

Downtown Stanfield seeing influx of new businesses

By JADE McDOWELL and SEAN HART

Staff WRITER

Downtown Stanfield is getting a shot of energy through four new downtown businesses.

Bazaar Happenings and Old Stanfield Junk Store opened in August, Joe's Treasure House opened last week and a new coffeehouse and cafe called Lucky Jam Barn is set to open in about two weeks.

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."

Lucky Jam Barn in particular has involved the work of many Stanfield residents. Owner Jason Sperr, a city councilor and teacher at Stanfield Secondary School, has hired his Future Business Lead-

ers of America students to help run the business.

The cafe and coffeehouse isn't affiliated with the school, but Sperr said he thought opening a business was a good opportunity to offer FBLA students some hands-on experience and a job with a manager who is willing to work around their busy extracurricular schedules.

The name Lucky Jam Barn is an acronym the involved students came up with using their first

initials. They have helped with everything from installing flooring to designing a logo to accounting.

"They've learned what it takes to start a business," Sperr said. "They've learned about remodeling a building. They've delved into the different aspects."

Amanda Newton, who will be the cafe's manager, said she has been impressed with the teens' work ethic.

"The kids are really hands-on with what we're

doing," she said. "They've been involved every step of the process. They're really learning about building a business from the ground up."

The cafe at 270 S. Main St. will be open seven days a week, 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. and serve specialty coffees, pastries, pizza and sandwiches.

Down the street at 210 S. Main St. is Joe's Treasure House, opened at the end of August by Joe Minazadeh and open 10 a.m.

to 6 p.m. on Mondays through Fridays plus some flexible hours on Sundays. The store sells antiques, china, crystal and other odds and ends.

Manager Kacie Robertson said there are "a lot of unique items here."

"If you have china and something breaks, I've got your extra piece," she said.

She said the store also buys vintage items from people.

"Joe's very fair about pricing," she said.



SEAN HART PHOTO

Hermiston Parks and Recreation Director Larry Fetter designed the landscaping in front of the Hermiston police and fire stations to comply with a proposed landscaping ordinance for new developments in the city.

Hermiston tries again on landscaping ordinance

By JADE McDOWELL

Staff Writer

The city of Hermiston has revised its proposed landscaping ordinance after fielding complaints from business owners who would be affected by the rules.

A public hearing on the revised ordinance will take place on at the city council's Sept. 14 meeting at 7 p.m. at city hall.

The city held firm on requiring specific percentages of new developments to be landscaped but did respond to other concerns, like resident Don Skeen's point that the ordinance's provision about "preserving natural vegetation" wherever possible didn't always translate well in real life.

"In our area natural vegetation is goatheads," he said at the Aug. 24 public hearing.

In response the city added new language to the ordinance specifying that natural

vegetation does not include noxious weeds or prohibited tree species.

It also added language allowing for drought-friendly xeriscaping, clarified how enforcement will take place, put a cap on commercial zone landscaping at 20,000 square feet if the property is more than 10 acres and changed the amount of non-plant ground cover allowed from 35 percent to 50 percent.

Under the new language, failure to follow the landscaping requirements would result in the same process of notice and abatement as violations of the city's nuisance codes.

At a previous public hearing, Hermiston Chamber of Commerce director Debbie Pedro said the chamber had sent out a survey with a copy of the original ordinance, and 71 percent of the 69 respondents agreed with implementing some sort of landscaping

ordinance, although many of them had worries about the wording of the ordinance.

According to a news release from the city, staff sat down with Hermiston Chamber of Commerce members after reworking the ordinance and got another round of feedback.

"One of the biggest concerns for the group was a fear that obtaining a landscaping permit would slow down the development process for certain properties," the news release said.

In response the city rewrote the waiver section of the ordinance, giving city staff the authority to grant waivers for requirements that weren't feasible for certain developments so that projects aren't held up by waiting for the planning commission's next meeting.

The new ordinance can be found on the city's website at www.hermiston.or.us.

ConAgra Foods to hold hiring event

ConAgra Foods Lamb Weston will hold a hiring event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11, at the SAGE Center in Boardman.

Attendees should come interview-ready with a resume in hand.

ConAgra Foods is hiring for multiple positions, including general laborers, lift truck operators and packaging operators, at its Boardman West Lamb Weston potato plant.

The SAGE Center is located at 101 Olson Road. Applicants will also need to apply online at www.conagrafoods Careers.com.

For more information, contact the SAGE Center at 541-481-7243.

Umatilla council to skip warning phase on all new code violations

By JADE McDOWELL

Staff Writer

Umatilla residents violating the city's nuisance code will be cited immediately rather than being given a warning first.

The City Council approved an ordinance Tuesday, Sept. 1, changing the Code Improvement Board to the Code Enforcement Board and making it the judging body for code violations.

In the past, the city's code enforcement officer has issued a warning to violators, automatically giving them five days to abate the nuisance on their property or go see a judge. Under Ordinance 807 the officer will issue a citation immediately upon seeing a violation and the violator will have until the next meeting of the Code Enforcement Board to abate it.

If the nuisance is still there when the board meets, the board can decide to give the person more time, levy a fine, hold their landlord responsible or take other action.

"It gives us a lot more flexibility," said Bob Ward, city manager.

He said the city has been taking a "kinder, gentler approach" to code enforcement but allowing the code enforcement officer to issue a citation the first time will improve the strength of its enforcement. Police chief Darla Huxel said the change gives code enforcement more teeth.

"When you hand someone a citation they know they have to take action immediately," she said.

On Tuesday, the council also took a number of other actions, including the approval of a ballot drop box outside City Hall. Ward said the city usually gets a few people trying to drop off their ballot at City Hall even though the nearest drop-off site is currently in Hermiston. Ballots in Oregon go by date received, not postmark, and Ward said county officials were worried about the loss of Pendleton's mail-sorting center.

"With the mail going to

Portland and then back to Pendleton it would be very easy for a citizen to miss that deadline," he said.

The council also granted a temporary sales license for alcohol to Steve Bunn of Honey Bunnz Hideout after previously refusing a last-minute request to put the item on their August agenda. The license is for a beer garden behind the strip club's wooden fence to celebrate its one-year anniversary on Sept. 11-12.

At the beginning of the meeting Bunn said he was tired of the city discriminating against him since he opened the club. He said he was recently denied a locksmith license despite 17 years of experience in Hermiston and has been hassled about his living quarters, too.

"I don't appreciate being treated that way," he said.

The council approved the OLCC license, with the stipulation he end at 1 a.m. instead of his requested time of 2 a.m.

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