

Business Notes

Banks Chamber team begins strategic planning process with RDI

If you have an idea of what Banks should be like in ten years, the Banks Chamber of Commerce Business Team invites you to join with a group of community members to work on improving the local economy and community with the help of a Strategic Plan.

Assisted by Rural Development Initiatives, Inc. (RDI), a non-profit organization dedicated to helping rural communities with economic improvement, and Laurel Schweitzer, their local RARE (Resource Assistance for Rural Environments) member, the citizen committee will develop a plan that will help guide Banks into the future.

During the next four months, the committee's objectives are to:

- Create a vision statement – a vivid picture of the community's ideal future 10 years out;
- Set specific goals for realizing the vision that was based on the four building blocks of community and economic development: workforce development, business development, infrastructure and quality of life;
- Develop projects or strategies to reach those goals; and
- Design a practical action agenda to implement the strategies.

"This is a very important process and it is crucial that we

get as much community input as possible," said Steve Harr of the Business Team. Everyone interested in joining the Banks Strategic Planning Committee, is urged to attend the next meeting on Thursday, April 10, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., in the Banks Fire Station, 300 S. Main Street.

The first meeting was held March 18, and there will be five evening meetings during the next four months. Even if you are unable to attend all of the meetings, the Team strongly encourages you to attend the April 10 meeting, which will be focusing specifically on setting priorities for the Downtown Re-

vitalization Plan created in January, 2002, by the Oregon Downtown Development Association. Input from the community is vital in order to develop a vision for Banks' future.

For more information, call Schweitzer at 503-341-1907 or e-mail: laurelsch@jps.net

More Oregonians utilize speed, convenience of income tax e-filing

More than 414,000 Oregon taxpayers filed their Oregon income taxes electronically last year. This is an increase of twenty percent over the previous year. The Oregon Department of Revenue expects more than half a million electronically filed returns this year.

"Taxpayers like to e-file because it is quick and convenient. It takes an average of one to two hours to complete a tax return electronically, versus 10 to 12 hours by pen and paper. Taxpayers also receive their refunds faster," said Stacey Weeks, the department's alternative filing coordinator.

The department accepts

Forms 40, 40S, 40P (part year), and 40N (nonresident) electronically if they are filed along with the corresponding federal Forms 1040, 1040A and 1040EZ.

Because the department had to wait for the results of the January 28 special election to begin processing, there was a slight backlog of returns. That backlog has been processed and refunds are on their way to taxpayers.

There are also many opportunities for free electronic filing this season. For more information, visit the department website at <www.dor.state.or.us>.

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