Enhancing & Promoting the Economic Vitality of Central Oregon Since 1994

# **Hot Topics** from the **Executive Suite Industry Experts Cover**

by NOAH NELSON — CBN Feature Writer

**Trends & Challenges** 



n Wednesday, September 3, Central Oregon Employer's Council (COEC) facilitated an insightful dialogue between industry professionals that covered a vast array of factors that affect local industries.

The panelists invited were; Katy Brooks, economic development officer with the City of Bend; Matt Swafford, CFO of St. Charles Health System; Paul Evers, co-founder of Crux Fermentation Project and Cultivate Bend, and NAI commercial real estate broker; Michael Hancock, executive director of Bethlehem Inn; and Steve Buettner, CEO and founder of Sunwest Builders.

Buettner talked about how Bend has come so far from the days of the late 80s but has endured several difficult business cycles along the way. Sunwest recently became an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) and he discussed the pros and cons of ESOPs. Some of the deciding factors for him were the desire to reward long-time employees, and to retain local presence and decision-making of the company in Central Oregon.

When asked about the impact of tariffs, Buettner said he feels they are having a delayed effect but that the impact still may be coming. He said the current implication is that earlier in the year, there was indecision in starting on projects because of cost overruns, and more recently those potential costs are being managed more by their clients with contingencies than in the bid process. Some projects are still being delayed because the margins in markets like Bend are so thin that any significant overruns cause a project to lose viability.

At St. Charles, Swafford's diverse role and skillset provides a broad view for him to speak on a variety of subjects.

As our largest employer in Central Oregon, St. Charles has a strong direct and indirect impact on our economy. They have plans to grow 40 percent over the next five years with an expansion of types of services. St. Charles has put a lot of effort on employee

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# **Sisters Plans for Growth While Preserving Small-Town Character**

by ANDREA HINE — CBN Feature Writer

orget acronyms such as NFL, LOL, CNN or FAQ that permeate headlines and the internet. The three letters that have occupied the time and talents of Scott Woodford these past few years are UGB, which refers to Urban Growth Boundary — a planning tool used in Oregon to ensure communities have enough space for growth over the next 20 years.

As Community Development Director for the City of Sisters, Woodford summarized the progress made by city officials and the community in tackling what he admitted is "certainly a long process with lots of public input, differing opinions, and other factors to take into consideration."

"We've been in this process almost 18 months now working with our UGB Steering Committee (which included both citizens, and elected and appointed city officials) to develop a preferred UGB boundary for the UGB Amendment," Woodford said. The committee made its boundary recommendation in July, which was passed and unanimously approved in August by the Sisters Planning Commission, which he termed "a real milestone." It will go before the City Council on September 24.



GARRETT QUEEN, ROBINSON & OWEN; PETER HOOVER, SISTERS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY; KEVIN ECKERT, BUILD, LLC; AND MITCH GRAYSON, ROBINSON & OWEN, ARE SHOWN AT THE FUTURE LARCH COMMONS AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SITE | PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM CORNELIUS. THE NUGGET)

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# Sisters Spotlight — Pages 11-19

# **EDCO Highlights New Space & Business Changes in Sisters**

by ANDREA HINE — CBN Feature Writer

"■ f you don't have space, you don't have options, and can't even start a conversation." That was the situation facing Eric Strobel when working in Sisters as EDCO's area director in the mid-2000s: "No one wanted to build it was rough. That has now changed."

"What we've been seeing falls under three themes — movement, availability of building space and consolidation," he said, underscoring EDCO's effort to create more stable long-term economic growth by attracting traded-sector companies and jobs to the Sisters area.

(A traded-sector business sells its goods or services to customers beyond the immediate region, bringing new revenue into the local economy, and supporting non-traded sectors like retail and restaurants.)

Strobel began by pointing out that in the town's light industrial park on the north side of town, "three buildings are going up at the same time. Currently, a total of approximately 50,000 square feet is available for lease, with plans for 21,000 square feet to be constructed. There are lots of plans." And he summed up, "Our industrial park is

STEAK. SEAFOOD. FIREWATER. FRIENDS.

TWO NEW EATERIES — THE MCARTHUR AND THREE FINGER JACK TAVERN — OPENED IN JULY | PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDREA HINE

getting filled up; there aren't going to be many lots left in the coming years."

The expansion of BASX into Sisters also stands at the top of Strobel's list. "The company, Deschutes County's largest commercial employer, is leasing a 27,000-squarefoot building to assemble critical field modular surgical

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## CONTRIBUTORS

BRI SOUDER	
CHRIS C PIPER	
SEAN RAY & AVERY TUNSTILL	8
INDUSTRIAL APPLIED ELECTRIC	9
ANDREW LOSCUTOFF	13
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COURTNEY IGNAZZITTO	

PRODUCERS
ounderPamela Hulse Andrews
resident/CEOJeff Martin
ditor/Production Director/ eature WriterMarcee Hillman Moeggenberg
ontent ProofreaderEmma Carpenter
eature WriterLeah Etling
eature WriterAndrea Hine
eature WriterSimon Mather
eature WriterNoah Nelson
listribution David Hill

## **HOT NEWS**

# Tower Theatre Foundation Announces Hayden Homes as Spire Partner

The nonprofit Tower Theatre Foundation announced Hayden Homes as their new Spire Partner for the 2025-26 Season. The Foundation's 2025-26 Season kicks off September 7 and runs through June 2026. Performances include live music, comedy, film and dance events that reflect the organization's vision to further Central Oregon as a dynamic hub

of culture. The Foundation also welcomed Simplicity by Hayden Homes as a sponsor of their popular LessonPLAN Education Series, which already has sold out shows and students on waitlists after being announced August 25.

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# Kiln to Open Dynamic Coworking Community in Bend's Old Mill District

Kiln, a leading provider of premium flexoffice and coworking communities across the Western U.S., has announced plans to open its newest location in the heart of Bend's Old Mill District. The thoughtfully designed, 43,000-square-foot workspace at 501 SW Hill Street is slated to open in the spring of 2026 and is expected to be the center of gravity for over 500 professionals, creatives and growing teams throughout Central Oregon.

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## Bend Venture Conference Announces Early Stage Semifinalists Presenting at Central Oregon PubTalk

Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) just recently announced the ten semifinalist companies selected to advance in the Early Stage competition for the 22nd Annual Bend Venture Conference (BVC), taking place at the Tower Theatre in Bend on Thursday, October 16 and Friday, October 17, 2025.

The ten Early Stage semifinalists will face off at the September 25, 2025, Central Oregon PubTalk: Road to BVC, held at the

outdoor Drink Up, Dream On stage at Worthy Brewing in Bend. At this high-energy event, each company will deliver a three-minute pitch to a live audience and a panel of judges, who will decide which companies move on to the main stage at the Bend Venture Conference next month. The audience vote will also award one Early Stage company a \$3,000 cash prize,

Continued on Page 30 ▶

# Central Oregon Gears Up for Third Annual High Desert Innovation Week

Central Oregon's entrepreneurial spirit takes center stage this autumn as Bend hosts the third annual High Desert Innovation Week, a vibrant five-day festival of innovation, collaboration and growth, October 13-17.

Organized by an ecosystem of dynamic community-building organizations, this week brings together entrepreneurs, investors, community partners, and changemakers across tech, natural products, outdoor gear, bioscience, climate innovation and more.

It begins on October 13 with the High Desert Innovation Fest, produced by the Central Oregon Innovation Network, where early-stage founders pitch ideas to a diverse audience of investors, peers and supporters. On October 14, Cultivate Bend hosts Cultivate LIVE!, a natural-products summit featuring keynote speakers, pitch slams and a community marketplace. That same evening, the Bend Climate Collective

Continued on Page 30 ►

# Central Oregon's First-Ever Golf Tradeshow Tees Off May 2026

Central Oregon Builders Association (COBA) announces the Oregon Golf Show — the region's first-ever golf tradeshow, taking place May 1-3, 2026, at the Deschutes County Fairgrounds.

This three-day event brings together golf enthusiasts, families and industry professionals for an action-packed weekend of demos, gear, games and giveaways. With free admission, free parking and nearly 50 dedicated golf booths — alongside the Spring Home & Garden Show featuring more than 200 total vendors — this combined showcase offers something for everyone.

As the only golf tradeshow in Central

Continued on Page 30 ►











## **Business & Industry**

**DESCHUTES COUNTY** 

♦ The Deschutes County Courthouse Expansion project will reach a pivotal phase this week with the scheduled removal of its tower crane, a prominent fixture in downtown Bend. The removal of the crane will require the temporary closure of Bond Street between Greenwood Avenue and Wall Street, starting early morning on Friday, September 12, until the evening of Monday, September 15.

Crews will dismantle the crane piece by piece, from the top down, with assistance from two auxiliary cranes. Drivers and pedestrians are encouraged to use caution while work is underway.

- Traffic Control Measures:Traffic control signs will be placed on Bond Street to give drivers advance notice off the closure and facilitate smooth redirection. Closure barricades will be placed at the north intersection of Bond Street and Greenwood Avenue.
- **Detour Route:**To bypass the closure, drivers traveling north on Bond Street will need to turn left at Greenwood Avenue and then right at Wall Street, to continue heading north.
- Pedestrian Access: The western sidewalk on Bond Street will remain open for pedestrian use.

When complete, the Deschutes County Courthouse Expansion will nearly double the size of the existing courthouse. The \$46.8 million project includes a new three-story, 50,933 -square-foot facility featuring new courtrooms, judges' chambers, a jury deliberation room, security offices and updated security screening and sally-

port facilities. Construction is anticipated to be complete in the summer of 2026.

For more information about the Courthouse Expansion please visit the project website or listen to the *Inside* Deschutes County podcast.

◆ The Deschutes County Board of Commissioners (BOCC) has announced its fall schedule for joint meetings with governing boards across the county.

The Board will hold joint meetings with the County's Fair Board, Circuit Court, Planning Commission and the city councils of Bend, Redmond, Sisters and La Pine. Meeting topics will vary by jurisdiction, but discussions are expected to focus on matters of public interest including strategies to address homelessness and affordable housing, growth management, wildfire risk mitigation, and updates on the siting of a future county landfill.

"I look forward to these meetings every year. They give us a chance to catch up with our partners and exchange information," said Commissioner Chair Tony DeBone. "Working together helps us optimize the services we provide to our communities in Deschutes County. The meetings are all open to the public, so please come join us."

The schedule for the joint meetings can be found on the Deschutes County website at deschutes.org/meetings \*Please note that all joint meeting dates and times are subject to change.

The joint meetings are open to the public and can be attended in person or viewed online. Agendas for each meeting will be posted at least 24 hours in advance.

◆ Deschutes County recently released reports that show the transient lodging tax collection results for FY 2025-26, updated through the month

Please keep in mind that these funds are recorded on a cash basis; therefore, this information reflects the results of payments for activity through July 2025.

To access the full report go to CascadeBusNews. com and search Transient Room Tax Collections.

- ♦ Community members are invited to an open house, in person or online, to explore proposed safety and connectivity upgrades at the southern end of Bend's Core Area. The project area has seen more traffic and new development and users have reported it is still hard to travel east to west — whether you're driving, walking, or biking.
- In person: September 10, 4-6pm, at the Campfire Hotel, Outpost meeting space, 721 NE Third St., Bend, OR 97701
- Online: September 10-24, 2025 at bendoregon.gov/aune

The project team has proposed designs to improve safety and increase connectivity along several streets and intersections from the Aune Street undercrossing at the Bend Parkway, to and along Third Street.

These road design improvements aim to make driving safer, walking and biking more comfortable, and strengthen connections between the Old Mill District and East Bend. Join us in-person, or online to provide public input and help shape the designs.

This project is funded through the 2020 Transportation GO Bond, Capital Improvement Program funding, and a grant through ARTS (All Roads Transportation Safety).

◆ The Bend Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMPO) Policy Board will consider adoption of the draft BMPO Title VI Plan (2025 update) at their regularly scheduled meeting, on October 17, 2025, at 12pm. This is a federally required document outlining how the agency ensures fair treatment and prevents discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. Public comments can be submitted via email for the next three weeks to kkennedy@bendoregon.gov, or during public comment at the hybrid (in-person/online) BMPO Policy Board meeting.

In-person meeting information, including a Zoom link to attend online, will be posted to the BMPO Policy Board webpage one week prior to the meeting date.

Sign up to have notifications sent directly to your inbox through the Subscribe page. From the News list, select "Bend MPO."

◆ Starting September 2025, the City of Bend will implement changes to the City Council meeting schedule. The change will result in more frequent but shorter meetings and separates the Council Work Session meetings from the Business meetings. Additionally, separating the Work Sessions and Business Meetings honors their distinct purposes and provides dedicated time and appropriate settings for each.

The changes are captured below and include updates to both the City Council Business Meetings and Work Sessions:

Business Meetings occur every first and third Wednesday, unless otherwise noted.

- Where: City of Bend Council Chambers, City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street.
  - Start time: 6pm.
- Agenda: Posted on City Council Meetings, Agendas, and Videos | City of Bend a week prior to the meeting.
- How to join: Attend in person or virtually. Virtual participation information is found on the meeting agenda.
- Visitor's Section: Occurs at the beginning of each business meeting, instructions can be found on City Council Meetings, Agendas, and Videos
- Executive Session: When scheduled, executive sessions will occur prior to the start of the business meeting. This will be noted on the City of Bend Calendar, "Upcoming Council Meetings" and on the meeting's agenda.

Work Sessions occur every second and fourth Wednesday, unless otherwise noted.

- Where: City of Bend Council Chambers, City Hall, 710 NW Wall Street.
  - Time: 4-6pm
- Agenda: Posted on City Council Meetings, Agendas, and Videos | City of Bend a week prior to the meeting.
- How to join: Attend in person or virtually. Virtual participation information is found on the meeting agenda.
- There is no Visitor's Section or opportunity for public comment during the Work Session.





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# Handling Risk After the Project

by BRI SOUDER, CRIS CLCS, Certificate Compliance Client Manager — Marsh McLennan Agency

he final day of your project is here, and now you can celebrate and look forward to other projects on your list. Of course, the construction industry is not always that simple. While you and your team have completed the project, that doesn't mean the risk associated with your work is gone. Sometimes, losses happen after a project finishes. If these incidents relate to your work, your business could face astronomical claims costs.



As the new year approaches, your business should understand two project contract items that can mean the difference between being protected after a project is done or risking financial and reputational damage for future losses. Completed operations and contractual privity are not new terms in the industry. However, many incidents and court cases show construction businesses have room to learn more about these concepts and how they can impact their bottom line.

### **Completed Operations**

Completed operations is a broad insurance policy term that relates to the tasks performed by the policyholder or on the policyholder's behalf. Regarding construction work, this term includes bodily injury or property damage that occurs after a project is finished. This contract term aims to place proper responsibility on the groups that work on a construction project, whether it's the project owner, the general contractor or the subcontractor.

Subcontractors need to think beyond the coverage they carry during the project. There's always a chance that the work done during a project can lead to a loss even after the project finishes. Imagine that the owners of a commercial building are installing a new roof. The owners hire a general contractor who then hires a subcontractor to help with the installation. The SC focuses on installing the roof tiles. Sometime after the completion of the project, the roof began to leak, causing damage to the property's interior. A later investigation found that the main culprit of the leak was faulty roof tiling installation.

If the subcontractor had a general liability policy, they typically would also have ongoing and completed operations coverage and be covered against litigation. However, the policy coverages that respond to injuries or damages after a project is complete differ from the policy terms that respond to losses in the middle of the project. To avoid paying out of pocket for claims or litigation, subcontractors must understand which policy or coverage under a policy — ongoing or completed operations — applies when a loss occurs. The roofing subcontractor must notify their agent and carrier and review the policy in place when the injury or damage happens. That will be the completed operations coverage that will most likely apply.

### **Contractual Privity**

The name of the game in construction coverages is to make sure that the general contractor is insured for their portion of the project or for whatever else they agreed to in their contract. Project owners and general contractors can transfer their exposures on the project downstream to subcontractors through contractual risk transfer. Contractual privity is one risk transfer mechanism that aims to establish who is a part of a construction contract.

Subcontractors should be fully aware of their responsibilities in a project contract. They should also understand who is included on their blanket additional insured endorsements. One trend to note is that "blanket" coverages are not as expansive as they used to be. Some blanket coverages still cover a broad space of parties, but others can be narrower. The key is to bring in a construction contract professional to help tell the difference between a broad blanket and a smaller one. As a subcontractor, adding the project owner to the policy is essential. Blanket coverages can include everyone you have a direct contract with or only the entity that the contract is directly with, depending on the policyholder's needs.

For example, while the project owner has a direct contract with the general contractor they brought on, that doesn't mean the project owner is directly in a contract with the subcontractors that the general contractor hired. As a result, there is no contractual privity between the owner and the subcontractors. Many blanket additional insured endorsements are only triggered if there is contractual privity. If your policy lacks this risk transfer tool, there is a chance that there is no coverage for all the parties that must be additionally insured, as your contract requires. You can also face the risks of a breach of contract or indemnity payments that will need to come out of your pocket.

The leaky roof scenario is an example of contractual privity. The general contractor lists the owner and the subcontractor as additional insureds on their blanket endorsement. However, the subcontractor only adds the general contractor as an additional insured on their policy.

Remember, blanket additional insured coverages don't cover every upstream party in a contract. If required under the general contractor agreement, the subcontractor needs to also add the owner to their additional insured endorsement. Since the subcontractor for the roof failed to add the owner to their policy as an additional insured, they may have to pay the loss from their balance sheet.

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# Continued from page 1



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retention, reducing annual turnover from 22 percent down to four percent. A key take-away from Swafford's presentation was the impact of both state regulations and federal funding. New state regulations that require a maximum of four patients per nurse have increased costs by \$21 million, and federal funding reductions of both Medicare and Medicaid, which represent 77 percent of St. Charles' revenue, will undoubtedly have a serious impact.

These topics and more were discussed, including a brief economic update from two local economists, Josh Lerner of SGH Macro, and Damon Runberg of Business Oregon. Some of their observations included the following:

Tariffs recently went to 18 percent from the previous 2.5 percent. As Buettner mentioned during the panel, they feel that the impact has been muted thus far but that it will be coming. "The immediate impact is indecision by organizations on big projects," he said.

On the labor front, both the State of Oregon and Central Oregon are starting to align more closely with the national averages. Both are seeing unemployment rates increase and unemployed taking longer to find employment. Don mentioned a current trend of "job hugging" or employees clinging to their jobs, that both economists have noticed. Most economists agree that the Federal Reserve will lower interest rates by 1/4% later this month when they meet.

These meetings provide professionals a chance to learn more about the industries around them, the impacts of national factors, and a great chance to connect and network. According to a statement from COEC, "Our mission is to offer high-quality, low-cost programs that address the real needs of employers in our region. Each year, we host four events, including our annual Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) seminar in November and three additional programs on timely topics such as leadership, employee engagement, compensation, and executive hot topics. These programs are designed to equip employers with practical knowledge while creating opportunities to connect with peers and share insights. Our role in the community is to be both a resource and a facilitator. By bringing employers together, we help businesses stay informed, navigate workforce challenges, and build stronger relationships that benefit the entire region. Events like ours are important because they not only deliver valuable learning but also foster collaboration and support a thriving economy here in Central Oregon."

centraloregonemployerscouncil.org



# Building Our Future Together

## The Importance of Public-Private Partnerships in Central Oregon

### by CHRIS C PIPER, Area Manager — BBSI Central Oregon

he idea of public-private partnerships has been on my mind lately, sparked by recent events, board meetings and conversations with leaders from both the private and public sectors. It's clear that these collaborations are vital for our region's economic vitality and growth, and I felt compelled to explore why they are so crucial for Central Oregon's business community. I hope this article provides valuable context and perhaps inspires you to share your own insights.

In an era of fiscal constraints and evolving economic landscapes, public-private partnerships (PPPs) have become an essential tool for economic development. For a region like Central Oregon, with its unique mix of rural and urban communities, abundant natural resources and a growing tech sector, these collaborations aren't just beneficial — they're essential. By combining the public sector's stability, long-term vision and ability to provide incentives with the private sector's innovation, capital and efficiency, PPPs can unlock growth and create a more resilient and diversified economy.

At their core, public-private partnerships are formal agreements between a government agency and a private company to finance, build, or operate public infrastructure projects or services. Unlike traditional projects funded solely by taxpayers, PPPs use private investment to complete large-scale initiatives that might otherwise be impossible or significantly delayed. This creates a win-win situation: the public receives new or improved infrastructure and services without a significant upfront financial burden, while the private partner secures a contract with a reliable revenue stream.

The key to a successful PPP lies in the synergy of each partner's strengths. The private sector brings expertise in project management, cutting-edge technology and a focus on efficiency, often completing projects faster and at a higher quality. The public sector, meanwhile, provides the necessary regulatory framework, land and public support, ensuring projects align with community priorities and longterm strategic plans.

Central Oregon's diverse economy — spanning from agriculture and timber to tourism and advanced manufacturing — requires a tailored approach to development. Public-private partnerships are uniquely suited to address these varied needs. For instance, our rapid population growth has strained existing infrastructure, from roads and bridges to water and broadband access. PPPs can be instrumental in closing these gaps. A private utility company, for example, could partner with a local government to expand high-speed internet to underserved rural areas, sharing the financial risk and accelerating the project. This, in turn, boosts local businesses, attracts remote workers and enhances the overall quality of life.

The collaborative spirit of Central Oregon is already evident in the work of key organizations. Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) is a prime example of a successful public-private collaboration, working to diversify the local economy and create high-paying trade sector jobs. Similarly, our local Chambers of Commerce in cities like Bend, Redmond, Prineville, Madras and Sisters act as vital conduits, connecting businesses with each other and with local government initiatives. The Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council (COIC) and various city economic development departments also play a crucial role, providing a regional perspective and coordinating efforts across jurisdictional lines. These local efforts are often amplified by state-level partners like Business Oregon, which offers grants and technical assistance. These partnerships signal to potential investors that Central Oregon is a place where public and private sectors work together to foster a pro-business environment.

PPPs can extend beyond infrastructure to address critical social issues as well. Collaborations between local governments, nonprofits and businesses can tackle challenges like homeless ness and affordable housing. For example, the continuationof partnerships that involve a private developer converting vacant properties into supportive housing with public funding and philanthropic support a model that has proven successful in Bend and now expanding throughout the Central Oregon region.

While the benefits are clear, it's important to acknowledge the complexities of public-private partnerships. They require careful planning, clear communication and a robust legal framework to ensure transparency and accountability. The private sector's profit motive must be balanced with the public's interest. Risks, such as cost overruns and project delays, must be fairly allocated, and contracts need to be meticulously negotiated to protect taxpayer interests.

Despite these challenges, the outlook for improving PPPs in Central Oregon is promising. As the region continues to grow, these partnerships will be the engine that drives economic diversification, infrastructure modernization and community development. By embracing collaboration, Central Oregon's business community and its public leaders can build a more vibrant, resilient and prosperous future for all.

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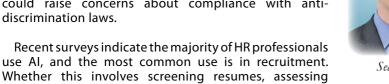
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# Navigating Legal Risks of AI in Your Workplace

#### by SEAN RAY, Attorney & AVERY TUNSTILL, Law Clerk — Barran Liebman LLP

s artificial intelligence (AI) tools become increasingly common in the workplace, employers should consider the legal risks of AI use. While AI offers efficiency and convenience, its use in employment decision-making — particularly hiring and firing — could raise concerns about compliance with anti-discrimination laws.





Sean Ray

interview performance, or recommending candidates, the adoption of AI in these contexts must be approached with caution.

### Al's "Black Box" Problem

One of the most critical limitations of AI is its inability to explain its decision-making processes. Many AI tools operate as "black box" systems where users can see what they input and what AI produces, but the user does not know how the AI system arrived at its conclusions. Unlike human decision-makers, AI cannot articulate its rationale.

Al's lack of transparency creates significant legal challenges when employers need to justify employment decisions. In the event of litigation, employers will find it difficult or impossible to defend a decision made by an Al system. Simply pointing to an algorithm is not a viable legal defense; employers must be able to article legitimate, non-discriminatory rationale supporting employment decisions.

### The Illusion of Neutrality

A common misconception is that AI, by virtue of being machine-driven, is objective. However, AI systems are trained on human-created data and inevitably reflect the biases embedded within that data. This is especially problematic with closed AI models, which are trained on limited datasets curated by a small group of individuals.

For example, consider a closed AI system used to identify ideal candidates for an electrician position. If the training data consists primarily of resumes



Avery Tunctill

from previously hired electricians — most of whom are men — the system may begin to associate men as the ideal candidates and recommend men as applicants.

Even open AI models, which are trained on broader, publicly available data, are not immune to bias. As men represent a disproportionate percentage of electricians historically in the general workforce, AI programs may still generate biased outcomes that favor men.

In both cases, the use of AI may perpetuate existing disparities rather than eliminating them. This creates legal risk under Title VII and similar state anti-discrimination laws if an employer's use of an AI algorithm in hiring results in a gender bias.

#### **Bias at Scale**

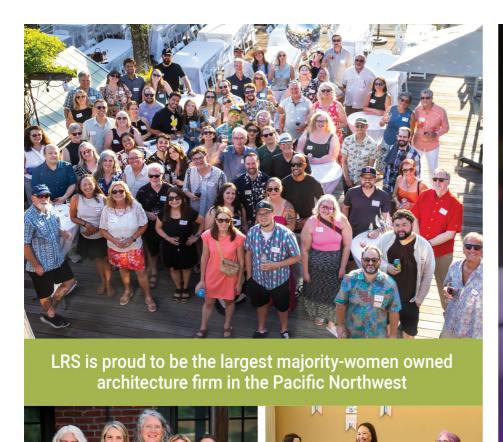
Al has the capacity to process information at a scale far beyond human capabilities. This is a double-edged sword; while it enables faster decision-making, it also amplifies any existing bias. A human might apply flawed reasoning to a handful of candidates, whereas an Al tool can apply flawed reasoning to thousands of applicants.

Additionally, Al systems are often designed to optimize results based on user preferences or past outcomes. This can create a form of confirmation bias — Al essentially becomes a "yes machine," seeking to give the user the desired result without engaging in any risk-assessment.

### **Risks in the Hiring Process**

Al is already widely used in hiring, often without full awareness of the extent of its role. Common platforms use Al to filter resumes and rank candidates. Some employers also rely on Al-powered video interview tools that evaluate tone, facial expressions, and word choice to assess a candidate's potential fit.

Continued on Page 10 ►



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# A New Chapter, An Established Legacy

## How a Young Family is Breathing New Life into a Central Oregon Business

### provided by INDUSTRIAL APPLIED ELECTRIC

n a world where small businesses are increasingly being swallowed by institutional investors and private equity firms, the story of Industrial Applied Electric is a powerful reminder of what makes Central Oregon unique. It's a story of a young family choosing risk over stability to carry on a local legacy — a tale of courage and commitment to community.

For over four decades, Industrial Applied Electric has been a lifeline for the region's essential industries, from logging to construction. When a critical piece of machinery breaks down, they are the ones with the hard-to-find part and the expert knowledge to get it running again. Their mission is clear: to be a trusted, community-focused procurement partner with the



(L-R) DAN DRAKE AND THE ORIGINAL OWNER/FOUNDER
HUSTON WALTER

best service, availability and delivery to enable those building and maintaining Central Oregon to maximize uptime, efficiency and profitability.

Enter Dan Drake, a CPA in his midthirties. He and his wife were drawn to Bend years ago, captivated by its community and landscape. With a three-year-old and a one-year-old at home, Dan felt the call for a different kind of life — one built on purpose, not just a paycheck. He was seeking a business with soul, and he found it in Industrial Applied Electric. After a months-long negotiation, the Drakes successfully purchased the business for over \$2 million, rewarding founder Huston Walter and his family for building a lasting legacy.

Rather than seeing a small company, Dan saw a legacy worth preserving. He saw the company's long-tenured employees, the deep trust of its customers and the critical role it plays in the community. It was a leap of faith to leave the security of his career and commit to this purchase with no outside investment, not even from family. This bold move was a powerful statement of their belief in Central Oregon.

Now, as the new owner, Dan is committed to honoring the past while building the future. He's not here to strip the business for parts; he's here to modernize it, with plans to digitize operations and expand services. His goal is to double sales in the next five years, and the results are already clear: the company has achieved over 30 percent year-over-year growth, doubled its local employment from three to



(L-R) JACK HODSON (WAREHOUSE ASSISTANT), DAN DRAKE (OWNER), BILL WARRICK (SALES MANAGER), GREG PERKINS (WAREHOUSE MANAGER) AND JUSTIN SCHROEDER (OPERATIONS MANAGER) | PHOTOS COURTESY OF INDUSTRIAL APPLIED ELECTRIC

six, and raised wages on top of that. This isn't just a business plan; it's a promise to create an employer of choice in the region, with strong values and a culture where giving back is ingrained.

In a time when it's easy to feel like the soul of small business is fading, the story of Industrial Applied Electric is a bright light. It's proof that with belief, courage and a deep love for community, a family can do more than just buy a business — they can become a part of its enduring legacy. The Drake family has poured everything into this new chapter, and they believe that with the continued support of the Central Oregon community, this local service and legacy will thrive for generations to come.

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# **Business & Industry**



### **Plan Ahead for Challenges**

At this point in the year, your business has completed many projects. However, you should keep tabs on them as you enter the new year because most contracts place requirements on your work for many years after the project is complete.

Becoming aware of various states' statutes of repose is one vital step. Statutes of repose refer to the qualifying period for filing a claim for construction defects. Every state has its own time frame, so learning about those relevant to your business is essential. Having a construction-focused partner to help understand these statutes goes a long way in protecting your business. They will ensure you ask insurance carriers the right questions about completed operations and contractual privity.

Another important consideration is ensuring that you have the proper construction insurance policies. Work with a construction-savvy partner to help you navigate the ins and outs of contractual terms like completed operations and contractual privity. A partner specializing in construction helps save you and your business from financial and reputational damage. As you plan for next year and beyond, it's important to be proactive. With insurance coverage, it's critical that you protect yourself, your team and your business from risks, regardless of when they happen.

Bri Souder, CRIS CLCS, is a certificate compliance client manager at Marsh McLennan Agency. Souder works in the construction specialty practice and is responsible for reviewing owner contracts and subcontracts for insurance requirements and matching those requirements to the certificates and endorsements provided by subcontractors. Bri works with general contractors, subcontractors and insurance companies across the country to educate and assist with proper risk transfer.

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## egal Risks of Al

Continued from page 8

These practices raise several legal concerns. Research shows that some Al systems struggle to interpret the facial expressions of Black candidates accurately, potentially resulting in discriminatory outcomes. Additionally, applicants with disabilities — such as autism — may engage differently in interviews, and Al may incorrectly interpret these differences as poor interview performance.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has cautioned against such technologies, noting that they may create unlawful disparate impacts. Employers must also consider implications under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and similar laws, especially when using tools that may penalize candidates for behavior unrelated to job performance.

### **Employee Use of AI and Confidentiality Risks**

Beyond the HR application, AI is becoming a common tool for general workplace tasks, from content creation to research. Surveys indicate that half of employees use AI tools at work. Despite widespread use, many employers have no policy regarding AI use.

Employers are encouraged to develop policies regulating employee use of AI, including clear guidance on what data can and cannot be shared with AI platforms. One significant area of concern is confidentiality and protection of intellectual property. If employees upload sensitive or proprietary information

into open AI platforms, that data may no longer be confidential or protected.

#### **Risk Assessment**

While there are clear risks associated with AI in hiring and employment, not all uses carry the same level of legal exposure. High-risk uses include allowing AI to analyze or score interview performance and delegating hiring decisions directly to AI. Lower-risk applications include summarizing applicant materials, automating interview scheduling, and generating drafts of emails.

Employers can mitigate risk with AI tools by ensuring human oversight in employment-related decision making, documenting rationale behind all employment decisions, and establishing internal policies governing AI use.

Employers that proactively assess and manage Al-related risks will be best positioned to harness the benefits of this evolving technology while avoiding costly legal pitfalls. When in doubt, consult experienced employment counsel before implementing or expanding your use of HR-related Al tools.

Sean Ray is an attorney at Barran Liebman LLP, where he represents employers on a wide range of employment issues. Contact him at 503-276-2135 or sray@barran.com.

Avery Tunstill is a law clerk at Barran Liebman LLP, where she partners with attorneys in client trainings, legal research, and the drafting of employment policies and handbooks.

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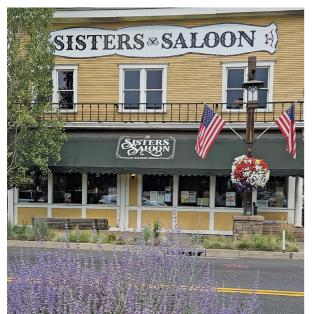


# **Tourism Comprises** 'More Than Half of Sisters' Economic Base'

by ANDREA HINE — CBN Feature Writer

ore than half of our town's economic base is tourism, with 2024 spending estimated at more than \$50 million," said Scott Humpert, executive director of Explore Sisters, which is tasked with sustaining Sisters' quality of livability by attracting visitors "who value the smalltown atmosphere and surrounding nature that local citizens prize." As he's fond of saying, "it's not the quantity, but the quality of tourists that counts."

Counting primarily on the June — September summer season to help fill the city's coffers, but also desirous of attracting visitors during the rest of the year, Humpert explained that Sisters has become "more of a weekend destination, with the average visit lasting two-and-a-half to three days."



THE TOWN'S EARLY HISTORY, TRANSITIONED INTO A RESTAURANT IN

As a rule of thumb, he added, "overnight visitors have three times the economic impact of day trippers, or those passing through, filling up on gas, and getting an ice cream cone. The former category spends about \$300 per person on lodging and dining, with an affinity for hiking, fishing, and mountain biking that goes beyond the necessities, as purchasing guided experiences."

A self-admitted "cone licker" when visiting

Sisters as a child with his family, Humpert previously served in a capacity similar to his current position for ten plus years in Lincoln City. "The product we have makes it easy to promote Sisters," he said. "It's not a hard sell due to its small-town feel, cohesiveness, accessibility to recreational options, and great people. From the start, I found the community to be very welcoming."

He also emphasized that "much of what Explore Sisters does is based on partnerships with local and regional groups, as opposed to operating independently — there is a lot of overlap in our promotional efforts."

Tracing the evolution of the town's western theme, Humpert said that it began to emerge in the 1970s, spurred by the developers of Black Butte Ranch who decided they needed a place for prospective residents and guests of the nascent resort a place to



TOWN'S HERITAGE AND HISTORY, AS SHOWN BY THIS EARLY PHOTO OF MAIN STREET I PHOTO COURTESY

OF THE THREE SISTERS HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM)

shop and dine, and believed that a unique identity would help attract visitors.

As he detailed: "Slowly but surely, the downtown core started to transform with a consistent look and feel — built brick by brick over time (and ensured through various local ordinances). This aesthetic was not an artificial construct, but one that hearkens back to the town's heritage and history an example being the Sisters Rodeo, now in its 85th year."

"Sisters has grown thoughtfully," Humpert said, "and care has been taken in the planning of the community, which regularly tops the list of 'great small towns in Oregon' (like Jacksonville and Hood River). Yet in wanting to maintain our livability and sustainability, sometimes we tend to forget that the amenities we residents enjoy wouldn't be what they are without tourism."



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# sisters Plans for Growth Continued from page 1

If approved by the Council, the proposed boundary will be part of a formal land use process to adopt the overall expansion — one that will have to be approved by the City Council and the Deschutes County Board of Commissioners, followed by submission to the State of Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development for its acknowledgement. "This final approval of the UGB Amendment could possibly occur by early 2026," Woodford said.

Accommodating Sisters' projected future growth — approximately double the current population within the next 20 years, according to Portland State University's Population Research Center — "is what drives the need for this UGB expansion and makes the work we do all the more important," Woodford emphasized.

He predicted "ebbs and flows in the population over the next two decades, kind of a zigzag, And if population growth exceeds estimates, we'll adjust our land needs over time. It may also be less than predicted, in which case the expansion land will remain undeveloped. It's like trying to create a perfect crystal ball, knowing that many factors are beyond our control."

Woodford explained that while the gross acreage of the recommended UGB boundary totals 314 acres overall, the net acreage — or the amount that can be developed after subtracting environmentally sensitive areas, streets, and open space — is 202 acres. "We need to make sure there is sufficient land to meet our identified future needs for housing, employment opportunities - including retail and light industrial - and parks and schools over the next twenty years." (A sidenote: no short-term rentals will be allowed in any part of the UGB expansion area.)

Woodford described City Council as "having been extremely engaged and supportive, while prioritizing outreach and education to the community" to ensure what he terms "a transparent, open process" — in fact, going further than what is typically involved.

"We knew this would be a long process going in," he said, "and we are taking it a step at a time. Both our City Council and most of the community understand the need for planning for the future to help ensure that Sisters continues to be a thriving community — balancing growing a little bit up and a little bit out without compromising our existing character."

#### **Affordable Housing**

Inextricably intertwined with UGB efforts is the continuing need for affordable housing in Sisters, where the median single-family home price has reached \$815K (as of the August 2025 Beacon Report) — compared to \$750k in Bend, and \$506k in Redmond — while average household income is currently pegged at \$117,000.

"There is no doubt a discrepancy between income and housing costs in Sisters," Woodford said, "providing another reason to expand the town's boundaries, as it represents an opportunity to provide more housing choices, and opportunities for our workforce to live and work in the area. It's one of the City Council's highest priorities."

One tool the Council is considering is a requirement that a certain percentage of units built by development in the UGB meet affordable housing goals. Realizing



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SISTERS HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HAS NOW BUILT 83 AFFORDABLE HOMES IN THE TOWN, AS MARKED BY TWO RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONIES ON SEPTEMBER 5 | PHOTO BY ANDREA HINE

that leveraging resources are critical to the creation of affordable housing, the City is also exploring other funding sources.

### City of Sisters Affordable Housing Projects

According to Woodford, the City of Sisters is continuing to help support the construction of several affordable housing projects for 2025 — "reflecting its commitment to addressing housing needs and ensuring affordable housing options for all residents."

For example, the City contributed \$500,000 in ARPA funds to assist Trinity Place, a 40-unit rental apartment project being developed by Northwest Housing Alternatives that is targeting households making 50-80% of the area median income. "NHA is close to securing its building permit," said Woodford, "and hope is to break ground this fall."

#### **Habitat for Humanity**

As announced at the end of August by Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS), more than \$10 million is coming to RootedHomes and Habitat for Humanity affordable housing projects in Sisters and Redmond. In Sisters, \$4.75 million was awarded to Sisters Habitat for Humanity for Larch Street Commons and \$1.45 million for Sisters Woodlands. Two ribbon-cutting ceremonies on September 5 marked the 82nd and 83rd affordable homes that the nonprofit has built in the town.

### **Sisters Woodlands & Village Meadows**

Construction is underway on four homes in the Sisters Woodlands partnership that will eventually consists of 10 cottage lots integrated throughout the development, rather than clustered together as is generally the case. Habitat's second project — Village Meadows — has three homes under construction.

### **Larch Street Commons**

Larch Street Commons, located on two development sites near the intersection of Adams and Larch, is currently in the building stage. It involves building 27 affordable and workforce cottages and townhomes over the next three years.

The \$10 million project will be funded by various state and local grants, including a City of Sisters Urban Renewal Agency Workforce Grant of \$400,000, and a City of Sisters Affordable Housing Grant of \$182,000.

The fact that the homes - from 900 to 1,300 square feet in size — are on very small lots "helped make it feasible from a financial standpoint to build," said Habitat's Executive Director Peter Hoover. (The City of Sisters Cottage Overlay Zone along Adams Avenue allowed for the housing types featured in the development.)

### Housing Works

The August 27 Sisters City Council workshop included a presentation by Executive Director Lynne McConnell on Housing Works, a quasi-governmental regional housing authority that serves Deschutes, Jefferson, and Crook Counties and is the largest provider of housing in the region. She said that since 2015, the organization has graduated 79 people from its housing voucher programs into home ownership, including 12 homes in Sisters.

Housing Works rentals and homes in the town include Ponderosa Heights (located in northwest Sisters); Tamarack Village (North Sisters); and Skygate (northeast Sisters).

## **Building Up and Out**

"It will take all of us as a community, along with a variety of policies and programs, to address the housing and growth issues we face in Sisters," Woodford said, "and to decide whether to grow by building either up or out. The Council has decided to pursue both options — modestly expanding the UGB, at the same time encouraging and allowing more infill within the existing boundary with higher density allowances for multifamily and reducing the minimum lot sizes for single family and middle housing units, among other things — all the while continuing to prioritize affordable housing. This will result in more opportunities to accommodate new growth, while maintaining our town's unique character."



# Welcome to Sisters, Oregon

by ANDREW LOSCUTOFF, Personal Trainer — Sisters Athletic Club

entral Oregon, an oasis on the east side of the Cascade Mountain Range, offers a climate and environment atypical of the more populated western side of the state. People have discovered the areas and lore as a natural playground; flocking to the area to experience the work, life and play balance often elusive in the cityscape suburbs.



One such town, Sisters, has lifted itself as a destination circled on the map for fishers, golfers, hikers, bikers and more. Historically, Sisters was built on the logging industry's

booming business generations ago. Some time ago, the logging industry moved to greener pastures, and the town was left with a choice, adapt or become a dystopia of industry come and gone.

Sisters turned up the dials on tourism, hospitality and recreation... Sisters is now thriving. A main connection is U.S. Hwy. 20, a pipeline over the Santiam Pass from the central Willamette Valley's population centers and captures the eye of many as weekenders flock in troves. It's a steady flow of traffic and proximity that gave Sisters an edge for developing into the destination it is today.

The topography of Sisters lends a rare opportunity for everyone. Mountain lakes, bike trails, wilderness hiking, ski resorts, fly fishing, golfing and more. Hoodoo, a small ski resort offers a laid-back and family-friendly experience one might remember from yesteryear before corporate takeovers of Oregon's beloved resorts. Fly fishers rush to the Metolius River and stop for lunch at the Historical Camper Sherman store for a handmade sandwich and cold drink. Golfers tee off at Black Butte Ranch, a golfer's paradise among the ponderosa pines and snow-capped peaks.

Bikers flock to Sisters as a one-stop shop for a variety of rides. Casey Meudt, owner of the local bike shop Blazin Saddles, makes the proclamation that "within a one-hour drive of Sisters, there are more world-class cycling opportunities than anywhere else." This includes backcountry old-growth fir trails in the McKenzie region, gravel riding in the Metolius River basin and road riding up the McKenzie Pass. McKenzie Pass, a historic twisting mountain pass of old, offers bikers a dreamscape. Enjoy scenes of mountain peaks, lava fields from Oregon's fiery past, and descend into the temperate old growth on the West side for a day of two-wheeled thrills. Mountain bikers are rewarded with meandering lines up the Peterson Ridge area in close proximity to town. Start and end in town, where a cold beverage and tasty lunch await in the various food purveyors in the heart of town

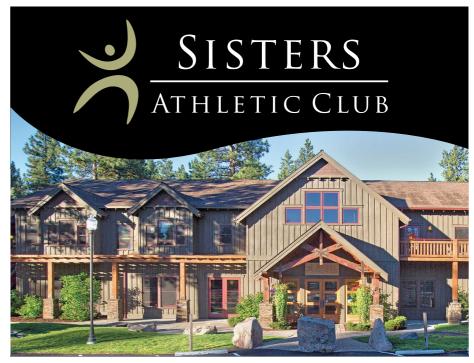
Sisters is a small community, and within, they've found their niche in offerings for entertainment. A world-renowned quilt show lines the streets in July. Bulls buck and cowboys battle in June. A folk festival hosts thousands turning every available outdoor area into a music stage later in autumn. There's farmers markets, craft fairs and brew festivals all summer long. Thriving food carts, local music venues and coffee shops abound.

Overall, Sisters community is about activities in the outdoors. The local adventures have a gentle energy, they like a slow morning with coffee before the day's adventures, they like to socialize with the visitors at the local tap hub. Yoga classes, spin class and local gyms are bustling with activity. It's a vibrant community about balance of wellness, adventure and living the good life.

Sisters has something for everyone.

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## Sisters Spotlight



suites for various healthcare and high-tech applications," he said. The expansion is expected to create about 25-30 living-wage jobs.

"Although the loss of Metabolic Maintenance (which produces high-quality nutritional supplements) after its acquisition by a Florida-based firm was a real bummer, the expansion of BASX will create the same number of jobs that were lost. Had we not found space for BASX, the company would have expanded elsewhere — we kept them in the region," Strobel said.

"GFP (a major employer with 27 full-time employees in Sisters that provides base camp assets and resources) is expanding its space from a 10,500-square-foot office/warehouse building to 43,000 square feet by acquiring two buildings previously owned by Metabolic Maintenance and Three Creeks Brewing, whose shutting down reflects how the craft beer industry has become so difficult due to increased costs, slowing consumer demand and intensifying market pressures."

Calling GFP "a great company," Strobel explained that it couldn't find anything within the city limits, and was going to move out of the region before this space came online.

Strobel continued: "Personalized Nutrients moved into [a] new 16,000-square-foot production and office building in April. We had a heck of a time leasing Laird's space, which had been built to the company's specific production requirements," Strobel admitted, "and it stood empty for a while."

Other examples include the Third Garage project, which offers leasable space in two buildings, for about 12,000 square feet total, with off-street parking for 32 cars. "The anticipated leased space ranges from 900 square feet up to bays of 1,326 to 7,376 square feet," he said. The ClearPine Building also has leasable space available, that would be "perfect for a headquarters or technology company."

That's not all in terms of movement with stores and businesses that is keeping Strobel occupied. "In terms of consolidation, GFP — in moving its

main operation to Sisters — is bringing a lot of equipment from other facilities, and Cascade Spirits is leasing the former Laird warehouse and constructing a new tasting room downtown."

He cited other examples:

- Two new eateries The McArthur and Three Finger Jack Tavern opened in July.
- The French-themed Famille opened in the space formerly occupied by Chops; it was created by the owners of Ski Inn Taphouse and Hotel.
- The Hub, which is designed to serve as "the center of civic life in Sisters Country," leased space at 291 Main Avenue to nonprofits C4C (Citizens4Community) and Explore Sisters.
- After 20 years of operation, The Sisters Athletic Club which consists of a 24,000-square-foot building on 1.5 acres of land — is for sale for \$7.1 million. As Strobel noted, "That's a lot of space."

In representing EDCO and providing resources and connections to companies at all stages of their development to help them thrive, Strobel has clearly found his niche. "I love the job, and I love the people, including my EDCO team and the really collaborative Sisters community. We're all working toward the same things."

David Moore, president of the Sisters Business Association, agreed. "Our business community is also a stakeholder in attracting people to the downtown corridor, and we are working to strengthen local resilience. Naturally, we all compete, but there is room for collaboration as well. A telling example comes from two local restaurants — both association members — that initially scheduled separate bingo games that competed on the same night. Instead of splitting the crowd, they decided to join forces to alternate the venue each week. Customers loved it."

EDCO will be hosting its first-ever Sisters Country Economic Development Mixer on September 18, 4-6pm, at The Hub. For more information, contact Strobel at 541-410-8630.

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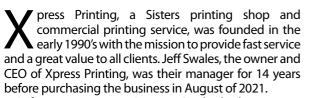


# **Xpress Printing**

Three Decades of Quality Service

by NOAH NELSON — CBN Feature Writer





Before joining Xpress Printing, Swales had a career in the print industry beginning with Lazerquick in Portland, moving up from customer service at the U.S. Bancorp Tower to managing a location in the Salem/Keizer area, and finally senior management. On the side, he owned a number of franchises in the Seattle area.

A lesson learned from his time in business is to always differentiate yourself by your merit. At Xpress Printing, this looks like being extremely responsive, detail oriented and hyper-focused on providing the best value possible.

"In 2002, I lost those franchises in the Seattle area as our business died out in the several months following 9/11," Swales said. "We tried too hard to always be the



the end. I learned along the way that it is much better to differentiate yourself from your competition by providing a high level of service."

Swales and Xpress Printing strive to be more than a typical "print shop" by partnering with their customers to access, advise and execute their print and marketing strategies. This level of expertise provides more value to their clients, and helps them guarantee the quality of their work.

Aside from setting themselves apart with their service and expertise, Swales made sure to modernize his practice as time and technological advancement allowed. In addition, his drive to diversify their offerings has helped the business remain successful.

"We have successfully transitioned the business from traditional offset printing to an all-digital print environment over the past decade and a half," Swales said. "During this time, we have also built a lot of our business around mailing services. We are able to provide our customers with a number of print/mail solutions, led



PHOTOS | COURTESY OF XPRESS PRINTING

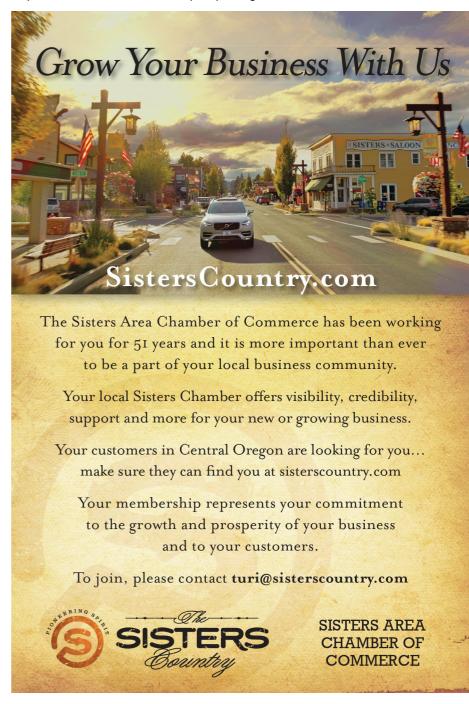
by our VP of Marketing and Mailing Services Bart Platner."

"Bart was previously the owner of Blue Sky Mailing in Redmond and has brought a wealth of knowledge to our clients here at XPress," Swales continued. "He is especially good at working with nonprofits to provide them with options that can help to facilitate a successful direct mail fund raising campaign. We also have very experienced customer service and production teams that we feel include some of the best people in the industry. This includes six staff members with 15 or more years of industry experience."

Speaking on the future of Xpress Printing, Swales sees growth on the horizon. "Our goal for the future is to continue to grow by providing printing and mailing solutions to our clients here in Central Oregon and beyond," he said. "As other printing businesses come and go and online printers fail to fill the gap, it is especially important for us to be a provider in the printing and mailing industry that local organizations can rely on."

xpressprinting.biz





# Fire Fails to Flatten Commerce & Community in Sisters

### by T. LEE BROWN

ids holler and laugh, jumping through the fountains in Fir Street Park. Crowds wait in line for pizza and vegan bowls at The Barn. Employees at Angeline's hustle to fill orders for bagels and gluten-free pastries. Half a block away, traffic is tight on the main tourist drag, Cascade Avenue, also known as Highway 20.

Thirteen days after the Flat Fire started, there are few indications that a 23,000 acre wildfire has been burning just two miles from the town of Sisters. Many area residents who were evacuated have returned to their homes. [At the time of writing], the fire is over 81% contained.

A hand-drawn sign thanking firefighters adorns the Sisters Saloon. Two tourists stand at its door; they hadn't heard about the fire before driving south from Bellingham, Washington.

Owner Aaron Okura says the restaurant and bar stayed open for normal business hours throughout the fire and only one employee faced evacuation. The saloon's usual 10% discount for law enforcement and firefighters in uniform was in place, and firefighters were offered some extra treats.

"Things are fine now," he says, "back to normal."

Early on, smoke and fire caused difficulties for many businesses. Though tourists continued to clog up Cascade and saunter across streets in a haze of smoke, some avoided Sisters and many locals stayed home.

Farmers were hit hard, and Sisters Farmers Market was canceled (see related article this issue). The Native Bird Care facility and surrounding habitat acreage burned down.

Fika Sisters coffeehouse experienced a downturn; an employee described it as "naturally slow" given the

smoke. Today, Fika is offering coffee free of charge, encouraging customers to donate to local first responders instead. Participation is enthusiastic.

Macon Luhnig, general manager of Sisters Bakery, reports a steady stream of customers throughout. "As a bakery, the things we produce here are actually good for the community during an intense time," he says. "People are coming in to get some goodies to lift the spirits."

Tourism seems strong in general, he believes. During the earlier, scarier days of the Flat Fire, "we had a lot of firefighters coming through, and we were offering our employee discount of 30% off for them."

"The fire has of course it affected all of our business," says Julie Rickards of The



SISTERS BUSINESSES THANK FIREFIGHTERS WITH SIGNS AROUND TOWN, AND FREE OR DISCOUNTED WARES | PHOTOS BY T. LEE BROWN

Open Door restaurant and Rickards Gallery. "Our biggest concern was many of our employees were evacuated. It was sad. But we didn't close."

She says that diners were grateful and service moved inside from the expansive patio. "It's kind of the new normal; I think we're acclimating to fires now," she explains.

Coming at the end of a good season for this established local favorite, The Open Door isn't too concerned about a dip in business. "We're not worried about the food going bad," she says. "We bring food over to the firehouse and we feed people who are evacuated. We're grateful that the governor released resources so early; it was such a gift."

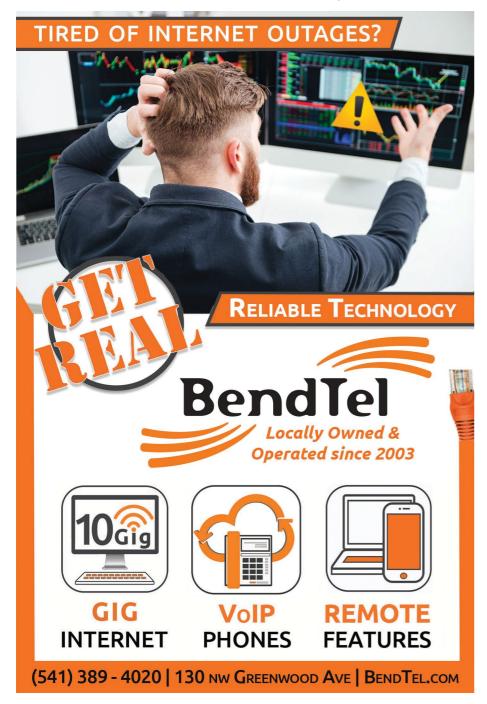
At the Hub, co-working hours are offered on a pay-what-you-can donation basis. One public event presented by The Hub's nonprofit parent organization, Citizens for Community, was canceled due to the fire. The Hub itself stayed open as "a place where evacuees and displaced folks, or just folks just looking for connection, could come work for free," according to C4C executive director Kellen Klein.

So far, most of Sisters and nearby scenic areas have experienced lower AQI levels and fewer days of thick smoke than many summers. In the new normal of frequent wildfires, heavy smoke from farther away rolls into Sisters.

The culprit? Often it's forest fires on the west side of the Cascades, such as 2020's devastating Holiday Farm Fire along the McKenzie River. As dense stands of trees blaze, opaque gray smoke rides on western winds and gets socked in. The Air Quality Index has reached over 750 AQI, literally off the charts.

The Flat Fire, by contrast, is located to the east and north of town. It rushed through grasslands and canyons toward Sisters at first. Now the wind has changed direction many times; in town the AQI usually hovers in the 30–100 range.

From bakery manager Luhnig's point of view, the fire caps a "really good" summer season. "I've seen the town be really busy all over, all summer long," he says, "and that's great."





# New Options Mitigate Smoke, Heat & Fire at Sisters Farmers Market

by T. LEE BROWN

ildfire. Smoke. Heat. How do the farmers, food purveyors and makers who sell at Sisters Farmers Market deal with increasingly difficult conditions? A new grant helps them — and their customers — navigate changing times.

Fires can hammer sales and distribution for local farms. As Rainshadow Organics farmer Sarahlee Lawrence explains, smoke from the Flat Fire affected essential points of sale including farmers markets and restaurants, along with the farm's on-site store. Many roads were closed.

Sisters Farmers Market had to cancel one Sunday. Manager Willa Bauman reports that over a dozen vendors were evacuated, along with board members of Seed to Table, the nonprofit organization that runs the market.

The fire itself loomed very close to Rainshadow. "It was in August, which is our most abundant month, so it was a pretty big hit," Lawrence says. "We still had to pick produce because it was ready; that was its moment. When the fire takes that moment, that's the biggest financial piece for us."

Even when conditions are safe for Sisters Farmers Market to stay open, increasing heat, fire and smoke affect visitor attendance and vendor health. A Climate Resiliency grant from Oregon Farmers Markets Association (OFMA) is helping the market mitigate climate change and raise awareness.

Among other things, the grant funds Special Thanks Days to motivate shoppers when less-than-ideal conditions are expected. Coupon vouchers worth \$5 off at any booth are given to 150 shoppers.

"If it's hot or windy or smoky at farmers markets, turnout can be pretty poor. That can be challenging," explains farmer Lawrence.

Bauman says Special Thanks Days are helping already. Several market days this year, "We saw great attendance from folks who had seen the announcements and enjoyed the vouchers."

Additionally, the outreach effort concerning Special Thanks Days educates people about the importance of supporting farmers and vendors even during tough times, and how climate and fire issues affect local growers and purveyors.

Misting stations around the market cool vendors and shoppers. Ana Daniels owns Snow Creek Farm in Tumalo, a market vendor specializing in flowers. The grant-funded equipment "helps the flowers to keep them fresh and it helps us to keep us cool, too, when it's really hot."

Fir Street Park, the market's location, sits at the doorstep of The Hub community building. Grant funding helps the market expand indoors, where



ANA DANIELS OF SNOW CREEK FARM SELLS FLOWERS AT SISTERS FARMERS MARKET. A MISTING STATION HELPS HER BOUQUETS, CUSTOMERS AND HERSELF THRIVE ON DAYS WITH ADVERSE CONDITIONS | PHOTO BY EMILY GREEN/PROVIDED BY SISTERS FARMERS MARKET

vendors sell temperature-sensitive wares like fresh pasta and cheesecake. The market's free workshops are held indoors as well.

The indoor space attracts customers like Liza Myers, who owns a house in Black Butte Ranch. "I think it's a nice option to have. It provides more room and frankly it's nice to get out of the sun," she says.

Thanks to the OFMA grant, Sisters Farmers Market is serving the community's comfort, safety and small business viability, bringing more income security to farmers, makers, artists and bakers from Sisters and around Central Oregon.

The market runs Sundays, 10am-2pm in Fir Street Park through the end of October, except for September 28 and October 5.

sistersfarmersmarket.com seedtotableoregon.org



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# Sisters Becomes the State's Second International Dark Sky Community

### by GRACE BRIGGS

sisters has been certified as an International Dark Sky Community by DarkSky International. This designation makes it the state's second Community and the sixth International Dark Sky Place. Sisters joins Eastern Lake County (Phase 1 of the proposed Oregon Outback International Dark Sky Sanctuary), Oregon Caves National Monument, the city of Antelope, Cottonwood Canyon State Park, and Prineville Reservoir State Park in this accomplishment.

The designation is the culmination of many years of dark sky advocacy by the Sisters community to help bring awareness of the importance of preserving our nighttime skies for current and future generations to experience its wonder and protect the wildlife that depend on darkness. It is also an opportunity to further education, retrofit poor lighting, ensure responsible lighting practices going forward, and market the tourism benefits the designation brings to a highly tourist dependent community.

"Advocates in Sisters have shown a strong commitment to preserving their dark night skies," stated Amber Harrison, International Dark Sky Places program manager. "Their application underscores the town's dedication to conserving its natural night sky through proactive conservation efforts and community engagement. Students, advocates, and local officials have played key roles in raising awareness and enhancing community lighting, ultimately improving both night sky quality and the overall environment for residents and visitors alike. We congratulate the Sisters team on this significant achievement and are thrilled to welcome another International Dark Sky Place in Oregon."

Nestled in the central part of Oregon, Sisters is a charming, western-style town of 3,475 surrounded by forest and the Cascade Mountains. With endless hiking, alpine lakes, and two nearby ski areas, recreational opportunities abound, all within a three-hour drive of Portland and the Pacific Ocean. The popular recreational mecca of Bend is located approximately 20 miles away.

The Sisters area sits at the transition between geographical wonders, where lush Ponderosa Pine and alpine forests to the west gradually give way to junipers and sagebrush and wide-open spaces of the high desert region to the east. While deer are visible everywhere in Sisters (we have a town herd), the region is home to a diversity of wildlife — from bears and cougars to hummingbirds and butterflies. Fish populations have regional significance in the area due to a native strain of interior Columbia Basin red band trout with little genetic influence from hatchery fish, and the reintroduction of federally listed steelhead salmon.



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The first inhabitants of the area were Paiute, Warm Springs, and Wasco peoples, who stopped in the area during their movement across the broad, local landscape. They fished in Whychus Creek and traveled into the neighboring mountains to gather huckleberries and other native foods.

European settlers came to the area in the late 1860s and soon claimed a newly abandoned camp that would become the future townsite for Sisters. In 1901, the Sisters townsite was platted the town using the names of local mountains and trees.

Around the turn of the century, Sisters was a pioneer town, the hub of a small homesteading community, located at the axis of two well-traveled wagon roads, making it a prime location as a waystation. Operating in relative isolation, Sisters' residents had to be self-reliant and resilient. Within a short period in the early 1920s, two fires destroyed sixteen buildings, causing the town to be rebuilt several times, but it continued to grow.

With Sisters' strategic location as the Gateway to the Cascade Mountains, its early industries included sheepherding, cattle ranching, timber production, and the provision of goods and services for travelers. These industries supported residents until tourism started to take root with the development of the nearby resort of Black Butte Ranch in the 1970s, which coincided with the establishment of the 1880s Western architectural design theme still prevalent in Sisters. Sisters maintained a small population until the 1990s when the voters approved a bond to install city utilities, which set off a period of robust population growth to what we see today.

Starting in 2000 with the introduction of the astronomy program at Sisters High School, the community of Sisters began a steadfast commitment to dark sky preservation. Their efforts have culminated in its designation as an International Dark Sky Community through education, updated ordinances, and community initiatives. The city has implemented widespread educational outreach via newsletters, social media, newspaper articles, and community events. It has updated its Dark Skies Outdoor Lighting Ordinance to meet certification standards, established astronomy education and clubs, and secured commitments from city officials to retrofit non-compliant lighting. Compliance monitoring, data collection, and widespread support from residents, businesses, and leaders, including the mayor, underscore the community's dedication to safeguarding its night skies.

"Being able to gaze at an infinite sea of stars and feel our place in the universe has been an integral part of living in Sisters. The community values caring for and connecting with the natural world and came together to make sure the legacy of our starry skies continues. The DarkSky community certification will ensure that we can continue to feel wonder as we gaze at the Milky Way on a clear night over the mountains, and feel our sense of place and connection." ~Rima Givot, Sisters High School Science Teacher.

"Way to go Sisters! We tried really hard to become the first city in Oregon with the designation, but alas, Antelope became the first Community just weeks ago, so we will take pride in being the second. This is another accomplishment that the Sisters community can proudly enjoy. Fostering our local environment by removing light pollution is something that helps all of humanity and we are excited about the astro-tourism opportunities. What a great accomplishment!

"We all need to thank the people that have been working on this for years before the city and the rest of the community joined the movement, namely, the Sisters Astronomy Club, who created the momentum to see this through." ~Michael Preedin, Mayor or Sisters.

"The city of Sisters has now set a community standard for responsible outdoor lighting in Oregon. It's a standard that benefits residents, visitors, and the surrounding wild environment. This international certification brings recognition to Sisters, known to visitors for culture and arts, and now globally, for environmental protection of dark skies too." ~Bill Kowalik PhD, Chairperson of DarkSky Oregon

With the recent adoption of the city's Dark Skies Outdoor Lighting Ordinance and this designation as an International DarkSky Community, next will be a big push in the community for education — both on the benefits of preserving the dark skies and how residents and business owners can help achieve that with retrofits of non-compliant lighting. This will be done with articles in the local newspaper, community events such as stargazing parties, and funding assistance for the community to change out old lights.

### About the International Dark Sky Places Program:

Founded in 2001, the International Dark Sky Places Program is a non-regulatory and voluntary program encouraging communities, parks, and protected areas worldwide to preserve and protect dark sites through effective lighting policies, environmentally responsible outdoor lighting, and public education. When used indiscriminately, artificial light can disrupt ecosystems, impact human health, waste money and energy, contribute to climate change, and block our view and connection to the universe. Sisters, Oregon now joins more than 230 Places that have demonstrated robust community support for dark sky advocacy and strive to protect the night from light pollution.

### **About DarkSky International:**

The mission of DarkSky is to preserve and protect the nighttime environment and our heritage of dark skies through environmentally responsible outdoor lighting.

darksky.org/what-we-do/international-dark-sky-places • darksky.org

# Sisters Home Watch

### by FAITH LUBER, Publicity Coordinator — National Home Watch Association

isters Home Watch has earned accreditation for its Home Watch services from the National Home Watch Association (NHWA). The NHWA was formed in 2009 in order to establish and maintain the highest industry standards for Home Watch and absentee homeowner services throughout the United States and Canada (nationalhomewatchassociation.org). Home Watch is a visual inspection of a home or property, looking for obvious issues, which means that it is a service that "keeps an eye on things" at your vacation or primary home while you are not in residence. All principals of



NHWA Accredited Member companies are background-checked, insured and bonded.

Founders Doug and Jeannie Buell's first-hand experience with a major water damage event ultimately required a comprehensive renovation of their family's vacation home on Black Butte Ranch. This made them realize how important it is to routinely monitor an unoccupied home.

Previously, Doug and Jeannie founded and operated Buell Recreation, serving schools, cities and community organizations throughout the Pacific Northwest. They provided high-quality, accessible playgrounds and outdoor recreation products. They sold the company in 2020 and moved from Portland to live full-time on Black Butte Ranch. Since then, Doug and Jeannie have focused on living more locally, while seeking opportunities to continue serving their community in meaningful ways.

Doug's background is rooted in service and leadership, from the U.S. Marine



Corps to managing parks and recreation facilities around the world, to co-founding Buell Recreation. Most recently, he worked as a greenskeeper on the golf course at Black Butte Ranch. Jeannie's strength in customer service, administration and relationship building has always ensured that every client feels heard and wellsupported. Together, they have built their reputation on trust, professionalism and follow-through — and that's exactly what they bring to Sisters Home Watch.

Doug graduated from the NHWA's Home Watch Boot Camp and has earned the designation of Certified Home Watch Professional (CHWP), placing him among the Home Watch industry's elite providers. The CHWP designation and Boot Camp training exemplify Doug's commitment to Home Watch excellence.

Doug and Jeannie understand the vulnerability of a home when left unoccupied, especially in the eastern foothills of the majestic Cascade Mountains, surrounded by beautiful ponderosa pine forests. In this environment, extreme weather, wildlife and water systems can cause costly damage if not detected early. Their clients choose them because they are local, experienced and treat every property as if it were their own.

Sisters Home Watch serves Black Butte Ranch, Camp Sherman, Sisters and the surrounding areas. They can be reached at 541-797-4711 or doug@ sistershomewatch.com.

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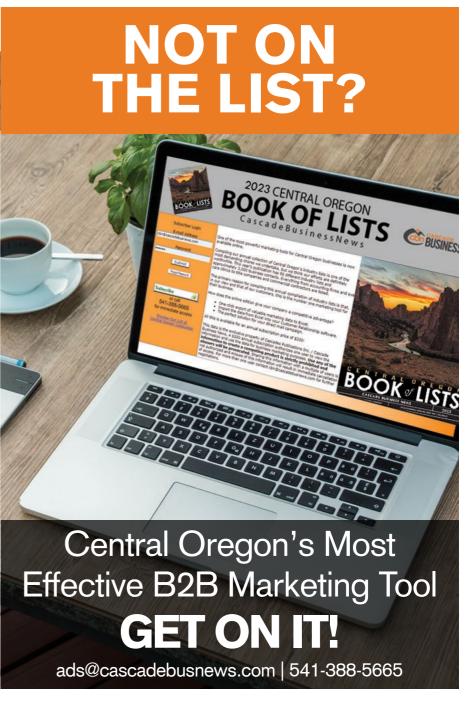
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# Financial & Investment Advisors & Stock Brokerage Firms (Listed Alphabetically)

Company / Address	Phone	Fax	WebSite/Email	Contact	Staff	CO Year Est.	Services
Ascend Financial Solutions LLC 1295 NW Promontory Dr. Bend, OR 97703	541-410-3875	N/A	www.ascend-financial.com belinda.afs@gmail.com	Belinda Britt Adler	1	2018	Financial consulting, business lending & bookkeeping.
Ascent Capital Management, LLC 395 SW Bluff Dr., Ste. 200 Bend, OR 97702	541-382-4847	541-388-1124	www.ascentbend.com scott@ascentcap.com	Devin Harrigan, Scott Agnew	6	2001	Registered investment advisor.
Axiom Wealth Strategies, LLC 243 SW Scalehouse Loop, Ste. 5B Bend, OR 97702	541-389-7777	541-508-5400	www.axiomwealthstrategies.com Neal@axiomwealthstrategies.com	Neal Richards	5	2021	Financial planning, asset management, wealth management.
Becker Capital Managment, Inc. 1051 NW Bond St., Ste. 200 Bend, OR 97703	541-410-3778	503-223-3624	www.beckercap.com sgueck@beckercap.com	Sharon Gueck	2	2021	Boutique firm providing a range of investment management services for high net worth ndividuals, families, nonprofit organizations & institutions.
Bend Wealth Advisors 523 NW Colorado Ave., Ste. 100 Bend, OR 97703	541-306-4324	541-588-5609	www.bendwealth.com stu@bendwealth.com	Stu Malakoff	7	2020	Retirement guidance, divorce planning, investment management, generational succession planning, business planning, strategic tax planning, insurance & risk management & more.
Black Diamond Financial, LLC 855 SW Yates Dr., Ste. 101 Bend, OR 97702	541-647-8718	N/A	www.blackdfinancial.com paul@blackdfinancial.com	Paul Svendsen	16	2008	Financial planning, estate planning & investments.
Capstone Wealth Management Group, LLC 404 SW Columbia St., Ste. 230 Bend, OR 97702	800-267-5022	541-330-0254	www.capstonewmg.com mike@capstonewmg.com	Michael Conrads	5	2003	Registered investment advisor. Independent, fee-based, customized portfolio management, wealth management & tax, financial & estate planning strategies.
Cascade Financial Strategies 243 Scalehouse Lp., Ste. 1A Bend, OR 97702	541-678-5475	541-678-5476	www.cascadefs.com jack@cascadefs.com	Marc Eppinger, Jack Schniepp	3	2013	Fee-only investment management, comprehensive financial planning, socially responsible ESG investing, risk management, savings maximization & preservation.
Country Financial 8283 11th St., Ste. 4 Terrebonne, OR 97760	541-548-0930	541-548-1466	www.countryfinancial.com/ray.austin ray.austin@countryfinancial.com	Ray Austin	34	1925	All lines.
D.A. Davidson & Co. 360 SW Bond St., Ste. 300 Bend, OR 97702	541-330-8964	541-330-1293	www.dadavidson.com dpollock@dadco.com	Dave Pollock, Jacquie Burchard	11	2000	Full service investment firm featuring asset management, financial planning, investment banking, research & public finance. Number of brokers: 8
Edward Jones & Co. 701 NW Arizona Ave., Ste. 210 Bend, OR 97702	541-617-8861	877-843-3790	www.edwardjones.com austin.ouderkirk@edwardjones.com	Austin Ouderkirk	2	1968	Financial Planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care insurance, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. Lines of credit & succession planning
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# Financial Focus

## Planning Your Business Exit: Start with the End in Mind

#### by MICHAEL J. BISHOP, AAMS, Financial Advisor — Edward Jones

f you own a business, you've probably spent countless hours thinking about how to grow it, manage daily operations and serve your customers. But have you thought about how you'll eventually step away from it? While it might seem premature, planning your successful exit from your business is one of the smartest moves you can make as an owner.

The reality is that most business owners have 80% to 90% of their net worth tied up in their companies, according to the Exit Planning Institute. That's a significant investment that deserves careful planning to protect. Unfortunately, 70% to 80% of businesses put on the market don't sell, and about half of all business exits are involuntary

due to unexpected circumstances like health issues, family emergencies management disputes or economic downturns.

Exit planning is more than preparing for retirement. It's taking control of your future and ensuring you can transition away from your business when and how you choose. You can start with the end in mind — a proactive approach that can inform your current business decisions and help increase your company's value and marketability.

Begin by articulating your personal goals for both the transaction and your life afterward. Maybe you want to sell only a portion of your business, stay on as a paid consultant or use the proceeds to start your next venture. Understanding your vision helps shape everything else.

You'll want to calculate how much money you'll need to fund your desired retirement lifestyle, accounting for expenses that may be currently covered by the business, like your cellphone, vehicles, travel and health care. Don't forget about your legacy goals too — what you want to leave for your family or charitable causes.

Getting started requires building a strong professional team. At the center should be a financial advisor who can help you through the planning, execution and post-sale phases. You'll likely also need a tax professional, legal

advisor, commercial banker and business valuation expert. Depending on your exit strategy, you might later add specialists like business brokers, investment bankers or employee stock ownership plan advisors.

Understanding your business's current value is crucial. It's a good idea to get a calculation of value at least three to five years before your planned exit. This isn't as formal or expensive as a qualified appraisal, but it gives you a realistic range of what your business might be worth.

This step may reveal a gap between what you need financially and what your business could sell for. If so, don't panic. You have several options: work longer, adjust your spending expectations, save more outside the business or focus on increasing your company's value. You can boost value by increasing profits through higher market share, new products, better pricing or reduced costs. You can also improve intangible assets like employee expertise, operational systems and customer relationships.

Finally, consider who your successor might be. Selling your interest to family members, business partners or employees often provide more control over timing and lower transaction costs, though they may result in lower sale prices. Selling the business to third parties typically bring higher proceeds but less control over the process.

The key message is simple: it's never too early to start planning your exit. Whether you're thinking about stepping away next year or in the next decade, taking proactive steps now puts you in control of your business's future and your own financial security.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

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Edward Jones Investments 16345 Sixth St., Ste. 101 La Pine, OR 97739	541-536-8822	866-462-0145	www.edwardjones.com bob.cox@edwardjones.com	Bob Cox	2	2002	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 1
Edward Jones Investments 1705 SW Highland Ave. Redmond, OR 97756	541-923-5135	866-462-7274	www.edwardjones.com jeanie.eberle@edwardjones.com	Jeanie Eberle	2	2002	Asset management & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, mortgage financing, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning
Edward Jones Investments 320 SW Upper Terrace Dr., Ste. 103 Bend, OR 97702	541-330-4096	877-566-9510	www.edwardjones.com mark.schang@edwardjones.com	Trent Oki, Mark Schang	3	2002	Asset management & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, CD's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Business IRAs including sep, simple & 401K.
Edward Jones Investments 334 NE Irving Ave., Ste. 101 Bend, OR 97701	541-389-0100	888-232-0664	www.edwardjones.com danielle.baptist@edwardjones.com	Danielle Baptist	2	1968	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, mortgage financing, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 1
Edward Jones Investments 413 NW Larch Ave., Ste. 203 Redmond, OR 97756	541-548-1300	866-229-7019	www.edwardjones.com annette.vardanega@edwardjones.com	Annette Vardanega	2	2002	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 1
Edward Jones Investments 655 SW Greenwood Ave., Ste. 4 Redmond, OR 97756	541-923-7773	800-303-0134	www.edwardjones.com joshua.wener@edwardjones.com	Josh Wer	1	2002	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuties, life insurance, long term care, mortgage financing, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 1
Edward Jones Investments 695 NW York Dr., Ste. 210 Bend, OR 97703	541-330-4329	866-411-6564	www.edwardjones.com eric.carmichael@edwardjones.com	Eric Carmichael	1	2002	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 1
Edward Jones Investments 8222 N Hwy. 97, Ste. 103 PO Box 174 Terrebonne, OR 97760	541-504-7817	855-379-0714	www.edwardjones.com hadi.sale@edwardjones.com	Hadi Sale	2	1968	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning
Edward Jones Investments 823 SW 14th St., Ste. 1 Redmond, OR 97756	541-923-2532	888-516-6327	www.edwardjones.com john.l.meyer@edwardjones.com	John Meyer	1	2002	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 1
Edward Jones 247 North Main St. Prineville, OR 97754	541-447-7013	888-805-0812	www.edwardjones.com darrel.wisseman@edwardjones.com	Darrel Wisseman, Oliver Wisseman	4	2002	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 1
Elevation Capital Strategies 775 SW Bonnett Way, Ste. 220 Bend, OR 97702	541-728-0321	541-639-3456	elevationcapitalstrategies.com info@elevationcapitalstrategies.com	Ryan Sanford	10	2009	Offers comprehensive wealth management with a focus on preservation, appreciation & income generating solutions.
First Interstate Bank Wealth Management 1070 NW Bond St., Bend, OR 97703	541-617-6883	N/A	www.firstinterstatebank.com	Customer Service	2	1977	Full service trust, investment management, financial & retirement planning.
Focus Partners Wealth 1777 SW Chandler Ave., Ste. 205, Bend, OR 97702	541-317-1617	866-371-7889	www.buckinghamadvisor.com/locations/bend alaferriere@buckinghamgroup.com	Lex Grecu, Ann LaFerriere	4	2002	Fee-only fiduciary: investment management & retirement planning.
InsureBend Bend, OR 97701	541-382-6400	N/A	insurebend.com henrik@insurebend.com	Henrik Jahn	5	1986	Financial advising.
Jones & Roth CPAs & Business Advisors 300 SW Columbia St., Ste. 201 Bend, OR 97702	541-382-3590	541-382-3587	www.jrcpa.com info@jrcpa.com	Evan Dickens, Brian Newton, Jordan Dawley	13	1946	Tax, audit, assurance, advisory, business transitions & retirement plans for companies of all sizes. Specialized industry practices in construction & real estate, dental, medical & nonprofit organizations. Retirement plan audit specialists.

Continued on Page 24



Wealth Management
Retirement and Investment Planning

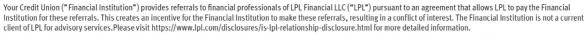
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# Financial & Investment Advisors & Stock Brokerage Firms (Listed Alphabetically)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

Company / Address	Phone	Fax	WebSite/Email	Contact	Staff	CO Year Est.	Services
LPL Financial Member FINRA/SIPC 50 SW Bond St., Ste 101 Bend, OR 97702	541-382-9212	541-610-1880	www.josephferrinlpl.com joseph.ferrin@lpl.com	Joseph Ferrin	3	1994	Full service private money management.
Mackeson Advisory 777 SW Mill View Way, Ste. 200 Bend, OR 97702	541-323-6300	541-323-6301	www.mackesonadvisory.com eric@mackesonadvisory.com	Eric Maki, Tyler Mackeson	4	2015	Investment strategy & financial planning.
Mainspring Wealth Advisors LLC. 25 NW Irving Ave. Bend, OR 97703	541-330-7590	541-749-2729	www.mainspringwa.com amber@mainspringwa.com	Amber Billeter, Kristin Artman	2	2007	Financial planning, retirement planning, investment management, risk management.
Merrill Lynch 755 SW Bonnett Way, Ste. 2200 Bend, OR 97702	541-382-4373	541-326-0291	www.ml.com	N/A	13	1994	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services. Stocks, bonds, mutual funds, cd's, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, mortgage financing, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services including cash mgmt. lines of credit & succession planning. Number of brokers: 10
Mid Oregon Wealth Management 557 SW Bluff Dr. Bend, OR 97702	541-322-5745	541-389-0103	www.midoregon.com m.cabanilla@lpl.com	Marc Cabanilla	3	2002	Wealth Management.
Morgan Stanley 705 SW Bonnett Way, Ste. 1200 Bend, OR 97702	541-389-1282	541-382-7329	www.morganstanley.com john.lorenz@morganstanley.com	John Lorenz	6	1974	Full-service brokerage firm. Number of brokers: 10
Northwest Quadrant Wealth Management 650 SW Bond St., Ste. 250 Bend, OR 97701	541-388-9888	541-388-3492	www.northwestquadrantwealth.com tyler@northwestquadrantwealth.com	Tyler Simones	9	1981	Fee based wealth management, financial planning, estate planning, retirement & charitable planning.
Northwestern Mutual 225 SW Scalehouse Lp., Ste. 102 Bend, OR 97702	541-389-7878	541-383-3846	www.northwesternmutual.com	Customer Service	4	1975	Insurance planning, investment products & services, retirement planning, education funding, estate & business planning, long-term care, disability insurance.
Northwind Financial LLC 2445 NE Division, Ste. 204 Bend, OR 97703	541-318-7871	888-320-7095	www.northwindfinancial.net BJ@northwindfinancial.net	B.J. Boeck	3	1985	Customized wealth management.
Ocean's Edge 334 NE Irving Ave., Ste. 102 Bend, OR 97701	541-382-1456	541-382-2172	www.oceansedge.com Abbie@OceansEdge.com	Abbie Summers, Rilee L. Johnson, Duane J. Silbernagel	4	1984	Fee-based financial planning, retirement & estate planning, wide variety of mutual funds, annuities, life insurance, money market accounts.
OneDigital Wealth Management (formerly ASI Wealth Management) 15 SW Colorado Ave., Ste. 280 Bend, OR 97702	541-617-0898	541-617-0498	www.onedigital.com Susie.langdon@onedigital.com	Susie Langdon, Brian DeBels	16	1998	OneDigital Wealth Management, formerly ASI Wealth Management, provides fee-only wealth management & institutional consulting throughout the Pacific Northwest, serving individuals, families, retirement plans, endowments, foundations, trusts, corporations & nonprofits. Personalized guidance & strategic insight & more.
Paltzer Wealth Management 2334 NW Frazer Lane Bend, OR 97703	541-389-3624	541-389-3579	www.jakepaltzer.com jake@jakepaltzer.com	Jake Paltzer	2	2009	Comprehensive wealth management & investment advisory for successful individuals & families.
RBC Wealth Management 2220 NW Labiche Lane, Ste. 210 Bend, OR 97703	541-385-5026	N/A	www.rbcwealthmanagement.com cal.blethen@rbc.com	Cal Blethen	23	1909	Financial planning, asset mgmt. & investment advisory services, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, CDs, government & tax exempt municipal services: variable annuities, life insurance, long term care, estate, retirement planning & retirement savings. Business financial services include cash mgmt. IRA & college planning. Number of brokers: 14

## **2025 State Legislative Session Review**



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Company / Address	Phone	Fax	WebSite/Email	Contact	Staff	CO Year Est.	Services
Rosell Wealth Management 550 NW Franklin Ave., Ste. 368 Bend, OR 97703	541-385-8831	N/A	www.rosellwealthmanagment.com david@rosellwealthmanagement.com	David Rosell	5	2001	We have a unique planning process, THE RETIREMENT ADVANTAGE, to help our clients achieve three critical things: 1. Enjoy retirement 2. Mitigate taxes 3. Create a Legacy.
Seglund Financial Group 750 NW Charbonneau, Ste. 108 Bend, OR 97703	541-647-8157	N/A	www.paulseglund.com paul@seglund.com	Paul Seglund	2	2007	Services include: independent investment advisory & financial planning. Business retirement & benefit plans. Business exit planning strategies & asset protection analysis.
Sherpa Wealth Strategies LLC 444 NE Norton Ave., Ste. 101 Bend, OR 97701	541-633-7728	541-633-7759	www.sherpawealthstrategies.com brian@sherpawealthstrategies.com	Brian K. Stallcop	3	2011	Business exit planning, investment advisory, financial planning, insurance.
Sundowner Capital Management, LLC 725 NW Broadway St. Bend, OR 97703	541-389-3311	541-389-3322	www.sundownercapital.com doug@sundownercapital.com	Douglas Downer	3	2000	Portfolio management for affluent investors.
The Bahnsen Group 5 NW Minnesota Ave., Ste. 220 Bend, OR 97703	541-604-8603	N/A	thebahnsengroup.com pnwoffice@thebahnsengroup.com	John Swanson	4	2014	Asset management, financial planning, wealth management.
The Pacific Wealth Group at UBS Financial Services Inc. 600 SW Columbia, Ste. 6200 Bend, OR 97702	503-225-9225	855-333-1711	www.ubs.com/team/pacificwealthgrou jim.mead@ubs.com	Jim Mead	16	1997	Our team has extensive experience in guiding prominent business owners up to, through & long after the sale of their business.
U.S. Bank Private Wealth Management 86 SW Century Dr. Bend, OR 97702	541-633-1205	541-388-8704	www.usbank.com/wealth-management charles.yeaman@usbank.com	Cody Michael, Chuck Yeaman	6	1891	High net worth wealth management banking services including personal & business lending. Retirement & financial planning, trust services, investment management. www. usbank.com/wealth-management/private-wealth-management/bend-or.html
U.S. Bank 1025 NW Bond St. Bend, OR 97703	541-388-8742	541-388-8726	www.usbank.com	N/A	4	1891	Securities & insurance products, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, fixed & variable annuities, employer sponsored retirement plans, wealth management/fee based, long-term care insurance, individual retirement accounts, tax deferred strategies & a variety of small business products.
UBS Financial Services Inc. 600 SW Columbia St., Ste. 6200 Bend, OR 97702	541-617-7020	N/A	www.ubs.com cy.aleman@ubs.com	Cy Aleman	9	1998	Full-service brokerage firm offering financial planning wealth management, consulting, discretionary & non-discretionary portfolio mngmt, equities, fixed income, cash mngmt, lending, equity research & retirement planning. Number of brokers: 4
United Financial NW 424 NE Kearney Ave. Bend, OR 97701	541-388-1708	541-388-1710	www.unitedfinancialnw.com ed@unitedfinancialnw.com	Ed Wettig, Courtney Marlatt	5	1993	Investment management, IRA rollovers, comprehensive financial planning, retirement income strategies, insurance & annuities, Medicare plans.
Wells Fargo Advisors 320 SW Upper Terrace Dr., Ste. 200 Bend, OR 97702	541-388-1221	541-388-4274	www.wellsfargoadvisors.com	Customer Service	14	1986	Full-service brokerage firm.
WestPac Wealth Partners Bend OR 97701	541-382-6400	N/A	www.westpacwealth.com henrik@westpacwealth.com	Henrik Jahn	3	2010	Financial advice, risk management, income tax planning, business exit strategies.
Wychick Investment Advisors Inc. 70 SW Century Dr., Ste. 100-448 Bend, OR 97702	866-992-4425	N/A	www.wychick.com gparker@wychick.com	Glenn Parker, Stein Swenson	2	2005	Investment advisory services, retirement planning, financial planning, trust administration.

CBN has made every effort to ensure that all information is accurate and up-to-date. We cannot, however, guarantee it. Please contact us immediately if you know that certain information is not correct or you would like to be added to a list, 541-388-5665 or email cbn@cascadebusnews.com.



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Zach LaVelle

Zach LaVelle joins Johnson Brothers Appliances as account manager. LaVelle was born and raised in Spokane Valley, Washington, graduating from high school in 2016. He started his career at Best Buy quickly out of high school as a part-time appliance salesperson and quickly developed a burning passion. He outgrew the part-time position and became laser-focused on developing his then newfound passion and skills into a true professional career.

He rapidly graduated to the local Eastern Washington independent appliance titan, Fred's Appliance, learning the ins and outs of the industry, working at their corporate location. This was followed by a move into high-end showroom sales with Ferguson, a national chain, and

made a lateral move for a brief period as outside sales for Consolidated Supply, a regional plumbing supply house. Instilled with a strong desire to return to the appliance world, LaVelle furthered his career by being recommended to direct the launch for appliances, plumbing and lighting at a regional building supply chain, eventually taking a swing at opening his very own appliance store in the surrounding regions of Spokane.

Upon a recommendation from a well-established regional sales representative for several upscale brands, LaVelle was introduced to Johnson Brothers and Bend and felt he had no choice but to take the leap. He found that Johnson Brothers would be the best fit for him and his expertise. Aside from his love of appliances, LaVelle plays hockey as a goalie, is an avid guitar player and has three fluffy cats.

Cole Architects has announced that Ian Schmidt has assumed the role of managing principal effective July 2025. Schmidt succeeds Matt Huffield, who transitions to partner focusing on strategic initiatives and key client relationships.

The planned transition comes as Cole Architects celebrates its 30th anniversary, continuing its evolution as a diversified regional firm serving clients across the Mountain West.

During Huffield's leadership, Cole Architects grew from serving primarily southern Idaho to building a Mountain West presence through strategic acquisitions, integrating firms with 30-year histories of successful client relationships. Recent projects include the Frontier Credit

Union Headquarters in Boise, Idaho; Glendale Fire Station #153 in Glendale, Arizona; and Prospect Fire Station in Prospect, Oregon.

The leadership transition will not affect current projects or client relationships. All existing project teams remain in place, ensuring continuity of service and design excellence.



Crystal **Poquette** 

Stroke Awareness Oregon (SAO) announces the appointment of Crystal Poquette as its new executive director. Poquette brings a dynamic blend of leadership, community engagement and healthcare advocacy to SAO as the organization embarks on a new chapter in its mission to reduce stroke-related death and disability across Oregon and beyond.

Ian

**Schmidt** 

Poquette joins SAO with an extensive background in nonprofit leadership, public safety, and healthcare outreach. Recognized for her ability to build strong partnerships and drive organizational growth, she has held leadership positions in caregiving, marketing and public service — including more than a decade as a decorated law enforcement official.

As executive director, Poquette will lead statewide awareness campaigns,

expand community education programs, strengthen hospital and caregiver partnerships, and advance SAO's signature BE FAST initiative, which teaches the early warning signs of stroke.

Family Access Network (FAN) welcomes Jenny Werner of Redmond to its Board of Directors. Werner's extensive professional background, coupled with her dedication to the Central Oregon community, is a valued addition to

Werner was born and raised in Central Oregon and is a partner and CPA at Alliance Professionals, LLP in Redmond. She graduated from Linfield College with a bachelor's degree in accounting and has over 20 years of experience in the accounting industry. In her spare time, she volunteers for various nonprofits in Central Oregon and enjoys traveling with her husband and children. She believes education is vital for a strong community and economic growth. She is proud to be a part of the FAN organization that works to connect families to resources they need, so their circumstances do not become barriers to learning.

Lais

Jiménez

Maria

Romero

Rowan

Jones

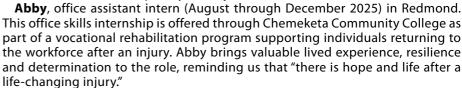
The Latino Community Association (LCA) has promoted two team members to roles in our legal program, welcomed new client services staff, and elected a new board president.

Luis Jiménez, a Redmond banker with two years on the LCA board, was elected board president on August 21. He works for U.S. Bank as a client relationship consultant and is studying for his master's in business analytics at OSU-Cascades.

Client Service Coordinators Jimena López, Prineville, and Marlene Peraza, Redmond, graduated in June from the Colibri Fellowship program. While working full-time at LCA, they studied online to become DOJ Accredited Representatives on our immigration legal team.

Maria Romero, client service assistant in Madras. Romero grew up and attended high school in Madras, where she worked at Medline before coming to LCA. She filled out forms and interpreted for her parents, a

To fill vacancies, we hired: **Alexis** Boss function she will use frequently in her job.



Alexis Boss, client service coordinator in Bend. Boss grew up in Guatemala City and moved to California 30 years ago to join family. She has worked as a florist and in health care and medical transport. In June, she moved to Bend to be close to her grown children.

Rowan Jones, immigration and advocacy program manager in Bend. Jones grew up in the Willamette Valley and studied Spanish and environmental systems at Middlebury College in Vermont. They worked on immigration justice, worker rights and public health campaigns and founded Slingshot, an environmental justice nonprofit. They are excited to support the LCA team in expanding our legal programs, deepening advocacy efforts and building community power.

More Who's Who Next Page ▶

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OBERTO AND DENNIS | PHOTO COURTESY OF BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS CENTRAL OREGON

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Oregon announced that Dennis Murphy, CEO of Hayden Homes, will receive the first-ever Big Champion Award at the 28th annual Comedy For Kids' Sake fundraiser on October 3, 2025, at Tetherow.

A devoted mentor, leader and advocate, Murphy has been a part of the Big Brothers Big Sisters family for more than 20 years. In 2002, Murphy was matched with his Little Brother, Roberto, forging a powerful and lasting relationship that continues to this day—a testament to the life-changing impact of mentorship. Beyond his role as a Big, Murphy has served as a member and chair of the BBBSCO Advisory Council and consistently champions the agency's mission to help all youth achieve their full potential.

The Big Champion Award, introduced in 2025, honors individuals whose extraordinary commitment and service have strengthened Big Brothers Big Sisters mission to ignite the inherent potential in every child through one-toone mentoring relationships.

Comedy For Kids' Sake will feature an evening of laughter, dinner, live and silent auctions, and the presentation of the Big Champion Award to Murphy. The annual fundraiser directly supports BBBSCO's work creating and sustaining lifechanging one-to-one mentoring relationships for youth across Central Oregon.



FIELD DAY | PHOTO COURTESY OF HAYDEN HOMES

Hayden Homes announces that Great Place To Work and Fortune Magazine have selected the company for two prestigious awards representing its positive culture, employee experience, leadership and community-driven work.

For its first recognition, Hayden Homes ranked third on the 2025 Fortune Best Workplaces in Construction List. This is Hayden Homes' second time being named to this prestigious list. Earning a spot means that Hayden Homes is one of the

best companies to work for in the country. The Best Workplaces in Construction award is based on analysis of survey responses from nearly 54,000 employees at Great Place To Work Certified companies in the construction industry.

The second recognition celebrates Hayden Homes' ranking as 21st on the 2025 Fortune Best Medium Workplaces List, elevating the company out of all medium-sized workplaces in the nation, not just those in construction. This award is highly competitive. To determine the Best Medium Workplaces list, Great Place To Work analyzed the survey responses of over 228,000 employees from Great Place To Work Certified companies with between 100 and 999 U.S. employees.

Great Place to Work, which is the global authority on workplace culture, chooses its honorees based on the survey data and a company's ability to offer positive outcomes for employees regardless of job role, race, gender, sexual orientation, work status, or other demographic identifier.



Lava City Cirque (LCC) announced that the studio will perform in an upcoming movie, Soul Cirque, featuring athletes who recently medaled, and won a National Championship for, their aerial arts performances. Opened just a year ago, this regional circus and aerial arts studio supports a nationally lauded competition team, one of many programs which teach Central Oregon youth and adults in the growing disciplines of circus and aerial arts.

Soul Cirque is an independent movie filming in Houston, Texas, and featuring Lava City Cirque along with eight other aerial arts teams (soulcirquemovie.com). To prepare for the film, a group of 12 performers, ages 9-16, have put in hours of training, choreography and practice over the summer. The group travels to a studio location on September 9 for two, 12-hour days of filming where they will perform a routine to a song written specifically for their performance in the film.

Lava City's competition team includes 17 performers, with 15 invited to compete at Aerialympics Nationals in July, 2025. Seven aerialists flew to Kansas City, MO, for live performances where they were judged against competitors from across North America. Margot Tatum-Ling, 11, was named National Champion with the highest score of all athletes in the Intermediate 2 level; Kate Andrews, 12, Royal Gorham, 13, and Clara Wirtz, 14, won gold. Altogether, Lava City took home ten medals in nine categories, with solo routines on classic apparatus including aerial silks, sling/hammock, lyra and trapeze.

As Central Oregon's fastest-growing circus arts studio, Lava City celebrated its one-year anniversary on September 6 with free performances and open studio. LCC athletes perform frequently for our community and have been featured at Bend's SummerFest, Northwest Crossing Farmers' Market, Kids Entrepreneur Markets and upcoming at Bend Moonlight Market and Open Arts Center.



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# Prineville Chamber Golf Tournament Raises \$3K for Wildland Firefighter Foundation

by DEB SHAW, Operations Manager — Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce he Prineville-Crook County Chamber of Commerce & Visitor's Center supports the firefighters who protect our region. As part of its first annual golf tournament and fundraiser, the Chamber contributed \$3,000 to the Wildland Firefighter Foundation, which honors fallen firefighters and assists their

The Foundation, formed in response to the Storm King Mountain tragedy and the loss of the Prineville Hotshots, provides critical support to the families of fallen and injured wildland firefighters. Their work includes financial assistance, mental health and PTSD counseling, and programs such as the "Santa Helpers," which

> accepted the donation on behalf of the Foundation at its annual gala this year.

> "It's always good when the community and the Chamber give to us because it's something we weren't expecting," Pearcy said. "Our goal this year in Central Oregon was to raise \$120,000, and the money from the Chamber helped us exceed that goal. The check was presented during our spring fundraiser, Gala of Valor: A

> The golf tournament was established to strengthen relationships and generate support for nonprofit organizations that impact the community. The event achieved both objectives and laid the groundwork for

> "The Chamber is proud to support the Wildland Firefighter Foundation and the vital work they do," said Deb Shaw, the Chamber's operations manager. "We are committed to building a strong, resilient community, which includes standing behind those

Night to Honor Our Firefighters."

an ongoing annual tradition.

who serve and protect it."

prinevillechamber.com

provides Christmas gifts to children who have lost a parent in the line of duty. families in times of crisis. Wildland Firefighter Foundation representative Sam Pearcy, who also sponsored the golf tournament,

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# Construction Starts on New Residential Mental Health Treatment Center in Redmond

### by NATALIE PODGORSKI

lected officials and business leaders recently gathered in Redmond to celebrate the groundbreaking of Jory Behavioral Health, a secure residential mental health treatment facility for adults suffering from severe and persistent mental illness. The facility will help close critical gaps in mental health treatment in Oregon and help keep individuals who need help closer to home.

"People all across our state struggle with mental health challenges," said Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Chang. "Oregon currently doesn't have the capacity to provide treatment to everyone who needs it. However, the state is investing in solutions, and we are proud to join their efforts by allocating resources to help individuals in our community."

This Redmond treatment facility represents a strategic public-private partnership with the State of Oregon, Deschutes County and Jory Behavioral Health. After a competitive bidding process, the County allocated \$2 million to this project, with funding from the Oregon Health Authority.

"Recognizing the critical need for expanded mental health treatment options for Oregonians, we are pleased that a dedicated facility will finally be constructed to address these needs," said Deschutes County Commissioner Patti Adair.

"Jory is a safe place for people to start their recovery and recognize their full potential," said Jim Sechrist, president of operations, PNW. "Our goal is to help people reintegrate into their communities by helping them develop important life skills, identifying medication needs and building therapeutic plans that support long-term mental health. We know people do better in their recovery when they can stay close to home and

maintain a connection with their community. We are so grateful for Deschutes County's partnership and the mental health treatment opportunities this will open up for people living in Central Oregon."

Jory Behavioral Health's 16-bed, secure facility will serve individuals suffering from severe or chronic mental illness. Patients will be referred to Jory for treatment from nearby hospitals or Oregon State Hospital. Most patients will spend six months to two years at Jory undergoing treatment before transitioning to a lower level of care.

Jory provides all patients with 24-hour supervision and around the clock access to nurses and mental



PHOTO | COURTESY OF DESCUTES COUNTY // JORY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

health workers. Every patient will receive a customized treatment plan to support their long-term recovery goals and be supported by highly trained clinicians throughout their treatment. All patients will have access to medication management, individual, group and recreational therapy, as well as case management services to coordinate care.

Construction on the Jory facility is anticipated to take a little more than a year with the goal of serving community members beginning in late 2026. The facility is being built at 815 NW Canal Blvd. in Redmond.

deschutes.org

# La Pine Community Health Center Remobilizes Construction on Wellness Center

by COURTNEY IGNAZZITTO, Marketing & Communications Coordinator — La Pine Community Health Center

a Pine Community Health Center (LCHC) announced that construction will resume on the highly anticipated Wellness Center. While the facility was originally projected to open in early 2025, work came to a halt in March due to unforeseen funding-related issues that have since been amicably resolved.

Once completed, the Wellness Center will provide expanded dental services, diagnostic imaging, and enhanced mental and behavioral health care for the community.

"We're thrilled to resume construction and take this next step in expanding access to high-quality, comprehensive care in La Pine," said Erin Trapp, chief executive officer of LCHC. "The Wellness Center represents our commitment to this community and ensuring that every individual has access to the services they deserve and need to thrive."

"We are excited to continue our partnership with La Pine Community Health," said Todd Predmore, senior vice president-account manager for Skanska USA Building in Portland. "The Health and Wellness Center is a testament to our shared commitment to enhancing access to healthcare services. We look forward to advancing construction and delivering a facility that will make a meaningful difference in the health and well-being of La Pine residents for years to come."

Community members and organizations interested in supporting the project  $are\,encouraged\,to\,contact\,Courtney\,Ignazzitto, marketing\,and\,communications$ coordinator, at 541-876-2135 or visit lapinehealth.org/wellnesscenter to learn how to get involved.

### **About La Pine Community Health Center:**

La Pine Community Health Center (LCHC) is a nonprofit, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), Patient-Centered Primary Care Home that provides 360-degree care to the communities of South Deschutes, North Klamath and West Lake Counties. LCHC provides care to the commercially insured, uninsured and underinsured. Some of the services that are provided by the health center are primary medical care for all ages, point of care nursing,



behavioral health, health education and outreach resources such as transportation to appointments, assistance with prescriptions and Oregon Health Plan enrollment. Also offered at LCHC is access to specialty care, such as orthopedics, podiatry and dermatology.

lapinehealth.org



www.MyPrinterResources.com

# **P**VC Continued from page 3

courtesy of Washington Trust Bank.

The Bend Venture Conference is the Pacific Northwest's largest angel investment conference and a hub for entrepreneurship in the region. Following the close of applications, investors and partners carefully reviewed each submission to select the top startups advancing in both the Early and Growth Stage tracks. The semifinalists for the Growth Stage will be further narrowed down in early October. Finalists in both Early and Growth Stages will present at the BVC on October 17 in front of hundreds of attendees and investors.

The 2025 Early Stage competition is open exclusively to Oregon-based companies, strengthening BVC's mission to spotlight and support local innovation. A cash award of at least \$25k will be presented to one standout startup headquartered in Central Oregon, underscoring the region's ongoing commitment to homegrown entrepreneurship.

Speaking for EDCO, Venture Catalyst Brian Vierra highlighted the strength of this year's Early Stage track. "We're seeing remarkable innovation coming from Oregon, and it's inspiring to showcase these founders on a stage where their ideas can gain momentum. The Bend Venture Conference has always been about celebrating the region's most promising entrepreneurs and connecting them with investors and leaders who can help them grow."

In alphabetical order, the BVC Early Stage

semifinalists that will compete at the September 25 Central Oregon PubTalk are:

- 360 Sierra (Bend) All-in-one platform for vehiclerental operations — powered by an Al master operator.
- GlowWell (Bend) GlowPrep is the companion kit to your colonoscopy prescription laxative making prep clear and comfortable while increasing compliance to save lives.
- Goal 300 (Bend) Goal 300 supercharges natural CO2 removal to fight climate change, targeting 1M tons annually by 2035, with strong returns in the booming carbon credit market.
- Luxefly Basecamp (Eugene, Oregon) Freezedried, refined, curated camp food, from duck confit with white bean cassoulet to chile rellenos with burrata cheese, these are not just for camping.
- Neurosom (Eugene, Oregon) Neurosom is advancing a clinically validated, personalized neuromodulation therapy to reduce dementia risk by enhancing deep and REM sleep.
- Overpotential (Eugene, Oregon) Overpotential improves the flavor profile of beverages by removing negative flavors with electrochemistry.
- SokoLife (Eugene, Oregon) SokoLife is revolutionizing cardiac care with innovative, non-toxic patches for congenital heart defect repair, reducing reinterventions and healthcare costs.
- Toast Wear Inc. (Bend) Cold is universal. Your gear is personal. Toast solves both with a personal thermostat for your jacket, making existing apparel your go-to for warmth.
- Topsail (Bend) Conversation-led sales in one click. Human-led, Al-assisted outreach leads to 2-4x

productivity, more meetings and more revenue.

• Yak Incorporated (Portland, Oregon) – Yak is the all-in-one, automation and Al-powered platform that automates audits for accounting firms, cutting admin work in half and ending auditor burnout.

### **PubTalk Agenda**

4:30-5pm — Networking, drinks and appetizers 5-7pm — Early Stage company pitches, audience vote and winners announcements

PubTalk Cost and Registration Register through Eventbrite here. Ticket price is \$32 for EDCO Members

\$48 for Non-Members.

Attendance includes appetizers and a beverage (beer, wine or non-alcoholic options available).

Now in its 22nd year, the BVC is the Pacific Northwest's largest angel investment conference and a hub for entrepreneurship in the region. Since its inception, BVC investors have awarded more than \$14 million to startups. The event is the cornerstone of the High Desert Innovation Week, happening October 13-17 in downtown Bend, a multi-day program that brings together local entrepreneurs, innovators and investors to showcase the region's startup resources and celebrate its collaborative culture.

Bend Venture Conference cannot guarantee that investments will be made in any specific amount because the final amounts to be awarded are dependent on investment commitments received from third-party investors and the ability of the winning companies and the investors to agree on the terms and conditions of the investment.

edcoinfo.com • bendvc.com

igh Desert Innovation
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debuts its inaugural Bend Climate Innovation Fair, spotlighting climate-focused solutions and providing a platform to exchange ideas and inspire action. On October 15, Bend Outdoor Worx brings its BootCamp and BreakOut pitch event, offering expert panels and funding opportunities for outdoor-industry startups.

The week concludes with the Bend Venture Conference (BVC), hosted by EDCO, on October 16 and 17, combining seminars, founder pitches and networking at Central Oregon's premier investor showcase. BVC features two competition tracks: Early Stage, showcasing Oregon startups that are pre-revenue or very early revenue, and Growth Stage, highlighting companies with proven traction and larger investment needs, with finalists in each competing live for funding and prizes.

"High Desert Innovation Week embodies what makes Central Oregon a thriving startup ecosystem, including its collaborative energy, diversity of sectors and the unwavering support across organizations," said Brian Vierra, EDCO Venture Capitalist director. "By bringing together the region's most dynamic entrepreneurial resources, we're not only celebrating innovation but also strengthening connections that will fuel Central

Oregon's economic future."

"The outdoor industry is built on passion, resilience, and a drive to push boundaries," said Gary Bracelin, cofounder of Bend Outdoor Worx. "High Desert Innovation Week shines a spotlight on that spirit, giving founders the chance to turn bold ideas into real opportunities."

### **Event Highlights:**

### **High Desert Innovation Fest**

**Date:** Monday, October 13, 4:30-7:30pm **Host:** Central Oregon Innovation Network

This opening night pitch competition invites innovators from across the Pacific Northwest to present bold ideas and network with investors, founders and entrepreneurial organizations as Central Oregon's startup community kicks off the week in style.

### Cultivate LIVE!

Date: Tuesday, October 14, 12-5pm

**Host:** Cultivate Bend

A premier growth summit for the natural products packaged-goods sector, featuring keynote presentations, five fast-paced Pitch Slams, a sample-rich Community Marketplace, and a networking-friendly Happy Hour.

### Inaugural Bend Climate Innovation Fair

**Date:** Tuesday, October 14, 6-9pm

**Host:** Bend Climate Collective

An inspiring evening spotlighting climate-focused innovation, the inaugural Climate Fair features live demos, poster presentations, a ribbon ceremony awarding

community-voted innovations, and speed-networking sessions showcasing the region's sustainable future in action.

### **BOW BootCamp + BreakOut**

**Date:** Wednesday, October 15

Host: Rand Outdoor Wory (ROW)

**Host:** Bend Outdoor Worx (BOW)

**BootCamp:** Volcanic Theatre Pub, 9-11:30am

Hands-on panels, "How to Get into Retail" and "How We Did It," equip outdoor industry startups with practical strategies and insights from established experts.

**BreakOut Pitch Event:** Volcanic Theatre, 6-8:45pm Interactive pitch competition where early-stage and

Interactive pitch competition where early-stage and growth-stage companies from BOW's cohorts compete for \$20,000 in unrestricted cash awards. Winners will be selected by audience vote.

### **Bend Venture Conference (BVC)**

Dates: Thursday, October 16 and Friday, October 17 Host: Economic Development for Central Oregon Thursday (Oct 16): Downtown Bend, 1-7:30pm

The 22nd annual conference begins with seminars on startup fundamentals, featured speakers and concludes with the region's largest networking reception at the Broken Top Club.

Friday (Oct 17): Downtown Bend, 9am-5pm

Features a keynote presentation, startup pitches from Early and Growth Stage finalists, expert industry insights, and a culminating awards ceremony honoring innovation excellence at the iconic Tower Theatre in downtown Bend.

hdinnovationweek.com

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Blending workspace, wellness and community under one roof, Kiln Bend will reimagine the workday for entrepreneurs, remote workers, small businesses and enterprise teams alike. The two-story location will feature fully furnished private offices, open and resident desks, state-of-the-art conference rooms and content creation studios — complemented by lifestyle amenities including a theater, refresh rooms, wellness zones and vibrant communal lounges designed to foster connection and creativity.

"Bend is full of people doing meaningful work and living inspired lives," said Alexa Ford, community director for Kiln Bend. "Our goal is to create a space that not only supports business growth but also fosters connection and balance. We're so excited to open our doors to this community!"

Kiln currently operates more than

20 locations across Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Utah — with recent openings in Portland, Phoenix and Las Vegas. Each Kiln location is uniquely designed to reflect the energy and culture of its surrounding city, while offering access to a broader network of professionals and resources throughout the Western U.S. Located in the geographic and cultural heart of Bend, the Kiln site will serve as a new anchor for the Old Mill District's vibrant ecosystem of businesses, restaurants and entertainment venues.

"Kiln is an ideal fit for Bend and for the Old Mill District," said Beau Eastes, Marketing Director for the Old Mill District. "They've created spaces that go far beyond a typical office. These are places that inspire people to do their best work and build real community."

Memberships for Kiln Bend will open later this year, with the list expected to fill up quickly.

kiln.com • oldmilldistrict.com



Oregon, the Oregon Golf Show is expected to attract thousands of attendees eager to explore the latest in golf technology, apparel and equipment, while enjoying interactive experiences and family-friendly activities. At the same time, visitors will also be able to browse the Spring Home & Garden Show, making this a premier event for homeowners, families and golf enthusiasts.

"Central Oregon is a golf destination, and it's time we had a tradeshow to match," said Tim Knopp, COBA Executive Vice President. "The Oregon Golf Show will be a premier event for golfers of all ages and skill levels to connect with industry professionals, demo new products and celebrate the sport."

### Highlights of the 2026 Oregon Golf Show include:

50+ golf-focused booths showcasing golf gear, apparel, techniques and services

Hands-on demos and product launches from leading and local brands

Family-friendly activities, including a Kids Zone with lessons and games

Access to the Spring Home & Garden Show, featuring 200+ vendors

COBA.org

# Central Oregon Business Calendar

# Email Your Upcoming Business Events to CBN@CascadeBusNews.com Event Details at CascadeBusNews.com/Business-Events

## **BUSINESS EVENTS**



#### September 17

3-6pm Bend Chamber Ribbon Cutting at Central Oregon Veterans Ranch.

#### September 17:

5:30pm-8pm ConnectW Monthly Dinner Meeting at The Newberry Hotel Bend.

### September 17

5:30pm-8pm ConnectW Monthly Dinner Meeting at The Newberry Hotel Bend.

### September 17

6pm City of Bend Virtual and In-Person City Council Business Meeting at Bend City Hall Council Chambers.

#### September 19

9:30am City of Bend Virtual and In-Person BMPO Policy Board Meeting at Bend City Hall Council Chambers.

#### September 23

9am-2pm OMEP Ready or Not - Central Oregon Business Simulation Game at COCC Wille Hall, Bend.

### September 23

5:30-7:30pm SCORE Free, Confidential One-on-One Small Business Counseling at Bend Downtown Library.

### September 24

7:30-9am Sunriver Area Chamber Coffee & Conversation at SHARC in Sunriver.

#### September 24

4-5pm Bend Chamber Ribbon Cutting at Final Touch Janitorial Services.

### September 24

5:30-7:30pm TEDxBend Community Event at The Haven Coworking.

### September 25

12pm Element Design Collective Kush Rugs Showcase (Trade Event) at Element Design Collective Showroom.

# **WORKSHOPS & TRAINING**



### (Ongoing)

Commercial (Alteration) at 1980 Ridge Hawk Ct. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Worldmark the Club 6277 Sea Harbor Dr. Orlando, FL 32821 Permit # 247-24-007565

COCC Small Business Development Center Virtual and In-Person Classes.

# **Building Permits**

### **DESCHUTES COUNTY 9.2.25 & 9.9.25**

\$25,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 19310 Tumalo Reservoir Rd. Bend 97703 OR Owner: Verizon 646 Cook Dr. Bend, OR 97703 Builder: M & A Contracting, Inc. 503-931-3895 Permit # 247-25-004669

\$966,503.00 - Commercial (Addition) 22,487 sf. at 52620 Day Rd. La Pine 97739 OR Owner: High Lakes Christian Church, Inc. 52620 Day Rd. La Pine, OR 97739 Permit # 247-25-002672

\$78,898.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 1480 Red Wing Lp. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Worldmark the Club 6277 Sea Harbor Dr. Orlando, FL 32821 Permit # 247-24-007566

\$44,828.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 1673 Redtail Hawk Dr. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Club Esprit 6277 Sea Harbor Dr. Orlando, FL 32821 Permit # 247-24-007563

### **CITY OF BEND 9.2.25 & 9.9.25**

\$43,981.00

\$60,000.00

\$150,000.00

\$610,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) 3,996 sf. at 16 NW Kansas Ave. Bend 97703 OR Owner: Central Or Environmental Center, Inc.

Builder: CS Construction 541-617-9190 Permit # PRRE202501789

\$25,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) 3 sf. at 1033 NW Bond Ste. 120 Bend 97703 OR Owner: Downing Hotel & Café, LLC

Builder: Wray Construction, LLC 541-318-7853 Permit # PRRE202504897

\$3,500,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) 39,745 sf. at 501 SW Hill St. Bend 97702 OR Owner: 501 Hill, LLC Builder: Sunwest Builders 541-548-7341 Permit # PRRE202501018

\$789,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) 2,721 sf. at 20785 NW Henry Ave. Ste. 150 Bend 97703 OR Owner: Powell-Bend, LLC

Builder: McKenzie Commercial Contracting, Inc. 541-343-7143 Permit # PRRE202503844 \$750,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) 65 sf. at 744 NW Bond St. Ste. A Bend 97703 OR

Builder: Bremik Construction, Inc. 503-688-1000 Permit # PRRE202503592

\$574,375.00 - Commercial (New) 3,093 sf. at 19888 Rocking Horse Rd. Bend 97702 OR Owner: Ponderosa Pine Estates, LLC

Builder: Beaudin Construction 503-915-8511 Permit # PRNC202501519

\$36,920.00 - Commercial (Alteration) 44 sf. at 549 SW Mill View Way Bend 97702 OR Owner: S Marco, LLC

Builder: Ram Jack West 541-688-7177 Permit # PRRE202502981

### **CITY OF REDMOND 9.2.25 & 9.9.25**

\$750,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 405 SW 6th St. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Roberts & Lynch, LLC 405 SW 6th St. Redmond, OR 97756

Builder: BMC Construction, LLC 503-803-2236 Permit # 711-25-001499

\$75,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 415 SW 6th St. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Roberts & Lynch, LLC 405 SW 6th St. Redmond, OR 97756 Builder: BMC Construction, LLC 503-803-2236 Permit # 711-25-001573

Commercial (New) at 2821 SW Airport Way Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Central Christian School 2731 SW Airport Way Redmond, OR 97756

Builder: Redmond Fencing & Pole Structures, LLC 541-408-6481 Permit # 711-25-001595

Commercial (New) at 2821 SW Airport Way Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Central Christian School 2731 SW Airport Way Redmond, OR 97756 Builder: Baseline Excavation NW, LLC 541-566-7982 Permit # 711-25-001616

\$100,000.00 - Commercial (Tenant Improvement) 2,460 sf. at 1380 SW Canal Blvd Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Elevated Acquisitions, LLC PO Box 4033 Bend, OR 97707

Builder: Derrick Barker Construction, LLC 503-260-8962 Permit # 711-25-001189

\$25,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 900 SW 23rd St. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Mt. Nolan, LLC PO Box 8236 Coburg, OR 97408

Builder: Legacy Telecommunications, LLC 253-858-0214 Permit # 711-25-001245

# Ower Theatre Continued from page 3

"At Hayden Homes and Simplicity by Hayden Homes, we believe a strong community is built not only by increasing opportunities for homeownership, but also with shared experiences that bring people together. We're honored to support the Tower Theatre and its incredible programs, from world-class performances to LessonPLAN's inspiring educational outreach. It's our honor to help ensure the arts continue to thrive in Bend and to open doors for the next generation to experience the power of live performance," said Steve Klingman, president of Hayden Homes.

"A huge thank you to Hayden Homes— the true rock stars behind live music in Bend! With their generous support, the Tower Theatre continues to bring world-class music, performance art, films and heartwarming stories to life on our iconic stage," said Stacy Koff, programming director of the Tower Theatre Foundation.

Since 2011, LessonPLAN has connected over 60,000 students to the world of performing arts in Central Oregon. Attendees from public, private, and homeschool groups across the region experience theatre matinees and inschool assemblies. "Thanks to the generous support from Simplicity by Hayden Homes, we can continue inspiring students through the power of live performance. Their investment in the Tower Theatre Foundation's educational program, LessonPLAN, helps us remove barriers, spark creativity, and connect

thousands of young people with the arts in meaningful and lasting ways," said Dani Wyeth, Director of Education for the Tower Theatre Foundation.

For information and tickets to the Foundation's 2025-26 Season performances, please visit towertheatre. org. Tickets are currently on sale for all Act 1 events. The lineup for Act 2 (February-June 2026) will be announced on October 7 and on member presale. For more information on the LessonPLAN Education Series, please visit the LessonPLAN webpage.

towertheatre.org

# Town of Country

# September First Friday Bend // Old Mill

PHOTOS BY LAURIE PITTMON



**Adell Shetterly** 



**Allison Murray** 



Alyson Brown



Anton Pavlenko



Clayton Riley, Jamie Turner, Amy Kernion, Anastasia Culpepper, Debby and Don Jones



Dillon Schneider



Gladys and Arie Pilz



Harris Family, (Isaac, Kailey, Kai and Luca) and Luoma Family(Dale, Laurie and Adrienne)



Jennifer McCaffrey with Lori Sutherland and dog Honey



Joan Hester



Joe and Martin



Kira Frances



Lindsay Gilmore



Lori and Lisa Lubbesmeyer



Mary Shea



Miriam Deeth



Pamela Beaverson



Steven Lee Adams