Voluntary Service.

This is one of many quarterly town halls that are regularly held by VA facilities across the nation. According to the press release, these meetings are intended to provide local Veterans a wide-open forum and for VA officials to hear directly from beneficiaries as a step toward improvement and to rebuild trust among Veterans.

"Caring for Veterans is a calling, and our first commitment is to provide Veterans and their families the timely, quality care and

benefits they have earned and deserve through their service to our nation," says Walla Walla VA's Director, Christopher Bjornberg. "It is important that we continue to listen and learn directly from those who use our system."

All are invited to visit with Walla Walla VA leadership and other staff about the future of healthcare for Veterans and how the new VA MISSION Act can provide additional access for more timely delivery of healthcare in rural communities.

This Veteran town hall meeting/event is open to the public and the media, as well as congressional stakeholders, Veteran service organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other community partners. The Walla Walla VA values the feedback from Veterans, family members, and other beneficiaries; and upholds VHA's mission by honoring America's Veterans in providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Contact Linda Wondra, Public Affairs Officer, Walla Walla VA Medical Center at 509.525.5200, Ext. 26520 (office) or 509.386.1117 (cell) for additional information.

**Chamber Chatter**

Thursday, October 24, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. All day flu clinic at Heppner City Hall by the Morrow County Health Department.

Saturday, October 26, 3-9 p.m., Fall Festival, organized by the Heppner Outreach Committee and volunteers, will be held at the Morrow County Fairgrounds with a \$2 admission charge per person. There will be carnival games and crafts, tractor rides, vendor market, food, beer garden from 6-9 p.m. and live music with Dallin Puzey and Cory Peterson.

Saturday, October 26, 4 p.m. at SAGE Center Theater, Free concert with Inland Northwest Chorale.

Tuesday, November 5, 6 p.m., SAGE Center Theater, Free Navy Band Concert.

Thursday, November 7,

6-8 p.m. at Heppner Ranger District Office, Public workshop on West End Project Area. This project was developed to reduce the risk and extent of an ongoing insect and disease infestation and is open to the community. For more information, check out the Project Webpage at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=56315>.

Saturday, November 16, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Ione American Legion Auxiliary Annual Craft Bazaar at Ione Legion Hall. Plan on coming by and checking out all of the crafts. Breakfast and lunch will be available for purchase. Vendor space is still available and the cost is \$10 per table. Contact Becky Rietmann before 10/31 at 541-720-2010 to reserve a space.

**Justice Court Report**


Morrow County Justice of the Peace, Ann Spicer, has released the following Justice Court report:

- Mason Gage Lehman, 18, Lexington, was convicted of violation of basic rule, 75/55 mph, fine \$165.
- Michael William

Peck, 52, Kennewick, WA, was convicted of violation of basic rule, 75/55 mph, fine \$165.

- Diana Jean Healy, 19, Heppner, was convicted of minor in possession of alcohol, fine \$265.

**Flu Shots**



Morrow County Health Department upcoming flu vaccine clinics

All day Flu Clinic at Heppner City Hall 10/24/2019 9:00 -7:00 p.m.

Irrigon Stoke's Landing Sr. Center 10/28/2019 10:30-1:00 p.m.

Ione Fire Hall 10/30/2019 4:00 -7:30 p.m.

Boardman Senior Center 10/31/2019 10:00-1:00 p.m. More to be announced at a later date!

**We do have flu vaccine for folks with no insurance, so drop by our clinic in Boardman, Heppner or Ione if you are unable to attend any of above scheduled flu clinics**

Morrow County Health Department 110 N Court Street, Heppner 541-676-5421 541-676-5652



**MURRAY'S 2020 MEDICARE PART D PLANS**

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\*Please note we are NOT a provider for Humana

Want to know when your prescriptions are ready? Ask the pharmacy about text alerts. Sign up for our auto-refill program. Shingles shots available at the pharmacy.

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**COMMUNITY HALLOWEEN PARTY**

TREATS  
GAMES  
HOT DOGS

**OCTOBER 31ST 5:30-8PM**

AT ALL SAINTS PARISH HALL

FUNDED BY MORROW COUNTY UNIFIED RECREATION DISTRICT AND FACILITATED BY HOPEFUL SAINTS MISSION TRIPPER'S

**Haunted Heppner**

This year the Haunted Heppner Trick or Treat Event will be held on Thursday, October 31st from 2:00 to 5:00 PM. Heppner businesses will offer treats to costumed children that come by the stores, banks and offices. The participating store fronts will display an orange sign that says "Welcome to Trick or Treat". Please come in to City Hall or call 541-676-9618 to request a sign or if you have any questions.

