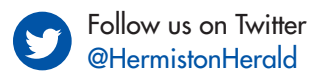


Herald Business



STAFF PHOTO BY GEORGE PLAGEN

Construction is underway of a new Love's Travel Stops off Interstate 84 and Tower Road, west of Boardman.

Love's Travel Stop to open west of Boardman

Truck stop expected to open by late spring

By **GEORGE PLAGEN**
Staff Writer

Construction is underway for Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores truck stop along Interstate 84 and Tower Road, about five miles west of Boardman.

Kealey Dorian, spokeswoman for the Oklahoma-based company, said the travel center should open by late spring and will include a convenience store, tire repair shop, 24 fuel pumps and Carl's Jr. restaurant.

"It's a very exciting time," Dorian said. "We're a growing company. We expect to open 40 new stores across the

country this year."

Love's has more than 360 locations in 40 states, including three in Oregon. Two travel centers are located on I-84 in Ontario and Troutdale, and one on Interstate 5 in Roseburg. Dorian said the Boardman location fills another hole in their network.

"We stuck with this site because we believed it would be a really good spot for us," she said.

Permitting the project has taken six years of clearing legal challenges and appeals from Devin Oil Co., a local business that owns two fuel stations in Boardman. Morrow County has twice approved conditional land use permits for Love's — once in 2010, and again in 2015. Both times, Devin Oil raised objections to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals and the

state Court of Appeals.

In one appeal, Devin Oil argued it would be adversely affected by Love's due to "aggressive marketing and pricing practices." The company also argued whether a travel center should be allowed at the I-84 and Tower Road interchange based on the county's own zoning rules.

Each time, the courts ruled in favor of the county. LUBA issued its most recent decision in April, which was affirmed by the Court of Appeals in December. The Oregon Supreme Court declined to hear the case in 2012.

Morrow County Planning Director Carla McLane said the deadline for further appeals passed earlier this month, and she is happy to see the process finished.

"It's nice to be done,"

McLane said. "It's been a real large time-consumer."

Dorian said it generally costs about \$10 million to build a new travel center. They will hire about 50 employees in Boardman, and start accepting applications next month.

"Most of those will be from the area," Dorian said.

As part of its grand opening, Dorian said Love's will donate \$2,000 to a local school or non-profit organization. The business sets aside \$450 every year to invest in the community.

"We really try to do a good job of coming in and being good stewards to the community," Dorian said.

For more information about Love's donations, contact Dorian at 405-302-6730 or kealey.dorian@loves.com.

BIZ BRIEFS

Brown names Smith to biz advisory panel

Republican Rep. Greg Smith of Heppner was named to Gov. Kate Brown's Small Business Advisory Cabinet.

Brown, a Democrat, created the cabinet earlier this month and last week her office announced its membership. Smith is one of nine in the cabinet.

Brown charged the group with developing recommendations to her on how state government can support small business owners and new entrepreneurs and advance statewide economic growth. The cabinet will deliver recommendations on three priorities by Oct 1: How state government can support and promote small business owners and prospective entrepreneurs; how state government can increase access to capital; and how the state can streamline regulations.

Chamber awards nominations due

Nominations for business and citizen of the year for the Umatilla Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center's Distinguished Citizen Award banquet will be accepted through Monday, Feb. 29.

This year's banquet, which features a Mardi Gras theme, is Saturday, March 5 at 6 p.m. at the Tuscan Lodge, 720 Seventh St., Umatilla. Tickets are \$30, which includes dinner catered by Sundown Bar & Grill featuring apple smoked beef brisket, two sides, two salads, bread, and huckleberry crème brûlée.

The event also features a silent auction for the chamber's scholarship program. In addition, the chamber is raffling off a Ruger 10/22 rifle, a Lamiglass salmon/steelhead rod and reel and an Okuma Celilo Kokanee rod and Okuma Citrix reel. Limited tickets will be sold for \$5 each.

Tickets for the raffle are available from any chamber board member or at the chamber office. Nomination forms are available at the chamber office, Carlson's Umatilla Drug Store, the Umatilla branch of Banner Bank and Java Junkies.

For more information, call 541-922-4825.



Gary L. West | Editor • gwest@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4532

Tammy Malgesini | Community Editor • tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com • 541-564-4539

Sam Barbee | Sports Reporter • sbarbee@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4542

Jade McDowell | Reporter • jmcowell@eastoregonian.com • 541-564-4536

Jennifer Colton | Reporter • jcolton@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4534

Jeanne Jewett | Multi-Media consultant • jjewett@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4531

Shannon Paxton | Office coordinator • spaxton@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4530

Audra Workman | Multi-Media consultant • aworkman@eastoregonian.com • 541-564-4538

To contact the Hermiston Herald for news, advertising or subscription information:

- call 541-567-6457
- e-mail info@hermistonherald.com
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Survey seeks employer responses

Employers are asked to take a survey about challenges they face when recruiting and filling open positions in Umatilla County.

The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners and Blue Mountain Community College have joined forces to better understand the workforce needs throughout Umatilla County. Together, they would like to understand the challenges and the impact the availability of a qualified workforce has on decisions to expand.

The survey takes just 15-minutes to complete and can be found at www.surveymonkey.com/r/Umatilla-countyworkforceneeds.

"The more we understand the issues existing employers face, the better we will be able to work on solutions and resources to support them as well as those interested in establishing a business in Umatilla County," said Susan Bower of Eastern Oregon Business Source, who has been hired to conduct the study.

Individual responses will

be shared only with the independent consultant hired to conduct the study. The compilation of results will be published and will include a list of participant organizations. An organization's contact information and survey responses will not be shared in a way that is identifiable.

The county and BMCC are committed to serving the region's employers, and believe this survey is an important step toward the increased availability of a qualified workforce for the region.

For more information, contact bower at susanbower@eobusinesssource.com.

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Umatilla Electric Scholarship Program



Umatilla Electric is offering the following scholarships for the 2016-17 school year:

Academic Scholarships - 12 \$2,500 scholarships are available for members of UEC and/or their dependent children who receive electric service from UEC at their primary residence, and are enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time graduate or undergraduate program at a two- or four-year college. Apply online at www.oregonstudentaid.gov by **March 1, 2016**.

Electrical Engineering Scholarship - a \$5,000 scholarship is administered to a college student who has completed their freshman year and is interested in pursuing a degree in Electrical Engineering-Power Systems. Apply by **March 1, 2016** at www.oregonstudentaid.gov

Lineman Scholarship - a \$2,000 scholarship is available to members and/or applicants whose parent or guardian is an active member who receive electric service from UEC at their primary residence, and are interested in the Line Construction trade and will be attending an accredited Line College. Apply by **March 1, 2016**. Go to www.umatillaelectric.com to download the application.

UEC wants to help make college accessible to our young members. We hope you apply.

For more information about UEC's scholarship program, visit our offices in Hermiston or Boardman or online at www.umatillaelectric.com. You can also call us for more information at 541-564-6414 or the Oregon Student Access and Completion (OSAC) at 1-800-452-8807.

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