

Comfort Inn & Suites expanding

By **JADE McDOWELL**
Staff Writer

An expansion underway at Comfort Inn & Suites will increase Hermiston's hotel capacity by 35 rooms.

The hotel, located by the Space Age fuel station near Interstate 84 exit 182, is also planning to update its existing 65 rooms by adding new carpet, furniture and wall coverings.

"We basically want it to match up to the new section," co-owner Jim Pliska said.

The 35 new rooms will include six suites and three or four handicap-accessible rooms. Pliska said construction is expected to wrap up in November. A few of the hotel's current rooms will be closed while they are re-carpeted, but the hotel will remain open throughout the construction phase.

Pliska said the hotel will hire between five and 10 new employees when the project is complete.

Pliska owns the Hermiston Comfort Inn & Suites, franchised by lodging com-

pany Choice Hotels, with his father Harold Pliska. He described the hotel as an affordable "mid-level" lodging option.

"It should be nicer once we get done," he said.

He said the hotel should not have trouble utilizing the new rooms, since it is often "running up against capacity" now.

The anecdotal evidence is backed up by hard numbers: In 2014 the 434 hotel rooms in Hermiston averaged 69.6 percent occupancy, with some hotels filling up completely during large sporting tournaments in town. According to information presented by the city in 2013, Hermiston's occupancy rate tends to be about 8 percent higher than the state average and 19 percent higher than the rest of Eastern Oregon.

Hermiston will get another boost in hotel capacity in July 2016, when a recently announced four-story Holiday Inn Express is expected to open on the corner of Hermiston Avenue and Highway 395.



STAFF PHOTO BY JADE McDOWELL

A 35-room expansion is underway at the Hermiston Comfort Inn & Suites near Interstate 84.

Hermiston Chamber plans events Aug. 25

The Hermiston Chamber of Commerce will host two events Aug. 25.

A supply chain opportunities conference will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The event is designed to help manufacturers generate new opportunities, partnerships and awareness about suppliers and customers in the Northwest. The conference will feature presentations from large manufacturers and round-table discussions. Kerry Bass, from Pacific NW National Laboratory, and Josh Burns, from Wal-Mart Distribution Center, will speak at the event.

The conference is a collaboration between the chamber, Business Oregon, the Pendle-

ton Chamber of Commerce and the Pacific Northwest Defense Coalition. PNDC and chamber members can register for \$20 by Aug. 12 or \$35 after. Non-members can register for \$40 by Aug. 12 or \$55 after. The cost includes breakfast and lunch at the Business to Business luncheon that follows. For more information or to register, visit www.pndc.us or call 888-701-PNDC.

People who do not wish to attend the entire conference can attend only the Business to Business luncheon, which begins at 11:45 a.m. The luncheon costs \$10 for chamber members or \$33 for non-members. For more information or to register, call 541-567-6151.



STAFF PHOTO BY SEAN HART

This handcrafted chess set is one of a variety of items at Old Stanfield Junk Store, which opened last week in downtown Stanfield.

Stanfield open for business

Two new businesses in operation, another planned this month

By **SEAN HART**
Staff Writer

Residents hope new business activity in Stanfield will attract more customers and even more businesses.

Two new stores — Bazaar Happenings and Old Stanfield Junk Store — opened last week, and the Lucky Jam Barn, a new restaurant, plans to open later this month.

After Elephants Trunk Antiques closed and Echo Bike & Board moved to Pendleton earlier this year, vacant storefronts dominated the downtown area. Now, the former antique store owner, Dave Meyers, has opened a new business in the building next door that once housed the bike shop. It offers an eclectic mix of old and new items.

Although Meyers said he is still trying to sell or lease the old Elephants Trunk building on the corner of Highway 395 and West Coe Avenue, Bazaar Happenings opened on the same block a day after Meyers' new store. He said he hoped more stores in town would lead to more customers.

"It should have been done long ago," he said. "People draw people. That's always been my experience. Stanfield, as far as I'm concerned, is a prime location."

Stanfield librarian Cecil Longhorn, who opened Bazaar Happenings, said the new stores will provide customers a better shopping experience.

"We have a bunch of great things in Stanfield," she said. "We're just lacking with a few businesses, so it's nice to see people get involved and try to get some more activity



STAFF PHOTO BY SEAN HART

April Bautista, manager of the new Old Stanfield Junk Store, poses inside the store at 135 W. Coe Ave.



STAFF PHOTO BY SEAN HART

Lisa Mavis poses by some of the items she is selling in the new Stanfield business Bazaar Happenings, 165 W. Coe Ave. Last week, Stanfield librarian Cecil Longhorn opened the business, which features a wide variety of items from different sellers.

going where people can go from shop to shop to shop."

Longhorn said she hoped her new consignment store offering a variety of gifts and handcrafted and repurposed items would encourage foot traffic. She said the business also plans to offer ice cream soon.

Bazaar Happenings is connected by an interior door to Fun Fashions Boutique, which opened in October last year, so customers can easily move from one store to the next. Boutique owner Kathy Baker said she is excited to have more businesses downtown.

"I think it's going to be a great new asset for Stanfield," she said. "We're slowly building up the town again. I think it's going to be a new opening for this town."

Baker said, although it took time to establish a customer base, her business is doing well. She said Stanfield is great location for businesses because of the amount of traffic that passes through each day on Highway 395.

Bazaar Happenings

What: A variety of gifts, handcrafted and repurposed items and, coming soon, ice cream
Hours: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays
Where: 165 W. Coe Ave., Stanfield
Phone: 541-571-3812

Old Stanfield Junk Store

What: An eclectic mix of old and new items
Hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays
Where: 135 W. Coe Ave., Stanfield
Phone: 541-571-6715

The Lucky Jam Barn

What: Breakfast, lunch, pizza to go, baked goods, ice cream, smoothies and coffee
Opens: Initial plans were to open Friday
Where: 270 S. Main St., Stanfield
Phone: 541-561-6240

With a location directly on the highway, the Lucky Jam Barn eatery hopes to draw some of that traffic. The business tentatively scheduled to open Friday plans to offer breakfast, lunch, pizza to go, baked goods, ice cream, smoothies and coffee.

City Manager Blair Larsen said he hopes the new businesses will thrive in Stanfield.

"I love to see people make the effort to create something," he said. "It certainly takes a lot more work than just living your life and shopping elsewhere, so it's nice to see."



STAFF PHOTO BY SEAN HART

Bazaar Happenings, a new business in downtown Stanfield, offers a variety of items from different sellers.

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Hermiston Herald

VOLUME 109 • NUMBER 47

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The Hermiston Herald (USPS 242220, ISSN 8750-4782) is published weekly at Hermiston Herald, 333 E. Main St., Hermiston, OR 97838, (541) 567-6457, FAX (541) 567-1764. Periodical postage paid at Hermiston, OR. Postmaster, send address changes to Hermiston Herald, 333 E. Main St., Hermiston, OR 97838.

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