

Guest Editorial

Why create an employee handbook?

By Greg Smith

Employers of any size will benefit from a straightforward, well written employee handbook. This document clearly spells out company policies and expectations as well as provides employees with a tool of reference should questions arise.

When drafting an employee handbook, it is essential that all federal and state employment laws are adhered to and be written in simple language, rather than legalese. It should always contain an employee and manager signature line and date documenting the handbook has been carefully reviewed by the employee and any questions answered by a supervisor.

While it will take time to create the handbook (and keep it updated), there are many benefits to both employer and employee. Examples include:

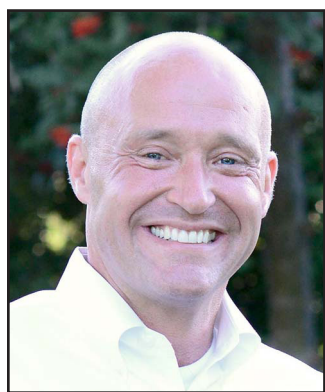
- By creating uniform expectations, it can lessen workplace strife and streamline the hiring process.

- The handbook documents company procedures and specific rules regarding dress code, any permitted use of personal electronic devices, non-discrimination, harassment (and how to file a complaint), compensation and benefits, company holidays, sick leave information, scheduling, etc.

- Discusses consequences, including termination, for violating these expectations.

- It may also offer a level of employer protection in the event of an employee lawsuit.

Helpful content to include in an employee handbook may include:



Greg Smith

- Welcome to Our Team
- About Us
- Explanation of "at-will" employment
- Office conduct
- Probationary period
- Specific cell phone and social media usage rules
- Safety policies
- Payroll schedule/time-card completion
- Performance reviews
- Company benefits and enrollment
- Exit interviews in the event of resignation or termination

Employers should review the handbook on a regular basis and make changes as needed. Additions or revisions may be necessary, and it is also important to remove any policies that are not enforced.

While it is tempting not to have an employee handbook in place when there is a small team, it is well worth the time to avoid aggravation and ensure standards for the business are being met.

Greg Smith is the director of the Eastern Oregon University Small Business Development Center located at 1607 Gekeler Lane #148 in La Grande, Oregon. You may schedule a free, confidential business advising appointment by calling 541-962-1532 or emailing eousbdc@gmail.com.

Frances (Arminta) Cox Griffin

Frances (Arminta) Cox Griffin died at home on December 9 at the age of 97. She was born February 15, 1922 to Percy Claude Cox and Jessie Mable Cox (Mead) in Heppner.



She married Frances Roland "Ronnie" Griffin Koff on October 29, 1938 and they later divorced. She then married Norman Beryl Griffin, an ex-POW of WWII, on December 9, 1945, remaining married until his death on November 24, 2005.

Frances worked as a telephone operator in Heppner for Pacific Telephone and Telegraph. Later she worked for Sears and Roebuck in Portland in both the toy department and sign shop, setting type by hand and soon becoming the department head. Over the years there were other retail jobs, but her greatest job was caring for her family and friends.

A family member said, "She told wonderful stories of her life growing up in and around Heppner. She told stories of living in the mountain cabin during the summer, of her adored daddy and her most beloved grandfather, Franklin Dee Cox, and of leaving her sister one day to wash dinner dishes by jumping bareback onto her horse, Dixie, and quickly riding away."

She had a great passion for genealogy before it became popular, and spent many years researching family history, including month-long summer trips across the US, visiting dusty courthouses and out-of-the-way gravesites, stopping to ask questions of a farmer at work in his field and learning that person was actually related. She got invited to dinner and had dozens of new relatives show up to meet her. She had distant relatives that she kept in touch with for all their lives. It happened all across the

country. "How open and welcoming people were in those years." She wrote a number of books on the various families that made up family history and gave them out to family members.

She loved her iris and roses and had photo albums full of pictures from every year. When someone showed up and flowers were in bloom, they were escorted to look at each one and hear its tale.

Frances is survived by her daughters, Virginia Lee Martinez of Ione, OR, Nina Louise Sikel of Portland, OR, Sheryl Lynn Derting of Salem, OR and Talia Lee Griffin (adopted great-granddaughter) of Salem, OR; son, Norman Phillip Griffin (wife Jeanine) of Silverton, OR; her sister, Marlene Grey (husband Mike) of Ione, OR; numerous nieces and nephews; many grandchildren, great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren; her honorary grandson, Shaun Best, who lovingly cared for her these many last years; non-relatives who considered her Grandma; and her special lifelong friend, (they shared a baby pram as infants) Norma McMahon.

She is preceded in death by her husband (just two months shy of 60 years) Norman; her mother and father; brother, Stanley Cox; sister, Nina Harshman; granddaughter, Dawn Dailey and great granddaughter, Jade Allen.

Frances will be buried with Norman at Willamette National Cemetery in Portland, OR on December 18. Her funeral will be at 10 a.m. on that same day at Virgil T. Golden Funeral Service in Salem, OR.

Her family said, "It's fitting that she passed on December 9th, as that was her and Dad's anniversary. They shared it together in Heaven this year."

Jim West

Jim West passed away peacefully at his home in Jerome, ID Tuesday, December 10 at the age of 88. He is an Arlington, OR native and he attended OSU for two years before joining the army in 1952.

He lived in Heppner on the family ranch on Rhea Creek with his wife of 62 years where he and his family raised cattle, sheep and horses. For the past 12 years he had been living on the family ranch in Nevada and most recently retired in Jerome.

Community lunch menu

Due to Christmas and New Year's falling on Wednesday this year, meals will be served the following Fridays, December 27 and January 3.

St. Patrick's Parish volunteers will serve lunch on Friday, December 27 at St. Patrick's Senior Center. Lunch will be taco soup,

cornbread, Waldorf salad, Malibu vegies and ice cream. Milk, coffee and tea is served at each meal. Suggested donation is \$3.50 per meal. Menu is subject to change.



Jim West

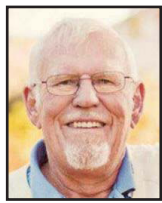
He enjoyed traveling with his wife, breeding and training horses and watching his children and grandchildren rodeo. Jim is survived by wife, Carleen West; children, Clay and Wade; grandchildren Katy, Betsy, James and Jamie; and brothers, Bill and Jack.

A celebration of life was held at his home on December 15.

Larry Earl Groves

Larry Groves passed away peacefully on Wednesday, December 4, while receiving care at the Hospice House through Partners in Care in Bend, OR.

Larry was born in Salem, OR on September 1, 1937. His parents were Maurice and Betty Groves. He moved to eastern Oregon where he attended school in Lexington, graduating in 1955 from Lexington High School. Larry attended Lewis and Clark College in Portland, graduating in 1960 with a BS in business. He was the first person in his family to graduate from college. While at Lewis and Clark, he participated in football and track, attaining captain status of the football team in his senior year.



Larry Earl Groves

He married Lindell Griffith during college, divorcing much later. He had three children from this marriage; Laura Ann, Leslie Louise and Linda Sue. Larry worked in highway construction as a superintendent all over the northwest and west coast with Fred H. State Co (Portland), Slate and Hall (Portland) and Bracelin and Yeager (Coos Bay).

His second marriage was to Gloria Malloy who passed away in 2005 after a long illness. His partner and caretaker at his passing was Janice Walters.

He enjoyed golfing, drinking beer and spending time with family and friends and often wintered in Arizona. He loved to give nicknames to people and he laughed a lot. He also loved to cheer on the Oregon State Beavers in all sports.

He was predeceased by his parents, Maurice and Betty Groves; foster parents, Archie and Dimples Munkers; daughter, Laura Mason McCord; grandson, Robert (Bobby) Mason; and wife Gloria Malloy.

Survivors include his former wife, Lindell Johnson (Albany, OR); daughters, Leslie Groves (Falls Church, VA), Linda Ferrell (Molalla, OR); sisters, Maureen Howard (Heppner, OR), Anita Dick (Welches, OR); half-brother, John Groves (CA); granddaughter, Kelley Adams (Houston, TX); five great-grandchildren; and step-brothers/sisters, Dave Rands (Crooked River, OR), Marshall Rands, Barbara Rands and Marsha Rands.

A service will not be held at this time. A celebration of life will be held in spring 2020.

Snowmobile playday scheduled

The snowmobile club will hold a playday at Kelly Prairie on Sunday, December 29 starting at 11 a.m.,


snow permitting. For additional information contact Mike Gorman at 541-980-3396.

STOP SMOKING SEMINAR



JANUARY 1ST - 7PM
Heppner SDA Church

Tom & Jerry Party
December 20th
5-7 pm
Steak Dinner
by Lodge Officers
6:30 pm
musical entertainment by
Frank Carlson
6-10 pm
(weather permitting)
Elks Members and Guests only



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