



A Walk
Down
Memory Lane
— Page 6

Enhancing & Promoting the Economic Vitality of Central Oregon Since 1994

COEC Panel Highlights Resilience & Regional Impact

by LEAH ETLING — CBN Feature Writer



(L-R) DON PAUMIER (MODERATOR), CORNELIUS EDISON, SARAH MAHNKE, STEVE BETTIS AND TY RUPERT SPOKE ON EMPLOYMENT AND THEIR PERSONAL CAREERS AT A RECENT COEC EVENT | PHOTO BY LEAH ETLING

Business, nonprofit and public sector leaders shared insights on leadership, resilience and the evolving challenges facing Central Oregon during a Central Oregon Employer's Council (COEC) event held April 29 in Bend.

Facilitated by COEC Board President Don Paumier, the panel featured Cornelius Edison, former NFL player and co-owner of Lift Fitness Studio; Sarah Mahnke, executive director of Thrive Central Oregon; Ty Rupert, Deschutes County Sheriff; and Steve Bettis, vice president of manufacturing operations at Medline Industries, LP.

Edison, who transitioned from professional football with the Chicago Bears and Minnesota Vikings to entrepreneurship in 2020, emphasized the transferable nature of leadership skills across industries. Reflecting on his journey from NFL player to small business owner, he noted, "I realized that it's the same game, just a different arena. You figure out how to communicate, find good teammates, develop a strategy."

After relocating to Central Oregon and acquiring a fitness business just before the COVID pandemic, Edison and his wife Hannah relied on resilience and adaptability to navigate early challenges. In addition to operating Lift Fitness Studio, they are expanding their community impact through a nonprofit initiative, Lift The City, aimed at increasing youth access to fitness and wellness opportunities.

Mahnke provided insight into the region's housing and resource landscape through her leadership at Thrive Central Oregon, an organization focused on connecting individuals with housing and support services. "Our work was really

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New Central Library Set for Launch in Bend

State-of-the-Art 100,000 sq. ft. Hub to Open New Chapter for Community

by SIMON MATHER — CBN Feature Writer

Excitement is building as the new state-of-the-art 100,000-square-foot Central Library in Bend — representing the largest branch in Deschutes County by a wide margin — prepares to open its doors to the public May 11.

The three-story structural mass timber facility, located at 61956 SE Santorini St., off 27th St., heralds a new chapter in community engagement, featuring a host of amenities, including community meeting rooms, study rooms, co-working spaces, a children's discovery center, a teen lounge, a creative DIY "MakerSpace" zone, outdoor patios and solar-powered EV charging stations.

Many of the features were inspired by community input on what county residents



BEND'S NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY - NOW THE LARGEST IN THE DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM - WITH A STAGGERED ROOF LINE THAT MIMICS THE MOUNTAINS IN THE DISTANCE | PHOTO COURTESY OF DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Central Oregon Financial Institutions Spotlight — Pages 15-23

Oregon Outdoor Alliance

Guiding Outdoor Industry Since 2013

by NOAH NELSON — CBN Feature Writer

The foundations of the Oregon Outdoor Alliance (OOA), a nonprofit organization that works to connect, build and promote the Oregon outdoor industry, can be traced back to Bend in 2013, when industry leaders from companies such as Stanley and Ruffwear recognized an opportunity to diversify the growing Bend economy by looking inward towards their community.

"It all started as an opportunity to connect with each other and form a network of outdoor industry professionals," said OOA President Mike Wallenfels. "That first meeting at Pine Mountain Sports in Bend drew about 75 people, all with some connection to the outdoor industry."

These professionals came from all walks of life, and gathered around one simple question: How can our community best support established outdoor companies and the new ones just getting started?

This original event kicked off a movement based around the now-tradition of Beer:Thirty!, a regular

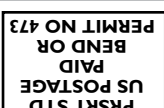


PHOTO | CASCADE BUSINESS NEWS

gathering of industry professionals (and those with any interest in guiding the industry) around an offering of free beer. Loosely organized conversation topics have grown into keynote speakers, event sponsors and more as OOA grew in size and relevance to the region.

In 2014, the movement grew to be large enough to

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Central Oregon Residents Invited to Weigh In on AI's Local Impact

Central Oregon residents are invited to participate in an online poll on how artificial intelligence is affecting their lives and communities. Led by the Central Oregon Civic Action Project (COCAP) in partnership with Citizens4Community, Central Oregon Community College, Mosaic Health, and the Bloom Project, the poll seeks input from all Central Oregon residents across Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties, and the Warm

Springs Reservation. Launching today, the anonymous poll takes only a few minutes to complete and is open to all Central Oregon residents. More information can be found at cocap.us/ai.

"This is a different kind of poll that offers participants the chance to contribute and vote on one another's

Continued on Page 30 ►

EDCO Releases 2026 Largest Employers List for Central Oregon

Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO) announces the 2026 Central Oregon Largest Employers List, including breakouts of the top employers in each Central Oregon community. This data, collected by EDCO annually for the past 25 years, is the most comprehensive major employer list in Central Oregon. EDCO's regional list features the largest private employers, including for-profit and nonprofit organizations, while community-level

lists include public employers. This year, the top 50 private companies collectively employ 22,733 Central Oregonians, or roughly 20.9% of the region's January 2026 annual average total non-farm employment of 108,800. St. Charles Health System tops the list again, employing 5,538 people regionwide, a 6.75% increase since last

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NFIB Kicks Off 'No on Measure 120' Awareness Campaign

Oregon's leading small business association announced today the launch of digital ads and a landing page aimed at educating voters on the urgent need to vote no on Ballot Measure 120 in the May Primary Election.

"Small businesses are urging

Oregonians to vote no on Ballot Measure 120 to protect our state's small businesses from unmanageable rising costs," said Anthony Smith, NFIB's state

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CORRECTION

In the April 15 CBN feature of Accomplished Under 40, Where Are They Now?, CBN omitted Ashley Mears' place of employment and title. It should have read under her photo: VP-Commercial Relationship Manager, Washington Trust Bank. You can read the article at CascadeBusNews.com under Archives.

We regret the omission.

RECENT TRANSACTIONS

Walt Ramage, of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Seller and Buyer in the disposition and acquisition of 95 SW Columbia in Bend. This 20,000 SF industrial building on 1.57 AC zoned Mixed-Use closed at \$5,400,000.

Jenn Limoges, **CCIM** and **Paul Evers**, both of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Landlord in leasing 724 SF of retail space (Suite 101) and 380 SF of office space (Suite 206) at 178 S Elm St in Sisters. This downtown boutique office and retail building is 100% leased.

Paul Evers, of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Landlord in leasing 1,800 SF of high-end retail

Continued on Page 30 ►

Submit your Recent Transactions to Jeff@CascadeBusNews.com to be seen in the next edition of *Cascade Business News*

Bend High School-Based Health Center Relocates to Expanded Site

Mosaic Community Health, in partnership with Bend-La Pine Schools and Deschutes County Health Services, is excited to announce that the Bend High School-Based Health Center (SBHC) has relocated to a larger, newly refurbished facility. The new site is adjacent to the Bend Senior High campus at 606 SE Glenwood Drive. The clinic began seeing patients at the new location on Monday, March 23, and is now welcoming the community to celebrate the expanded

space at an upcoming open house. "The new Bend High SBHC allows us to expand access to both medical and behavioral health services for youth in our community," said Ellie Millan, PNP, pediatric medical director at Mosaic. "We're excited to open our doors and invite families, students and neighbors to come see the space, meet our team

Continued on Page 30 ►

Savory Spice Bend Enters New Era, Becomes Top Hat Spice Shop in May

A long-time Old Mill District specialty store is getting a new name. But the spices, the people, and the product quality will remain largely unchanged.

The Bend Savory Spice franchise, which has been owned and operated by Matt Perry for 15 years, is rebranding as Top Hat Spice Shop. The change, which will be finalized in May, reflects a shift toward a more locally focused identity while maintaining the same spice suppliers, staff, and in-store experience customers

have come to love and expect. "We'll still be rooted in Savory Spice and still get all of our spices and blends from them, so the quality won't change," Perry said. "The biggest difference is that we'll now be able to create more of our own blends, have our own website, and build more of a local Oregon brand."

As part of the rebrand, many of the

Continued on Page 31 ►



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it truly makes a difference for the whole community.”

That track record is reflected in recent water-use data. In July 2025, Bend residents used 49 million gallons less water than in July 2024 — a reduction of approximately 20 gallons per person per day. The savings are particularly notable because July is typically the City’s highest water-use month. Building on its recent successes, the City of Bend is reaffirming its community water conservation goals in 2026:

- A voluntary reduction of 17 gallons per person per day
- A 12% reduction in water use among commercial customers

Thanks to strong community participation, these goals were met several times in 2025 — and they are even more vital this year.

The City’s Water Conservation Program offers hands-on support and incentives to help homes and businesses use water more efficiently, including:

- Free irrigation consultations for homes and businesses
- Rebates for high-efficiency indoor and outdoor water-saving devices
- Turf replacement rebates
- Increased water waste enforcement

Residents and businesses can take simple, effective steps to save water and keep our community resilient throughout the summer. The City encourages everyone to:

- Inspect irrigation systems thoroughly at spring start-up
- Adjust sprinklers to prevent overspray onto sidewalks and streets
- Check irrigation schedules to stay within City watering days and hours
- Take advantage of available rebates, consultations and conservation programs

“These are simple actions, but when thousands of people follow through, the impact is significant,” Denning said.

“Saving water helps delay expensive investments, protects Bend’s supply, and saves money for customers.”

For program details, watering regulations and upcoming events, visit waterwisetips.org.

◆ The City of Bend is launching Go Electric!, a free community workshop series designed to help residents learn practical ways to reduce energy emissions, save money and create more comfortable homes.

Energy use, from heating and cooling homes to cooking food and powering transportation, is one of the largest sources of local climate pollution. Transitioning to efficient, electric solutions is a key strategy in Bend’s Community Climate Action Plan, and Go Electric! is designed to help community members understand how and why electrification matters.

Through interactive, in-person and virtual workshops led by trusted local and statewide partners, Go Electric! breaks down electrification in clear, approachable terms. Participants will learn how electrification works, explore common misconceptions, and get connected to real-world resources, incentives, and next steps.

“Go Electric! is about making the energy transition accessible and practical for everyone,” said City of Bend Management Analyst for Environment & Climate Megan Lee. “We want people to feel informed and supported as they explore options that can improve comfort in their homes while also benefiting our community and climate.”

All Go Electric! workshops are open to all community members. The series will launch with three workshops over the coming months:

Weatherization for Income-Qualified Households

Learn about no- and low-cost options like insulation, sealing and energy-saving upgrades. Local experts will share information on available programs, eligibility and resources.

- June 24, 5:30-7:30pm
- Bend City Hall, Awbrey Butte Conference Room (or join online via Zoom)

Panelists:

- Satya Austin-Opper, The Environmental Center
- Thomas Elzinga, Central Electric Cooperative
- Jessica Taylor, NeighborImpact

Efficiency and Comfort for Renters

Homeownership is not a requirement to achieve a more comfortable, affordable and energy-efficient living space. This session dives into real-world electrification solutions for renters.

- July 23, 5:30-7:30pm
- City of Bend Council Chambers (or join online via Zoom)

Speakers:

- Tim Davis, Elevate NP
- Jessica Taylor, NeighborImpact

◆ The City’s 2026 street preservation plans were approved at the April 15, 2026, City Council meeting for paving, chipseal and slurry seal contracts.

The City of Bend is preparing to do about \$4.5 million worth of street preservation contract work this year that will improve approximately 68 lane miles in Bend. This includes about 7.5 miles of paving, 26 miles of chipseal, 26 miles of slurry treatments and 8.5 miles of micro paving. The attached map shows which roads will get treated this summer.

This work is supported by the Transportation Fee.

The City’s goal is to maintain and preserve streets with the most cost-effective treatment for the road condition, implementing the right treatment at the right time. Maintenance treatments for the 2026 construction season include:

Paving: Old asphalt is ground out and replaced, or a new layer of asphalt is paved on top of existing roadway. This process can take a couple of days.

Chip seals: Asphalt emulsion and rock are applied to the road. Rolling, short-term closures.

Slurry seal: A treatment typically for low-volume residential streets. One-day closures.

Micro paving: A cost-effective, quick treatment for high-volume streets. Night work.

With its own crews, separate from the contracted services, the City will also reconstruct the asphalt surface of about 1.5 miles of streets this year. With reconstruction, the existing roadway asphalt surface is removed and rebuilt. Work can take several days.

The City of Bend monitors the condition of roads to determine maintenance plans. This allows for the right treatment to be applied at the right time to save costs and extend the life of a road. The worst roads need full reconstruction, which is exponentially more expensive than regular maintenance. Full roadway reconstruction is not an efficient use of maintenance funds and is likely to be paid for as part of a larger transportation construction project.

“The street preservation contracts are part of our continued maintenance efforts to extend the life of our transportation infrastructure with the most cost-effective treatments and available resources,” said Transportation and Mobility Department Director David Abbas. “We have more than 900 lane miles of roads to maintain, and the cost of maintaining streets has increased considerably in recent years. Our operations and maintenance revenues, such as the Transportation Fee, will need to keep pace with cost and inflation increases in the future to improve our pavement conditions.”

To learn more about Bend’s street preservation practices, visit bendoregon.gov/streetpreservation.

To subscribe to weekly emails to plan your best route around road work and construction, visit bendoregon.gov/traffic for the weekly road and traffic report.

◆ The Bend City Council has adopted Section R327 of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code, establishing home-hardening requirements designed to improve wildfire resilience for new, detached residential construction in Bend.

Following a work session discussion on February 25, 2026, City Council directed staff to move forward with local adoption of R327, a state adopted section of the residential building code that cities may opt into. The ordinance received its first reading on April 1, 2026, and was adopted upon second reading on April 15, 2026. The new requirements will take effect May 15, 2026, and apply to new residential building permit applications submitted on or after that date.

R327 establishes wildfire-resilient construction practices for newly constructed dwellings and newly constructed accessory structures. It does not apply to additions or renovations of existing buildings. The new requirements include the use of noncombustible or ignition resistant materials for exterior components such as roofing, gutters, windows, vents and siding. Fire hardening makes a property more resistant to ignition by addressing the most vulnerable part of the home with materials and methods that increase the structure’s resistance to heat, flame and embers. While R327 does not apply to buildings regulated under the Oregon Structural Specialty Code, such as apartments and commercial buildings, those structures are typically built to a high baseline level of fire resistance.

With adoption of R327, Bend’s residential building standards align more closely with nearby jurisdictions. The code is already in effect for the City of Sisters and unincorporated areas of Deschutes County, supporting a consistent regional approach to community wildfire resilience.

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One Bad Boss Can Cost You Millions

Why Leadership Quality May Be One of the Most Important Financial Factors in Your Career

by **MAT HUNNICUTT, Partner — True Wealth Group**

When professionals think about building wealth, the focus is often on investments: stocks, real estate, retirement accounts and portfolio strategy.

But one of the most important financial decisions rarely shows up in a financial plan.

It is who you work for.

Leadership quality can quietly shape a person's career trajectory, influencing promotions, compensation growth and long-term earning potential. Over time, the difference between working under strong leadership and poor leadership can translate into a significant gap in lifetime earnings.

For most professionals, wealth accumulation in the early and middle stages of life is driven more by income growth than by investment returns. A salary increase early in a career does more than boost income in the short term. It often leads to larger raises in the future, increased bonuses and higher retirement contributions. Over the course of a career, that additional income compounds, creating a meaningful difference in long-term financial outcomes.

Because of this, the environment in which someone works plays a critical role in determining their financial trajectory.

Not all difficult managers are harmful to long-term success. Leadership is complex, and most organizations experience some level of friction. However, certain leadership styles consistently limit growth. In some workplaces, leaders prioritize control, recognition or personal image over developing their teams. These environments often create patterns that quietly stall careers, where credit is not properly shared, accountability is uneven and opportunities for advancement are limited.

In more extreme cases, employees may find themselves in cultures where taking initiative feels risky and visibility is restricted. While these dynamics may seem manageable in the short term, over several years they can significantly alter a professional's path.

Many professionals remain in these environments longer than they should. Some stay out of loyalty, while others believe conditions will improve over time. Still others hesitate to make a move due to uncertainty.

But the cost of staying too long is often underestimated.

Two individuals may begin their careers at a similar starting point with comparable skills. One works in an environment where leadership mentors, develops and promotes talent. The other works in a setting where growth is limited and recognition is inconsistent. Over time, the difference in compensation, responsibility and opportunity can become substantial, and that gap often continues to widen throughout a career.



The challenge for many professionals is not understanding that leadership matters, but recognizing when their current environment is no longer supporting their growth. That requires stepping back and evaluating whether they are continuing to develop valuable skills, whether their compensation reflects market value, and whether leadership is actively supporting their advancement. It also requires an honest assessment of whether their contributions are recognized and visible within the organization.

If the answer to these questions is consistently negative, the issue may not be temporary. It may reflect a structural limitation within the organization. The longer that environment remains unchanged, the more it can impact long-term earning potential.

When considering a new opportunity, professionals often focus primarily on compensation. While salary is important, long-term outcomes are typically shaped by other factors. The quality of leadership, the clarity of expectations and the presence of a defined path for growth all play a significant role in determining whether a role will support long-term success. Equally important is whether the company has a clear sense of direction and whether employees feel their contributions are valued and recognized.

These elements are not always immediately visible during the hiring process, but they often prove to be the most reliable indicators of future growth.

For employers, the implications are just as important. The same factors that professionals should evaluate when considering a new role, clear expectations, opportunities for growth, strong leadership and a culture where employees feel valued, are the same factors that determine whether employees stay and perform at a high level.

In a competitive labor market like Bend, where businesses are competing for a limited pool of talent, retention is no longer simply about compensation. It is about creating an environment where employees can succeed.

Ultimately, a career is the engine that drives an individual's financial future. That engine is shaped not only by effort, but by the environment in which a person works.

The right leadership can accelerate growth, increase earning potential and expand opportunities. The wrong leadership can quietly limit all three.

For employees, the message is clear: choose environments that invest in development, provide clarity and recognize contribution. For employers, the opportunity is equally clear.

The businesses that create those environments will not only retain their best people, they will get the very best out of them.

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A Walk Down Memory Lane

by **GRAHAM DENT, SIOR, Partner, Broker — Compass Commercial Real Estate Services**

This year, Compass Commercial is proudly celebrating 30 years in business! In 1996, Compass Commercial Real Estate Services was formed by founding partners Erich Schultz and Steve Toomey. In that same year, Erich and Steve launched the very first edition of Compass Points (“Points”). In 1996, the commercial real estate landscape looked very different from what it does today, with many of the community’s foundational pieces in development when the very first edition of Points was published. It was an exciting time to be involved with commercial real estate in Central Oregon.



In the early editions of Points, Compass only tracked the office and industrial markets in Bend and the industrial market in Redmond. In 1996, the Bend office inventory consisted of 84 buildings totaling 840,000 square feet. Today, the survey tracks 225 buildings and approximately 2.8 million square feet of office space. The office market was heating up in 1996, and four new office buildings were constructed on the west side, adding 57,000 square feet of new inventory. According to the fourth quarter Points report, “the newest and best buildings on the Westside command \$1.10-\$1.15 per square foot, per month.” Today, new office buildings command upwards of \$3.05 per square foot per month.

Amazingly, back in 1996, the Bend industrial inventory consisted of only 125 buildings totaling 1.8 million square feet. Today, the Bend industrial market consists of 333 buildings and more than 4.8 million square feet! In that early report, there was a pipeline of 15 industrial projects waiting for permits or in various stages of planning. Incredibly, those new projects penciled at lease rates between \$0.45-\$0.50 per square foot per month. Today, developers require rental rates between \$1.75-\$1.95 to justify new construction.

The 1996 Points report highlighted the sale of a 100-acre property located in northeast Bend. That property was sold by the Brinson Family for \$2.8 million and was key to unlocking the expansion of Bend’s industrial land supply. Today, the former Brinson property is home to the largest industrial submarket in town, comprised of more than 2.4 million square feet.

In Redmond, the future east side industrial market was beginning to take shape. The Points report in 1996 noted that one catalyst of Redmond’s ‘reshaping’ was the relocation of the Deschutes County Fairgrounds from its former location (current Fred Meyer shopping center) to the south end of the Redmond Airport. The Points report also pointed to the purchase of the 74-acre former Crown Pacific mill site by Nevada Rancher, Maynard Alves.

Since then, this site has provided much of the land supply for Redmond’s industrial expansion including the new distribution hub for Amazon. In 1996, the Points survey for Redmond only consisted of 19 buildings totaling 320,000 square feet! Today,

Points tracks a total of 97 buildings and 1.85 million square feet.

Although Points did not track retail data until years later, the 1996 report did note that Bend’s retail market was exploding: “On the west side of town, The Old Mill District at River Bend started designs on the 60,000 SF first phase of its retail component (now called The Shops at the Old Mill District). At the north end of town, the Bend Center and High Desert Village (now Cascade Village Shopping Center) were unveiled. Located on 45 acres adjacent to Target, these developments could consist of over 350,000 SF of space. Home Depot and Waremart (now WinCo) are two possible tenants. Plans on the east side call for the addition of several national retailers, including Barnes & Noble, Pier 1, Office Max, Blockbuster, McDonald’s, Taco Bell and Burger King. These retailers will be spread along Highway 20 at the Forum and Crossroads retail centers.”

When the first edition of Points was released, Bend was entering a new era of retail demand and beginning to attract national brands and big box stores. However, the locals weren’t embracing this new era. “The general citizenry seems to be up in arms over the appearance and character of the developments being created for these retailers. Many are unimaginative concrete block buildings nestled in a sea of asphalt,” quoted the 1996 Points report. Another highlight in the 1996 report was the groundbreaking for the Original Pancake House at the corner of Colorado and Century Drive. Who knows how many pancakes have been flipped in there since then.

Bend was also establishing itself as a viable alternative for outside investors during this time. The Points report mentioned this increasing demand and that stabilized investment properties were trading at cap rates between 9-10%. Those rates seem high compared to cap rates today, which are generally between 6.5%-7.5% but the cost of debt was substantially higher in 1996, with mortgage rates averaging 7.8% that year.

It’s been a wild ride, but for the last 30 years, Points has been a consistent resource for our clients and the business community in Central Oregon and beyond. Thanks to the foresight of Erich and Steve and all the hard work by Compass brokers through the years, we have access to a reliable data source that has been invaluable to our clients and an integral piece in their decision-making.

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BEND OFFICE

by **JAY LYONS, SIOR, CCIM, Partner, Broker — Compass Commercial Real Estate Services**

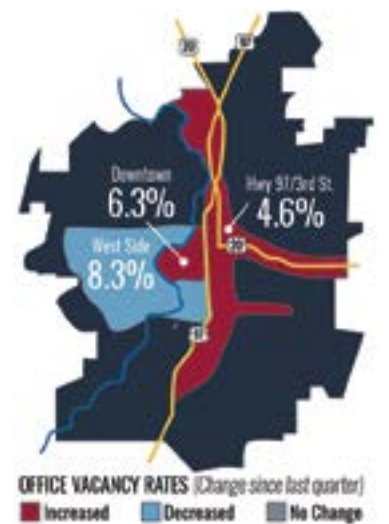
Compass Commercial surveyed 225 office buildings totaling 2.79 million square feet for the Q1 2026 report. During the quarter, the market experienced negative absorption of 3,194 SF. With this latest data, the Bend office market has now recorded negative absorption in five of the past six quarters. The vacancy rate increased slightly to 7.05% in Q1 2026, up from 6.94% in Q4 2025 and 6.05% in Q1 2025. Available sublease space increased slightly from 49,695 SF in Q4 to 50,524 SF in Q1, resulting in an overall availability rate of 8.75%. This gradual increase in available space continues to provide tenants with more options, particularly in second-generation office product.

LEASING: Leasing activity remains sluggish across all segments of the office market. The Downtown and Hwy 97/3rd St. submarkets both experienced modest negative absorption of 1,589 SF and 3,091 SF, respectively. The West Side submarket rebounded from a difficult Q4 (25,013 SF of negative absorption) and recorded 1,486 SF of positive absorption in Q1.

RENTS: Lease rates remain flat, with the high end of the market ranging from \$2.00-\$3.15/SF/Mo. NNN and more affordable space ranging from \$1.40-\$2.00/SF/Mo. NNN.

CONSTRUCTION: No speculative office buildings are currently under construction in Bend.

SALES: Office sales activity was limited but included two notable transactions during the quarter. A 1,245 SF single-tenant building at 846 NW Colorado Ave. sold in February for \$800,000, or \$643/SF, to an owner-user. Additionally, a 10,685 SF building located at 2100 NE Wyatt Ct. sold in March for \$3,450,000, or \$323/SF, with Deschutes County as the buyer. These transactions highlight continued interest from both owner-users and public entities, even as broader market conditions remain more challenging.

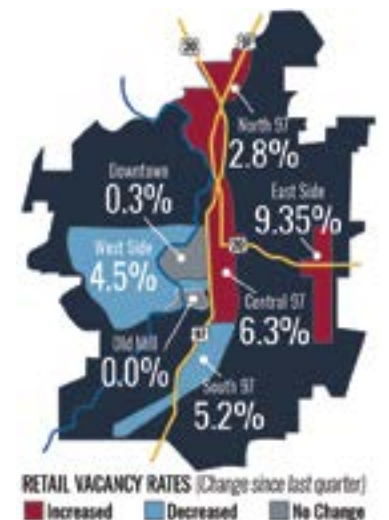


BEND RETAIL

by **ELI HARRISON, Broker — Compass Commercial Real Estate Services**

Compass Commercial surveyed over 4.61 million square feet of retail space across 275 buildings in Bend to compile our first quarter 2026 report. In the first quarter of the year, Bend experienced a slight increase in overall vacancy, rising from 4.32% in Q4 2025 to 4.37% in Q1 2026.

LEASING: The retail vacancy rate on Bend’s West Side continued to decrease for the third consecutive quarter, reaching 4.51%. The Old Mill District maintained a 0% vacancy rate, while the Downtown submarket also showed no change in its 0.34% vacancy



Continued on Next Page ►

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Compass Points

Continued from previous page

rate from Q4. Bend's Central district recorded 3,485 SF of negative absorption, causing its vacancy rate to jump from 5.78% to 6.29%. The East Side submarket also experienced a slight rise in vacancy, reaching 9.35%.

RENTS: Asking rental rates in Bend range from \$1.00-\$3.75/SF/Mo. NNN, with an average of \$2.20/SF/Mo. NNN. Exceptions to this range include several drive-thru pad sites being marketed for lease between \$5.00-\$5.42/SF/Mo.

CONSTRUCTION: A new restaurant drive-thru building at 3600 N Highway 97 is set to break ground in Q2 2026. Additionally, Goodwill's new superstore on the north side of Bend officially opened its doors in Q1 2026, bringing an estimated 50 new jobs to the Central Oregon community.

SALES: Notable sales this quarter included a sale-leaseback of the 195,916 SF Fred Meyer-anchored Paulina Square shopping center. Fred Meyer Inc. originally purchased the property for \$21.97 million, or \$111.73/SF in January 2026 and executed a sale-leaseback later that same month at the same price. 2570-2680 NE Twin Knolls Dr. sold for \$5,250,000, representing a 6.5% cap rate and \$206.14/SF. A 3,020 SF retail building at 1255 NE 3rd St. sold in February for \$975,000, or \$322.85/SF. Additionally, 631 NE Federal St. in Bend sold for \$2,040,000, reflecting a 5.08% cap rate and \$406.78/SF.

than the \$1.11/SF/Mo. NNN recorded in Q4 2025. Asking lease rates for new construction range from \$1.75-\$1.95/SF/Mo. NNN, depending on delivery condition. Second-generation flex space and highly-improved industrial space are typically leasing in the \$1.50-\$1.65/SF/Mo. NNN range.

CONSTRUCTION: Taylor Brooks is currently underway on the construction of NOCO at Juniper Ridge, located at Cooley Rd. and NE 18th St. The first phase consists of three industrial/flex buildings totaling 62,429 SF, with completion expected in 2026. The Falcon industrial condo project, located at 20489 NE Funner Pl., is nearing completion. The project consists of a range of condo units for sale (approximately 1,440 SF to 2,200 SF) and is projected to be completed in 2026.

SALES: One notable sale occurred during Q1 2026. The warehouse building located at 355 NE 2nd St. (adjacent to Bi-Mart building) sold to a nonprofit owner-user for \$1,800,000, or \$84.21/SF.

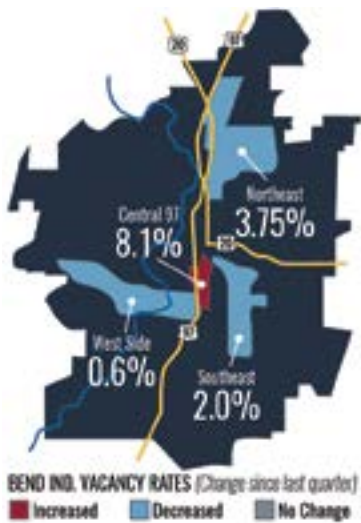
BEND INDUSTRIAL

by **GRAHAM DENT, SIOR, Partner, Broker** —
Compass Commercial Real Estate Services

Compass Commercial surveyed 333 industrial buildings in Bend totaling 4.81 million square feet for the Q1 2026 report. The market experienced 5,049 SF of positive absorption during the quarter, resulting in an overall vacancy rate of 3.36%. Bend currently has 161,654 SF of industrial space available, reflecting continued tight market conditions.

LEASING: Leasing activity remained relatively stagnant during the quarter, as evidenced by the modest level of absorption. The Northeast industrial submarket experienced the greatest level of activity, where a total of 13,465 SF of new leasing occurred during the period.

RENTS: The average asking lease rate for raw industrial space was \$1.13/SF/Mo. NNN at the end of Q1, slightly higher



REDMOND INDUSTRIAL

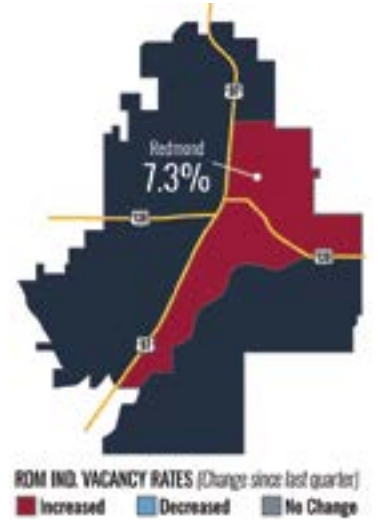
by **KRISTIE SCHMITT, CCIM, Broker** —
Compass Commercial Real Estate Services

Compass Commercial surveyed 99 industrial buildings in Redmond totaling approximately 1.86 million square feet for the Q1 2026 report. For the second consecutive quarter, the market experienced negative absorption, contributing to an increase in vacancy from 6.21% to 7.26%. This represents the highest vacancy rate since Q2 2015; however, the increase is largely attributed to several larger spaces coming to market, rather than a significant decline in overall demand.

LEASING: Leasing activity in Q1 remained measured, with continued tenant interest in smaller-bay industrial spaces under 5,000 SF. Consistent tenant inquiries and touring activity suggest underlying demand remains intact, particularly within the small- to mid-size user segment

RENTS: Industrial asking rents in Q1 2026 ranged from approximately \$0.75/SF/Mo. NNN on the lower end to \$1.20/SF/Mo. NNN for specialty-use or first-generation space, reflecting a slight widening in pricing based on building quality and level of improvements.

CONSTRUCTION: With the exception of 501 Veterans Way and the Red Barn Industrial Center, new industrial construction remains limited, and the market continues to be driven primarily by existing inventory. The lack of speculative development continues to limit new supply, which may help stabilize vacancy and support rental rates over time.



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Accomplished Under 40



Central Library

Continued from page 1

would like to see incorporated in the new facility, which will also allow the Deschutes Public Library system to double the size of its collection and provide quicker processing of materials.

The much-anticipated project stems from a broader district-wide expansion funded by a bond measure supported by Deschutes County voters in November 2020. The initiative has already funded the remodeling of the La Pine, Sisters and Sunriver libraries, as well as construction of the new Redmond Library and the current renovation of the Downtown Bend Library.

The Downtown Bend branch recently temporarily closed as it undergoes a major remodel, and is expected to re-open in summer of next year once work is complete.

Deschutes Public Library Director Todd Dunkelberg said the new Central Library, sitting on 9.3 acres, was the culmination of a “long and thoughtful” planning process that incorporated input from more than 7,000 community members, as part of a wide-ranging public canvassing effort.

He said, “We talked to people across the county through multiple outreach efforts, including everything from open house presentations to attending local fairs, standing in front of big box stores and interacting in libraries, to make sure we got as comprehensive a cross section of feedback from staff and community members as possible.

“One consistent response was that residents wanted a wider range of resources, including more meeting spaces, and better accessibility. We have addressed those requests through various means, including providing a large 250-capacity community room that can be divided.

“The Central Library — along with the new Redmond Library and remodeled neighborhood libraries — allows us to increase our services, resources and public meeting spaces. Plus, centralizing operations gives us the ability to move items to our other libraries throughout the county more quickly and efficiently than ever before.

“The site is central for the whole county and the resounding voter support received speaks to the quality of the community and what it values.”



NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY UPPER FLOOR FEATURING INCREASED BOOK COLLECTIONS AND GENRE CATEGORIES SURROUNDED BY MASS TIMBER STRUCTURAL DESIGN | PHOTOS COURTESY OF DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY

Architects involved were The Miller Hull Partnership in conjunction with local firm Steele Associates — a team that also worked on the Redmond Library project. Bend-based Kirby Nagelhout Construction served as general contractor during nearly two years of construction following a May 2024 groundbreaking.

Final preparations for the new Central Library over recent weeks have provided time to train staff and allow them to become familiar with the new space, with a focus on making sure they have a full understanding of all the systems and processes that make the new building function — which Dunkelberg says is key to having a successful opening.

The multiple meeting and study rooms include the large, divisible community room on the first floor, as well as a children’s discovery space that encourages interactive play and learning amidst the books on the second floor.

The third floor houses the adult collection, as well as a co-working area with plenty of space for collaboration, and the MakerSpace that provides opportunities for hands-on creativity.

Users will find ample seating areas throughout the building, public computers and print stations, and — in a first for a library in Deschutes County — a Thump Coffee café in the lobby.

Sustainability is a defining feature of the new building. “It was designed to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification standards,” says Dunkelberg.

“It is an all-electric building engineered to operate as an energy-independent facility. We’ve also incorporated energy-efficient systems that will significantly reduce the building’s environmental footprint while helping ensure reliable library service for the community well into the future.”

Steele Associates President Scott Steele said, “This is a career milestone as an extremely important public project for the community, and a great source of pride for me personally, as a Central Oregon native.

“The team, including Principal Architect Andy Harmon, poured their heart and soul into this project, as it did for the new library in Redmond. Any project benefitting the local community means a lot — these



DRIVE THROUGH FOR EASY RETURNS

Continued on Next Page ►

Central Library

Continued from previous page

facilities are not just libraries any more, they are important community centers.”

Design group The Miller Hull Partnership’s website states, “Designed to speak to the young, old, studious and synergistic, the Central Library will have a space — and be a place — for everyone.

“Creating and experimenting are prioritized, with spaces that are devoted to epitomizing these ideals. Creative spaces include equipment and flexible space to host a variety of activities for all ages; from crafts, to quilting, to emerging technology and more.

“A departure from convention extends to the various adult spaces, as well. Because of the increase in the number of remote workers coming to Deschutes County, there is greater demand for coworking spaces that don’t create any cost impediments.

“The new library responds to this heightened need by providing rooms that can support all types of ambitions and dynamics — from the virtual employee to the student to the entrepreneur.

“Another core principle involves early learning. In an effort to more deeply engage children beyond the simple provision of games and books, the children’s area will be filled with interactive elements that stimulate curiosity, encourage exploration of the collection, and provide hands-on interaction for children and caregivers.”

Reflecting the nature of its surroundings, the library’s base is made of regional stone and dry-toned metal, while its staggered roof line mimics the mountains in the distance with its undulating roof plane — human-made peaks and valleys.

Functionally, the sloped roof helps break down the multi-story space, enabling different types of spaces defined by ceiling height. One such space — the soaring atrium observed when entering the building — inspires a grand sense of arrival, while its openness functions as a wayfinding element, communicating a defined architectural menu that immediately orients visitors.

The design also maximizes mass timber, which provides significant structural integrity while occupying a 50% lower carbon footprint than concrete or steel.

Building on a collection of public art at libraries across the County, the



NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY UPPER FLOOR SEATING AREA OVERLOOKING JEFF GRADE'S WOODEN SCULPTURE, JUNIPER, WHICH FLOATS OVER THE MAIN STAIRCASE | PHOTO COURTESY OF DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY

Central Library features original art from a variety of artists working in a range of mediums.

A centerpiece is John Grade’s iconic wooden sculpture “Juniper” which floats over the main staircase, with more art representing artists such as Jason Graham, Sara Siestrem, Jeremy Okai Davis, Sarah More, and others.

Dunkelberg added, “We are excited to share the new Central Library with the people of Deschutes County.

“Bend’s last library was built more than 20 years ago, so it’s essential that our library system keeps pace with our county’s growth.

“So many people involved in the project and working at the highest level were dedicated to the library mission, and there was a lot of local pride involved to create a library that will be a community asset for years to come.”

deschuteslibrary.org

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Portland Gear Comes to Bend

Nationally Recognized Brand Unveils Old Mill Location

by **NOAH NELSON** — CBN Feature Writer

Portland Gear was founded in 2014 by Portland native Marcus Harvey. Inspired by the heart and soul of Portland, Portland Gear is made to be durable, weather-resistant, recognizable, and convenient for both short and long term travel. What began as a passion project to capture Portland's essence has become a lifestyle brand celebrated worldwide for its authentic storytelling and innovative designs.

Recently, the company announced their first move to Bend, unveiling an Old Mill storefront that is set to open with a ribbon cutting on Saturday, May 23.

"We're a brand that is deeply rooted in a sense of community," said Portland Gear's Head of People, Culture and Retail Kameesha Rose. "We're all about togetherness and everyday functionality. Our goal is for people to go together. Whether that's on a weekend hike or an adventure in a new country we hope to inspire you to go together, and we are excited to bring that unity to Bend."

Portland Gear, known for their recognizable "P" logo seen on hats



PHOTOS | COURTESY OF PORTLAND GEAR



around the state, has since evolved to offer a wide variety of apparel and accessories, including their new Cascade line of bags: the Cascade Backpack (available in both standard and compact sizes), the Cascade Getaway, the Cascade Carry-On, and multiple other Cascade bags featuring styles like duffel bags and cross-body bags. This wide range of bags provides customers with tailored options designed to meet a diverse array of travel needs, from carry-on convenience in airports to water-resistant technology that keeps belongings safe and protected.

Portland Gear has become known for their water-resistant nature, as Portland itself is a city known for having ample rainy days throughout the year. However, Rose said that this feature does not define their products.

"Our products are waterproof, but that doesn't define us, or defer people away," Rose said. "In Portland, the weather is a bit different, but our second biggest demographic is in California. Portland Gear maintains a high-quality, simple and functional design that's good for everyone. The waterproof features

Continued on Next Page ►

COEC

Continued from page 1

developed to make access to resources easier for people," she said, describing her own social work background, where she connected with local houseless individuals each week at the local library.

Thrive Central Oregon has grown rapidly, with a staff of 14 now facilitating as many as 800 monthly appointments across Central Oregon through partnerships with regional health agencies and public agencies. Mahnke highlighted both the scale of need and the organization's impact, noting that stable housing often leads to improved health and economic stability.

She also acknowledged ongoing financial pressures, including significant recent funding reductions tied to broader cuts in federal health-related programs. As a result, her organization is down \$500,000 in budget this year and has had to reduce staff.

Bettis offered a look into the region's advanced manufacturing sector through Medline's Redmond operation, which specializes in reprocessing single-use medical devices. The facility employs nearly 400 people and continues to expand as demand for cost-effective healthcare solutions grows. "We basically bring them back to life... and sell them back to the customers at a cost savings," Bettis said.

The process, which requires extensive FDA oversight and engineering expertise, reduces waste while helping healthcare providers manage rising

costs. Bettis noted that the company's growth reflects both innovation within the medical supply industry and Central Oregon's increasing role as a hub for specialized manufacturing. He applauded the City of Redmond and Redmond Economic Development Inc. (REDI) for their pro-manufacturing outlook and support of local businesses.

Rupert closed the two-hour discussion with a personal account of perseverance and public service, detailing his lifelong path to becoming the interim Deschutes County Sheriff. He will run for the permanent job in November 2026. "It's that heart of never giving up. Never give up, you just keep pushing through," said Rupert, who followed in his late father's footsteps by joining the Marines and eventually becoming a law enforcement officer.

Now leading a 238-person agency with a \$71.5 million annual budget that's responsible for public safety across Central Oregon, Rupert emphasized the importance of trust, accountability and operational discipline. Drawing on his experience in both the private sector and law enforcement, he described ongoing efforts to stabilize and strengthen the department while maintaining a high level of service to the community.

"We go into places that most people don't want to go, and we eliminate threats... because our job is preservation of life. We are here to make sure you go home every day and your family is safe," Rupert said.

Attended by around 75 community professionals, the COEC panel underscored a shared theme: effective leadership requires adaptability, perseverance and a sustained commitment to community impact.

centraloregonemployerscouncil.org

Portland Gear

Continued from previous page

are there if you need them, but they won't hold you back if you don't."

Aside from bags ready to take on any adventure, Portland Gear offers hats, footwear, shirts, sweatshirts, outerwear like sleek rain jackets, and accessories like luggage tags, tote bags, lanyards and bottle openers.

The expansion into Bend's Old Mill marks the company's first foray into Central Oregon. While the region has enjoyed Portland Gear's product line for years, this is the first brick and mortar location to be unveiled in the region. Aside from Bend, customers can find Portland Gear locations exclusively in Portland itself.

"When I thought about expansion for the summer, Bend felt like a natural next step," said Rose. "We share the same community values, and our goal is not to disrupt that, but to instead add to those values and help build them up."

Rose admits that this process happened faster than anyone had anticipated. What began as a potential pop-up in Bend quickly turned into a conversation for a permanent location in the Old Mill.



PHOTOS | COURTESY OF PORTLAND GEAR



"We're so excited about this big move," Rose said. "Bend has been at the top of our list, and the reception has been positive and welcoming."

Bendites and tourists alike will be excited to check out the first brick-and-mortar Portland Gear location outside of Portland when it opens on May 23. The public ribbon cutting ceremony will feature raffles, giveaways, and a speech by the company CEO.

In addition, the Bend location will offer a completely new line of products that will only be sold here in Bend. Be sure to check out the store to explore this uniquely-Bend product line.

portlandgear.com

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Oregon Outdoor Alliance

Continued from page 1

demand a more formal structure, and OOA was founded as a 501c(3) nonprofit organization the same year. Partnerships with other related organizations, such as the Economic Development of Central Oregon (EDCO), Business Oregon, Bend Outdoor Worx (BOW) and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) helped expand the organization's reach and impact.

What started here in Bend has since expanded to include chapters around the state, bringing in Portland, Southern Oregon and Hood River. Now, the organization has over 300 members including more than 50 brands and 30 nonprofits. The Oregon outdoor recreation economy has grown to generate \$8.4 billion for Oregon's economy, and OOA plays a unique role in guiding that growth. From collaboration and funding for businesses trying to break into the industry to advocacy and knowledge-sharing, OOA provides ample opportunities for outdoor industry partners to grow, thrive, and contribute to their local economies by serving their communities.



PHOTO | CASCADE BUSINESS NEWS



OOA's main impact comes from networking and connection. Industry professionals get to connect with each other, their audience, and the decision makers who help direct the industry. From there, they focus on advocacy, promotion and knowledge sharing, working with partnered organizations to grow from within, supporting Oregon businesses, nonprofits and entrepreneurs who are passionate about outdoor recreation.

OOA works with educational partners, including COCC, OSU-Cascades and UO to offer professional connections, internships and scholarships aimed at bolstering the outdoor community. Through these connections, OOA helps train the next generation of outdoor industry leaders and innovators.

To support these programs, OOA is looking for sponsors. Sponsorship is available in a tiered package system with increasing benefits. Aside from demonstrating commitment to community, economy and planet, the benefits include: tax deductions, logos on website and emails, grant sponsorship, social tags, event sponsorship, hosting and shoutouts, email and social campaigns, and special event tickets to help sponsors stay involved and connected.

To get involved and learn more about OOA, visit their website at oregonoutdooralliance.org, and consider attending their upcoming Beer:Thirty! hosted at Hi Vis Studio in Bend on May 14 from 5:30-7:30pm.

oregonoutdooralliance.org



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Mid Term Eye on Year End Targets

by EXPERT DAVE GROTJAHN —
Central Oregon Community College

Question:

I've heard a good practice is to conduct a mid-year review of my business, in June or July, but not sure what is involved. What advice can you provide?

A: Excellent question and the best place to start is by updating your financial statements and performance metrics along with your goals and objectives. Your objective is to find performance gaps and make necessary change to help you achieve your goals.

1. **Quality time with your financials:** Assess your financial statement with a comparative eye toward last year and/or prior quarters. Are you lagging behind, meeting or exceeding financial expectations? What actions can you take to influence your statements?
2. **Seeking CPA savvy:** Changes in tax laws can impact your business. Identifying those changes early affords you time to adjust and potentially save money.
3. **The long (or short) reach of marketing:** How effective is your marketing in driving sales? Are there new channels that have not been tapped that could bring in more customers? Make sure you're staying connected with your clients and seek their feedback.
4. **Keeping it efficient:** Evaluate for inefficiencies that may be costing you time and money. Examine key processes and look for areas to automate or streamline. Cycle time reduction, reducing non-value effort may seem trivial,

but left unchecked can impact your profitability.

5. **View from the 'bridge':** What's different over the past year? Changes in the economy, level of competition, labor market, technology (such as AI), etc. Having a macro perspective can bring a refined focus on your business to help you find solutions.

Remember, a business review is about your progress and results to date and to being open to making changes. Central Oregon Community College's Small Business Development Center offers free, confidential professional business advising and a variety of low-cost courses to help entrepreneurs through the business lifecycle. Visit cocc.edu/sbdc to learn more.

About the Expert:

Dave Grotjahn is a business adviser with Central Oregon Community College's Small Business Development Center. He is a non-licensed CPA and retired senior finance leader from Boeing Commercial Airplanes where he led investor relations, estimating and pricing and financial planning teams across many programs. He also supports Habitat for Humanity as a financial mentor, assisting clients in attaining home ownership.

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90% of U.S. Hiring Managers Say One Thing Speeds Up the Process & Most Candidates Don't Use It

by **KAREN TURNER, SHRM-CP | Managing Director — Express Employment Professionals**

A referral may be the closest thing to a “shortcut” in today’s job market, and a new Express Employment Professionals-Harris Poll survey shows just how powerful that endorsement can be. A striking 90% of U.S. hiring managers say employee referrals make hiring more efficient, and 91% say a strong internal reference can open doors that would otherwise stay closed.

Yet despite its impact, most job seekers aren’t tapping into it.

A referral does more than boost visibility. It fundamentally changes how hiring managers perceive a candidate.

- 89% trust candidates’ stated skills more when someone recommends them.
- 80% prioritize interviewing referred candidates over equally qualified non-referred applicants.
- 76% believe referred candidates perform better on the job.

In a crowded labor market, a single name can be the difference between getting noticed and getting overlooked.

But while referrals can be a deciding factor for hiring managers, job seekers rarely recognize their value. Only 40% believe a referral helps them stand out, revealing a significant disconnect between how influence is perceived on each side of the hiring process.

Referrals Work When Relationships Are Real

Hiring managers value referrals, but they also value authenticity.

- 93% have been contacted by former colleagues after long periods of no communication.
- 38% say it happens all the time or often.
- 68% are less likely to provide a reference if the only time someone reaches out is when they need one.

- 66% consider whether the person maintained the relationship over the years before agreeing to help.

The power of a referral doesn’t begin when a candidate needs a job. It begins long before that through trust, history and genuine connection.

The Strength — And Limits — of a Referral

Even with its undeniable impact, hiring managers are realistic about the boundaries of a referral.

- 91% say a reference doesn’t always mean the candidate is the right fit.
- 49% strongly agree.
- 70% worry that relying on referrals can limit team diversity.

Referrals open doors, but they don’t replace a true assessment of skills, culture or potential. They accelerate opportunity, not guarantee it.

Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from November 3 to 19, 2025, among 1,002 U.S. hiring decision-makers.

The Job Seeker Report was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals from November 7 to 20, 2025, among 1,003 adults ages 18 and older.

For full survey methodologies, please contact Sheena.Hollander@ExpressPros.com, director of Corporate Communications & PR.

The Central Oregon Express office is located at 296 SW Columbia, Suite B, Bend, Oregon 97702 and serves Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson counties.

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Oregon Tourism Industry a Critical Economic Driver Despite Headwinds

Economic Impact of Tourism in Oregon Totaled \$14.6 Billion in 2025

by **GRACE BRIGGS**

Despite global challenges, tensions and economic uncertainties, tourism remains a critical economic driver in Oregon, contributing \$14.6 billion in travel spending annually to the state economy. The 2025 Oregon Economic Impact of Tourism report, released by The Oregon Tourism Commission, dba Travel Oregon, shows the continued growth and resiliency of Oregon’s tourism industry and highlights the importance of travel to Oregon’s future.

In addition to the dollars spent in Oregon, the travel and tourism industry supported 122,900 jobs in 2025 across restaurants, wineries, local retail stores, lodging facilities, tour operators and outfitters, campgrounds and more. As of this analysis, one in every 16 jobs in the state is exclusively supported by travel spending.

“The release of our economic impact report coincides with National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW), and that’s not by chance,” said Travel Oregon CEO Todd Davidson. “NTTW is a celebration of the essential role the tourism industry plays in powering our economy, strengthening communities and creating meaningful jobs. As Travel Oregon celebrates the industry’s positive impact, we also recognize the challenges before us. Economic headwinds exist, but tourism remains vital and resilient, the numbers proving once again how critical the industry is for Oregon’s economic health.”

One of the greatest strengths of Oregon’s tourism industry is the ability to collectively

respond to challenges. We know, for example, that the continued decline in international visitation due to global tensions is hampering efforts to fully recover tourism spending in the Portland metro area. In response, Travel Oregon has made strategic investments to bolster tourism in our state’s largest city, such as supporting festivals and events, the James Beard Public Market and a wayfinding effort downtown.

Oregon winemakers are also feeling the pinch of the continued decline in international visitation, both in their tasting rooms and on the shelves in Canada. The tourism industry has responded to these challenges by helping promote new and unique offerings such as Method Oregon — a nonprofit organization of 50 Oregon sparkling winemakers who are creating a standard for producing world-class traditional method sparkling wine with sustainable practices — and the Method Oregon sparkling wine trail. Travel Oregon is proud to support this innovative initiative and others by securing media coverage, supporting events and festivals, working closely with Oregon Wine Board and more.

“We have so many amazing sparkling wines coming out of Oregon, and we knew we had to find a way to better tell that story. Method Oregon lets people know the sparkling wine they’re about to enjoy is exceptional in both quality and sustainability,” said Jeanne Feldkamp of Corollary Wines. “The promotional support from Travel Oregon has been instrumental in helping us share the Method Oregon

story with visitors from around the world.”

Across the state, the seasonal nature of tourism has always been a challenge. Travel Oregon helps tourism businesses address that, too, by supporting them in expanding visitor seasons and offerings in innovative ways. One such business is Central Oregon’s Wanderlust Adventures, an outfitter focused on sustainable, accessible outdoor adventure for all. After Travel Oregon and Travel Southern Oregon helped secure the Oregon Outback’s designation as the world’s largest Dark Sky Sanctuary, Wanderlust was able to capitalize on the astro-tourism travel trend by offering new dark sky experiences.

“Thanks to the tourism industry’s work on Dark Sky designations, Central Oregon is now known worldwide as a premier stargazing destination, and Wanderlust is able to cater to visitors looking for adventurous and sustainable ways to enjoy our starry skies,” said Courtney Braun of Wanderlust Adventures. “Being able to tap into widely promoted initiatives with year-round potential like Dark Sky tourism is critical to the health of our business. And with this economic boost also comes increased opportunity to inspire and educate more guests on the many benefits of preserving the dark.”

The earnings that owners of tourism businesses such as Wanderlust Adventures and their employees generated last year is an economic bright spot — \$4.9 billion in 2025, representing solid growth of 5% year over year. These earnings contribute

to critical public revenues as well. In 2025, Oregon saw \$441 million in state tax revenue generated directly by tourism activity — with much of those dollars contributing to the state general fund through income tax. Local communities across Oregon generated another \$301 million in tax revenue, funding everything from sports fields to police and fire services.

The contributions of the travel and tourism industry to Oregonians don’t stop there. In addition to the benefits above, 30% of the Transient Lodging Tax Travel Oregon collects is reinvested directly back into communities across the state through a Competitive Grants Program and a Regional Cooperative Tourism Program. Together, these programs fund projects that not only improve the visitor experience, but also create parks and trails, entertainment venues, museums and more that Oregonians enjoy each and every day. In 2025, these investments paved the way for Oregon to become the first state to achieve Accessibility Verified status with Wheel the World, earning Travel Oregon a Global Visionary Award from Travel + Leisure magazine and improving the quality of trips and everyday life for visitors with disabilities and Oregonians alike.

Access the full 2025 Economic Impact of Tourism in Oregon report, including a breakdown of the \$14.6 billion in travel spending, 122,900 jobs and \$4.9 billion in employee earnings at the regional and county level here.

traveloregon.com

Local Food Brand Goes All-In on Pesto

by **BARB MYERS — Fixa Foods**

Fixa Foods is turning up the flavor and dialing in convenience with a full-on focus on pesto and a brand-new 4 oz size designed for the way people actually eat today.

Known for reimagining pesto beyond pasta, Fixa Foods is now spotlighting its lineup of craveable, versatile flavors: Pistachio, Cheezy, Herby, and Red Pepper. The new 4 oz format fits just about anywhere: lunchboxes, picnic spreads, snack boards, and weeknight dinners.

“We listened to our customers in Central Oregon,” said Founder Barb Myers. “They want bold flavors to make cooking easier and upgrade everyday meals

or snacks.”

Small Size, Big Flavor, Endless Possibilities

The new 4 oz jars are made for modern eating habits:

- Snackable: Swipe it on crackers, dip veggies, or pair with cheese
- Portable: Toss it in a bag for work, school, or outdoor adventures
- No waste: Just the right amount for a few meals or one great gathering
- Entertaining-ready: Elevate a last-minute spread in seconds

From grain bowls and roasted veggies to sandwiches and eggs, Fixa’s pestos bring bold, fresh flavor to

everyday food with no complicated recipe required.

Rooted in Central Oregon

Fixa Foods continues to proudly produce in Central Oregon, drawing inspiration from the region’s vibrant food scene and access to high-quality ingredients. The brand’s commitment to simple, delicious food aligns with the local community’s love for real, approachable eating.

Now Available

The new 4 oz size is rolling out now at select Central Oregon grocery stores, farmers markets, and specialty shops. Customers can find all four signature flavors in the freezer section.

fixafoods.com

Local Banking Professionals Share Insights on AI, Liquidity & More



Wendy McGrane
 Vice President // Business Banking Manager
U.S. Bank
 usbank.com

How is your company currently using AI? In what capacity and how do you see it shaping the future of the banking industry?

Artificial intelligence and machine learning are used across U.S. Bank, with many different areas of our company leveraging its benefits to enhance how we do business.

Our strategy with AI focuses on enabling new experiences and unlocking efficiencies to power human potential. We are using AI not just for the sake of AI, but to solve problems, improve experiences and enhance operations.

AI has practical applications across Risk, Fraud, Operations, Technology, Human Resources, Customer Experience, Digital, Marketing and Data/Analytics. We have teams in each of these areas who serve as subject matter experts to stay on top of current developments and to ensure we are using resources wisely to take advantage of the tools.

AI is a powerful tool to augment human work, allowing employees to spend less time on mundane tasks and more time on high-value activity – increasing efficiency, productivity and job satisfaction, while providing clients with better service. For this reason, it’s going to be present in many aspects of our collective lives, including banking.

How are you addressing the rise in cybercrimes, including AI deep fakes and other scams?

Leveraging AI and machine learning has allowed us to be more efficient and prevent fraud. To date, fraud detection and prevention is a top scalable use case for AI and machine learning. That is why U.S. Bank has deployed AI/ML in fraud detection because of its speed and capability to sort billions of datapoints quickly. We will continue to prioritize use cases that help us fight bad actors deploying these same tools against us.

Additionally, we recognize the importance of safeguarding our customers’ financial data and records from individual interactions with our bankers. Our clients expect the highest standards of data security and privacy, and we are

fully committed to fulfilling our responsibility in safeguarding it. That is why we ensure that all data is strictly contained within our AI models inside our secure environment. This data is neither accessible to external parties nor shared with any Large Language Models outside our organization. We are committed to staying educated and aware of the inherent bias and risks these technologies contain. This strategy ensures we address these risks before implementation.

Are deposit and loan activity staying in line with traditional banking history? Any trends?

Deposit and loan activity remains generally consistent with traditional banking patterns, with several notable trends emerging as businesses seek both stability and flexibility in today’s environment.

On the deposit side, many of our business clients are focused on maximizing earnings on operating and excess cash while preserving liquidity for upcoming investments. We are seeing strong interest in money market solutions, particularly among businesses that want to earn a competitive return while keeping funds readily accessible for their next major purchase, expansion, or hiring initiative. We are also proactively working with clients who anticipate receiving large tariff-related reimbursements, helping them plan for how those funds can best support their goals.

From a lending perspective, activity has been healthy across several key areas such as equipment finance, particularly for manufacturing companies, operating lines of credit, and owner-occupied commercial real estate.

With an ever more crowded selection of options for depositors, tell us about how your institution is addressing bank liquidity.

Competition for deposits has certainly increased, but at U.S. Bank we view this

Continued on Page 18 ►



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Central Oregon Financial Institutions

Banks and Financial Institutions *(Listed Alphabetically)*

The financials listed contain the most current information provided by the financial institution.
In some cases it is as of May 2020, but for some of the entities it is information based on the previous quarter.

Company / Address	Phone	Fax	WebSite/Email	Contact	Staff	CO Year Est.	Local Deposits	Assets	Net Loans	Return Average Assets	Return Average Equity	Locations
Bank of America 1210 NE Third St. Bend, OR 97701	541-389-3500	541-693-0057	www.bankofamerica.com	Customer Service	22	1922	\$224 Million	\$1.6 Trillion	\$956 Billion	1.19%	9.43%	Bend (2), Redmond (1)
Columbia Bank 400 SW Bond St., Ste. 100 Bend, OR 97702	541-923-8110	N/A	www.columbiabank.com ChrisDupont@Columbia-Bank.com	Terri Collins, Chris DuPont	55	1993	\$57 B	\$70 B	\$51 B	1.40%	19.50%	Bend (4), Redmond (1), Madras (1)
First Interstate Bank 1100 NW Wall St. Bend, OR 97703	541-385-6200	541-382-8780	www.firstinterstatebank.com Eliesha.Stone@fib.com	Eliesha Stone	115	1977	See website	N/A	N/A	See website	See website	See website
Idaho First Bank 1002 NW Bond St., Ste. 101 Bend, OR 97703	541-948-8680	N/A	www.idahofirstbank.com dobrien@idahofirstbank.com	Davina O'Brien	6	2020	\$529,651,845	\$602,533,731	\$496,443,569	1.00%	11.20%	Bend (1), Locations in Idaho (7)
JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association 450 NW Franklin Bend, OR 97701	541-382-2866	541-388-2742	www.chase.com	Client Services	12	1955	\$295.7 Million	\$1.91 Trillion	\$15.1 Billion	0.84%	8.82%	Bend (3), Redmond (2), Prineville (1)
Summit Bank 560 SW Columbia St. Bend, OR 97702	541-317-8000	N/A	www.sbko.bank goconnell@sbko.bank	Gary O'Connell	26	2015	\$1.14 Billion at Q3 2025	\$1.29 Billion at Q3 2025	\$1.09 Billion at Q3 2025	1.13% Q3 2025	10.74% Q3 2025	Bend, Eugene, Portland & Redmond
U.S. Bank 1025 NW Bond St. Bend, OR 97703	541-388-8722	N/A	www.usbank.com wendy.mcgrane@usbank.com	Wendy McGrane	125	1937	\$1,087,393,000 as of 6/30/2025 (Bend MSA)	\$692.3 Billion as of 12/31/2025	\$391.3 Billion as of 12/31/2025	1.19% as of 12/31/2025	18.4% as of 12/31/2025	In Central Oregon: Bend (5), La Pine (1), Redmond (1), Sisters (1), Madras (1), Prineville (1)
WaFd Bank 572 SW Bluff Dr., Ste.110 Bend, OR 97702	541-330-1807	541-330-6928	www.wafdbank.com info@wafd.com	Client Services	56	1917	\$252 Million (5/2020)	\$14.9 Billion (5/2020)	\$9.9 Billion (5/2020)	1.12% (5/2020)	8.33% (5/2020)	La Pine (1), Gilchrist (1), Bend (2), Redmond (1), Prineville (1), Madras (1), Sisters (1)
Washington Trust Bank 1219 NE Third St., Ste. 120 Bend, OR 97701	541-516-8320	N/A	www.watrust.com/centraloregon cjallen@watrust.com	Cory J. Allen	12	2021	\$40,000,000	\$10,628,299,000	\$7,435,464,000	1.11%	11.93%	43 branches
Wells Fargo 960 NW Wall St. Bend, OR 97701	541-388-0540	541-388-0579	www.wellsfargo.com	Client Services	135	1936	\$663.7 Million (as of 4/2022)	\$1.6 Trillion (as of 4/2022)	\$895 Billion (as of 4/2022)	1.32% (as of 4/2022)	14%	Bend (3), Redmond (2), Madras (1), Prineville (1)

This is a sampling of Central Oregon Banks and Financial Institutions. If you would like to be added to this list, please email cbn@cascadebusnews.com.

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2

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watrust.com/HomeRun

 Washington Trust Bank

Member FDIC 

U.S. Bank *Continued from page 15*

environment as an opportunity to differentiate through strong relationships, prudent balance-sheet management, and thoughtful advice.

Liquidity management starts with our focus on deep, comprehensive relationships, rather than transactional banking. We reward clients based on their total relationship with the bank, not individual products. This approach encourages long-term partnerships and allows us to align deposit solutions with lending, treasury management, and personal banking needs. We believe this relationship-driven, whole-bank style is what creates lasting value for our clients and sustainable liquidity for the bank.

U.S. Bank's liquidity strength is also supported by scale and diversification, combining the resources of a national institution with strong local execution. In the Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson County tri-county area, U.S. Bank operates ten retail branches and holds approximately 19% of total market deposits, ranking among the top financial institutions locally. Importantly, that market share has

remained stable over the years, reflecting the durability of our core deposit relationships even in a competitive environment.

Additional comments?

What sets U.S. Bank apart in Central Oregon is our ability to combine national resources with a deeply local team and perspective. Our bankers, advisors and support teams are based here in the community, bringing together expertise across business banking, retail banking, mortgage, and wealth management. This locally integrated approach allows us to support clients holistically - whether they're running a growing business, managing personal finances, or planning for what's next.

We believe the strongest banking relationships are built on trust, continuity and a genuine understanding of our clients' goals. Our teams take the time to listen and collaborate, offering thoughtful guidance through changing economic conditions and across every stage of growth. Just as importantly, we're committed to Central Oregon for the long term and remain actively invested in the success of the businesses, families and organizations that make this region thrive.

For those who don't currently bank with U.S. Bank, we welcome the opportunity to connect, learn more about your priorities, and demonstrate the value of working with a local team backed by the strength and stability of a national institution.



Chris DuPont
SVP – Commercial Market Manager
Central Oregon Commercial Banking
Columbia Bank
ColumbiaBank.com

How is your company currently using AI? In what capacity and how do you see it shaping the future of the banking industry?

In 2024, we set up a council to develop a framework and policies for strategically deploying AI technology in light of regulatory, privacy, transparency, fairness and safety considerations. Our focus with all technology, including AI-related technology, is simple: deploy solutions that reduce toil for our associates and friction for our customers. So, we're implementing solutions that enhance customer experience, make us an easier bank to do business with and complement our unique brand of relationship-focused banking. This includes solutions that directly empower substantive and timely customer engagement and those that streamline back-office processes to improve efficiency and responsiveness.

AI will be transformative for the banking industry and, if deployed well, significantly improve customer experience, fraud safeguards, efficiency and productivity. Rapid advances in technology will make it imperative for regulatory guardrails to be responsive and keep pace and for banks to have robust governance and accountability to ensure they deploy solutions responsibly.

How are you addressing the rise in cybercrimes, including AI deep fakes and other scams?

Because these crimes typically have a financial component, banks are on the frontlines of fraud prevention. It's one of the first topics business customers want to discuss when we're introduced. Educating our customers is a major priority and involves a number of formal and informal engagements about their preparedness: From in-branch messaging to formal fraud prevention events we hold with various experts across our markets to educate customers about the latest threats and what they can do to ensure their employees, internal controls and financial processes are dialed.

We also strongly encourage our customers to implement simple controls, such as dual payment approvals within digital banking applications, biometric and multi-factor identity verification, as well as Positive Pay solutions to prevent ACH and check fraud. It's worth noting that while sophisticated AI deepfakes are a problem, good old-fashioned check fraud remains a significant threat for businesses. Moving to automated payment solutions, which we provide, is encouraged because they reduce transaction touchpoints and human errors, which are vulnerabilities criminals exploit.

Importantly, we emphasize with customers that they can always pick up the phone and call a member of their banking team (at a previously verified number) about a suspicious request. We recently helped one customer save more than

\$600,000 on a fraudulent wire transfer thanks to working together and digging deeper into the email request.

Are deposit and loan activity staying in line with traditional banking history? Any trends?

This all really depends. There are many variables at play including personal accounts and various business types. Technically speaking, there appears to be a trend of shrinking personal deposits and increasing consumer debt on credit cards, etc. Much of this was influenced by the pandemic and the "COVID" money has essentially run out. Higher cost of living on the consumer side is driving some of this as well.

On the business side we are seeing higher utilization of internally generated cash flows for operations leading to higher utilization of deposit and treasury management services. Lending activity is starting to ramp back up but has been tempered by higher interest rates over the past few years. Different business industries are peaking while others are dropping, but it is the nature of business. The evolution of financial products utilizing electronic methods is speeding up money movement. Overall, in my opinion we are seeing more transactional business with higher deposits and more treasury management services and less demand on loans.

With an ever more crowded selection of options for depositors, tell us about how your institution is addressing bank liquidity.

First and foremost, we are very focused on what we do best and has been the differentiator for our success through the ups and downs of market cycles: building deep, long-term relationships that deliver for customers and create value way beyond the transaction. As a result of this focus, we have very low loan default rates and a stable deposit base that is granular and diverse geographically and across sectors.

It's important to note that Columbia Bank has tripled in asset size the past five years, which has positioned us for strong organic growth moving forward. Here in Oregon and Washington, our 10% market share rivals larger national banks. We now rank as a top 10 depositor in Southern California and have tremendous opportunity for organic growth in our de novo markets across the West. For us, it's really about unlocking the potential of our unique brand of relationship banking, resources and technology enhancements to go deeper with current customers and continue attracting new ones. Adding top local banking talent to strengthen teams in our legacy markets and build best-in-class teams in our newer markets also remains a top priority, as well as strengthening our fee income through our outstanding treasury and wealth management teams.



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Cory Allen
SVP, Team Leader // Central Oregon
Washington Trust Bank
watrust.com

How is your company currently using AI? In what capacity and how do you see it shaping the future of the banking industry?

AI is an important component of our overall technology and business strategy. Today, we are using it primarily to remove low-value, manual work so our teams can focus on higher-value activities that better serve our customers. We are building a strong foundation for advanced capabilities, including secure employee chat tools, embedded AI within vendor platforms, and intelligent automation across processes, controls, and risk management.

Because there is no clear precedent for deploying advanced AI in a highly regulated environment, we've taken a disciplined "test-and-learn" approach — establishing governance frameworks, employee policies, and oversight that will also support audits and exams. Looking ahead, we believe AI will reshape banking by driving efficiency, strengthening risk management, and enabling more personalized, data-driven services. Avoiding AI is itself a risk, and we see the next few years as pivotal for the industry's evolution.

How are you addressing the rise in cybercrimes, including AI deep fakes and other scams?

Fraud prevention is a team effort. Washington Trust provides the technology, expertise, and resources, while our customers bring knowledge and awareness of scams, which is a critical layer of control. This year we launched our *Fraud stops with you* campaign with social content and monthly newsletter to educate customers on how fraud tactics are evolving and advancing, including the deployment of deepfakes. And later this spring we'll be releasing a fraud prevention playbook with tactics to help businesses not only defend against fraud, but also go on the offensive.

Yet even with increasingly technology-driven scams, identity theft by fraudsters stealing someone's personal information remains one of the top

ways scams are perpetrated. Federal Trade Commission data on consumer fraud reflects this fact. That's why we continue to host our free annual Shred Day events across the Northwest, which provide an easy way to properly dispose of sensitive documents. We'll be hosting one at our Bend branch on September 25.

Are deposit and loan activity staying in line with traditional banking history? Any trends?

Generally, deposits and loans are in line with what we have seen in recent years and reflective of our commitment to a fortress balance sheet. Year-over-year, deposits were up 1% and loans were up 7% at the end of Q4.

With an ever more crowded selection of options for depositors, tell us about how your institution is addressing bank liquidity?

Next year, Washington Trust will celebrate 125 years of serving the Northwest. We're privately held, which means that we don't answer to Wall St. or other outside interests. We focus on serving our clients and communities to the best of our abilities, so we put a premium on sound business practices, constant innovation, and deep expertise. This has resulted in our maintaining a conservative fortress balance sheet that prioritizes high liquidity and capital reserves.

Washington Trust also remains focused on local banking. Our approach to growth is "one customer, one employee at a time." As larger banks continue to consolidate or close their doors, we've found that many depositors prefer the experience that only a local, relationship-driven bank can provide. We opened our Bend branch in 2021 and have since opened three more branches in the Northwest, bringing our total to 45. Our customers value and are assured by the fact that they can walk into their local branch and speak face-to-face with a personal banker regarding their needs.



Gary O'Connell
EVP, Market President
Summit Bank
sbko.bank

How is your company currently using AI? In what capacity and how do you see it shaping the future of the banking industry?

Summit Bank's use of AI started by forming a strategy. The bank has an active AI Task Force. Our governing AI strategy began with how we will never use AI: in any capacity where we detect that the confidentiality of our client information could be even remotely at risk. We also never intend to implement AI as a lower cost alternative to what we function best at, which is people doing business with people. Guided by these principles, we have found a few fully vetted technology solutions that have aided in the client interface (mobile and online banking), operational efficiency, enhanced credit analysis to make faster human led local credit decisions (we do not credit score our decisions), and fraud prevention. We have experienced positive results based on client and banker feedback. We will continue to garner client and banker feedback to make additional investments as they develop.

How are you addressing the rise in cybercrimes, including AI deep fakes and other scams?

Of the numerous applications available with AI, fighting cyber crimes and other forms of fraud has been the focus of our AI investment. From our enhanced CIP (Customer Identification Program) and "know your client" protocols to enhanced AI private transaction monitoring, we are taking every measure to proactively fight cyber crime and fraud. For instance, we recently brought on Verafin, an AI solution that detects potential fraudulent transactions that the human eye may miss. It catches multiple fraud attempts daily. Our bankers promptly contact the client or business decision maker to address the matter. It has been a very impactful tool. Aside from AI, our "know your client" protocols prevent fraud daily. Rather than using out of area call centers with employees who may not be familiar with the client, our local banking officers familiar with the business client monitor their activity. If an email or phone request from a client appears to vary from their normal behavior, we'll call the client instantly to verify the request. We encourage every client to utilize our complimentary Positive Pay feature to monitor check presentment activity. It is the cheapest and easiest fraud insurance tool a business banking client can have. We utilize a similar solution, ACH filter, to monitor client ACH activity and alert them as appropriate.

Are deposit and loan activity staying in line with traditional banking history? Any trends?

Summit Bank's deposit and loan activity is dependent on local economic activity, market conditions (interest rates), and changing consumption patterns. By almost every key performance measure, the business climate in

Oregon is sluggish and we are starting to see this impact in Central Oregon. With higher interest rates than in years past, business loan demand has softened moderately. Despite this, Summit Bank was one of the few banks to grow both loans and deposits in Oregon last year. The bank's Central Oregon Advisory Board, a cross-section of local business leaders, recently met and discussed the stagnation in Central Oregon and what we can do to help. The multi-family sector has softened, with vacancies at levels that could take five years to fully absorb. The industrial sector remains strong but has slowed in some areas, and the office market remains flat albeit healthier than Portland and other areas. The general commercial and industrial environment shows mixed signals, with some locally based traded-sector companies thriving while other businesses more dependent on the local economy have flattened or slowed. These factors impact deposit and loan activity. In the changing marketplace, we monitor online banks, alternative or non-banks, and out-of-area based banks. Oregon is severely underbanked with only 12 banks headquartered here, so our strategy has been to continue to invest and grow market share in our Oregon markets despite economic headwinds. As for consumption patterns in banking, it is our belief that technology exists to augment transactions and our local teams of bankers exist to personally manage business client relationships. The transactional part of banking has been greatly enhanced in ways that our clients can appreciate: our investments in fraud prevention, operational efficiency and integration with client accounting systems, and Real Time Payments (RTP), enabling clients to receive funds instantly. In summary, our strategy to maintain deposit and loan activity is to grow market share by earning our clients' business every day, and by making meaningful technology investments in areas pertinent to the changing marketplace.

With an ever more crowded selection of options for depositors, tell us about how your institution is addressing bank liquidity.

We address liquidity often. Like the businesses we serve, liquidity and capital are the lifeblood of our bank. Our Asset Liability Committee meets a minimum of quarterly. There, we try to "break our bank" utilizing every stress test and worst-case scenario we can imagine. As of our most recently available public data for the quarter ended March 31, 2026, we had zero reliance on wholesale funding. We had cash and available for-sale securities of \$204 million or 15% of assets. This amount, combined with available unutilized borrowing capacity, surpasses the total of our deposits in excess of client FDIC limits. We often remind ourselves that we earn our independence every day, and ensuring our financial sustainability with rigorous asset-liability management is a key part of that.



Michelle Loftsgard
 AVP, Area Manager
OnPoint Community Credit Union
 onpointcu.com

How is your company currently using AI? In what capacity and how do you see it shaping the future of the banking industry?

OnPoint Community Credit Union implements AI tools to analyze data to discover insights into how our members use our products, and identify ways our products could be improved. We know that AI has and will continue to change the business landscape, and we will work to ensure the safety and soundness of our institution for our members.

How are you addressing the rise in cybercrimes, including AI deep fakes and other scams?

Scam tactics like video and audio deepfakes are becoming increasingly advanced (and harder to spot) thanks to AI. Scammers can also use AI to increase the volume of their attacks and the number of channels they use to target potential victims. We continue to prioritize cybersecurity and scam education as a key line of defense for our members and community. We also look for new tools, technology, and controls to help identify and prevent scams.

Are deposit and loan activity staying in line with traditional banking history? Any trends?

Credit union loan growth in 2025 averaged 5% year over year, while deposit

growth averaged 4.1%. OnPoint grew its loans by 6.4% and gross deposits by 11.1% in 2025. Over the last few years, we have invested in products and services and grown our small business banking offerings. Our commercial lending program also had a record year in 2025. Deposit growth was driven by OnPoint's competitive product offerings and rates, resulting in almost \$1 billion in deposit growth in 2025. Our branch network and charter footprint continue to grow, and complement our investment in online banking and other channels to reach members.

With an ever more crowded selection of options for depositors, tell us about how your institution is addressing bank liquidity.

OnPoint maintains liquidity by holding a conservative investment portfolio, keeping sufficient cash on hand to meet member needs, and having safeguards in place to absorb market shocks. We also benefit from a high proportion of insured deposits, with very low levels of uninsured balances, which provides added reassurance to members and depositors seeking a safe and stable place to keep their money. With an increasingly crowded and competitive deposit environment, we remain focused on prudent balance sheet management and strong member relationships. We are comfortable with our liquidity and capital levels, and despite recent market volatility and interest rate uncertainty, we are well positioned for continued success and growth.

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Madras/Jefferson County Spotlight

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Central Oregon Financial Institutions

Credit Unions *(Listed Alphabetically)*

The financials listed are the most current information provided by the financial institution.
 In some cases it is as of November 2024, but for some of the entities it is information based on the previous quarter.

Company / Address	Phone	Fax	WebSite/Email	Contact	Staff	CO Year Est.	Local Deposits	Assets	Net Loans	Members	Primary Field of Members
First Community Credit Union 62080 Dean Swift Rd., Ste. 180 Bend, OR 97701	541-382-7280	541-388-5485	www.myfirstccu.org matt.nicassio@firstccu.org	Matt Nicassio	7	1957	\$44,822,000	\$1,676,813,000	\$1,101,587,000	89,000	Member-owned financial cooperative, currently operating 28 branches throughout Oregon & are open to everyone in the community. Offer a full array of financial products & services to consumers & small businesses; delivered by local professionals & through convenient technology.
Mid Oregon Credit Union PO Box 6749 Bend, OR 97701	541-382-1795	N/A	www.midoregon.com kyle@midoregon.com	Kevin Cole	170	1957	\$758 Million (as of 1/31/26)	\$860 Million (as of 1/31/26)	\$735.3 Million (as of 1/31/26)	52,179	Individuals who live or work in, or organizations located in the Oregon counties of Benton, Clackamas, Crook, Deschutes, Douglas, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lake, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Sherman, Wasco, Washington, Wheeler & Yamhill.
OCCU 20785 NW Henry, Ste. 150 Bend, OR 97703	800-365-1111	541-681-6105	www.myoccu.org Communications@MyOCCU.org	Sharon Calhoun	13	1956	\$45,642,196	\$3,566,890,069	\$3,151,925,155	291,796	Membership is open to anyone living or working in most of Oregon, southwest Idaho & anywhere in Washington. Learn more at MyOCCU.org
OnPoint Community Credit Union 950 NW Bond St., Bend 61276 S Hwy. 97, Ste. 100, Bend 1380 SW Canal Bld., Ste. 105, Redmond	541-749-2240	541-749-1792	www.onpointcu.com Michelle.Loftsgard@onpointcu.com	Michelle Loftsgard	35	2010	\$7,996 Million as of 3-20-2026	\$9,544 Million	\$6.136 Million	30,000 Central Oregon/over 637,000 total	Membership available to anyone who lives or works in one of 28 Oregon counties (Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Crook, Curry, Deschutes, Douglas, Gilliam, Hood River, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Morrow, Multnomah, Polk, Sherman, Tillamook, Wasco, Washington, Wheeler & Yamhill) & who lives, works, worships or attends school in one of four Washington counties (Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis & Skamania) & their immediate family members.
Oregonians Credit Union 110 NE Fifth St. Prineville, OR 97754	503-239-5336	541-447-5369	www.oregonianscu.com memberservices@oregonianscu.com	Tricia Wanous	5	1936	\$27 Million	\$341 Million	\$213 Million	18,500	Anyone who lives, works or attends school in Crook, Jefferson, Deschutes, Lane, Linn, Marion, Benton, Polk, Yamhill, Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington or Columbia counties is eligible to join.
Peak Credit Union, a Division of TwinStar Credit Union 61490 S Hwy. 97 Bend, OR 97702	800-258-3115	N/A	www.peakcu.org	Client Services	9	2025	\$1,652 Million for State of Oregon (as of 11/2024)	\$1,831 Million (as of 11/2024)	\$1,177 Million (as of 11/2024)	107,318	Central Oregon tri-counties, 25 Oregon counties & all Washington counties.
SELCO Community Credit Union 88 SW Industrial Way Bend, OR 97702	541-312-1842	541-744-7782	www.selco.org swagner@selco.org	Sandy Wagner	58	2000	\$501 Million Local	\$2.9 Billion in all of SELCO	\$1.9 Billion in all of SELCO	150,000+ in all of SELCO	Eligible to anyone who lives in the 27 Oregon or 8 Washington counties SELCO serves.

This is a sampling of Central Oregon Credit Unions. If you would like to be added to this list, please email cbn@cascadebusnews.com.

Not listed?

Call 541-388-5665

or email cbn@cascadebusnews.com

& get your company on a list!



Kevin Cole
 President // CEO
Mid Oregon Credit Union
 midoregon.com

How is your company currently using AI? In what capacity and how do you see it shaping the future of the banking industry?

Mid Oregon Credit Union has been leveraging AI for consumer loan underwriting and fraud prevention for several years, initially focusing on predictive AI applications. We are now starting to explore generative AI use cases, particularly in our phone and chat systems, marketing, and content creation. While AI holds great promise, it currently falls short of delivering the level of service our members expect from us. Service quality is not something we are willing to sacrifice. Because of this, our deployment will be very intentional and limited to areas where generative AI can make our member experience better.

As we look to the future, we recognize that AI will play a significant role in banking. However, we will proceed only once the technology has matured and proven its reliability. While many are excited about the potential for cost savings, we believe it's crucial to consider the possible negative impact on consumers that can arise from premature AI integration. Our focus remains on maintaining the high standards of trust and service our members deserve.

How are you addressing the rise in cybercrimes, including AI deep fakes and other scams?

Our members continue to experience an increase in attempted fraud. Fraud is one area where AI has improved the quality of the attempted fraud. It has also increased the efficiency of those committing fraud. It is a race between the AI-based fraud prevention solutions we deploy, and the AI-based fraud attempts that plague our members daily.

We have increased our efforts to educate members about current fraud threats and common scams, including partnering with local police departments and sheriff's offices to host fraud prevention workshops, our Fraud Prevention Fridays with KTVZ, and our website which features a dedicated security webpage, educational blogs, and free access to Stickley on Security articles.

While we deploy sophisticated tech and education, the most important fraud prevention tool remains our employees. They are trained to ask the right questions and identify fraudulent activity. Our local team of professionals respond to potential fraud and proactively engage with members to assist in resolving any issues.

The emergence of deep fakes and other AI generated fraud content is a challenge, because it has the potential to deceive our fraud detection and prevention systems. The scope and scale of the fraud issue is enormous. As an industry, fraud is a \$12.5 billion annual business, with complex systems and

organizations that look like a multi-national corporation. AI is allowing it to grow and scale at a faster pace, challenging the systems and processes we use to prevent fraud.

Are deposit and loan activity staying in line with traditional banking history? Any trends?

There has been consistent growth in loans and deposits at Mid Oregon, aligning with our recent trends and organizational goals. Central Oregonians are actively seeking loans for vehicle purchases, home acquisitions, and home improvement projects. We are also witnessing promising developments in commercial lending activity.

Our members are increasingly focused on maximizing the value of their money, which is why we introduced the Value Plus checking account. This new product offers significant discounts on services that members might find at much higher rates elsewhere, helping them save more.

Another emerging trend is the rise of non-traditional lenders. These entities initially focused on personal loans and are now expanding into vehicle and home equity lending. While their processes are quick, they often lack the personal touch required for more complex financial needs. At Mid Oregon, we pride ourselves on providing in-person support, guiding our members through intricate financial decisions. This commitment to personalized service is where we truly excel.

With an ever more crowded selection of options for depositors, tell us about how your institution is addressing bank liquidity.

Mid Oregon is an important driver of economic activity in Central Oregon, serving one out of every four households in the region. Our members know that when they deposit their funds with us, those funds are reinvested into the local community, supporting their neighbors and the businesses that employ them.

In the era of technology and AI, Mid Oregon remains focused on the relationships we have with the people and businesses that trust us with their finances. While some banks have closed or are closing their Central Oregon locations, Mid Oregon continues to invest in new and upgraded locations to better serve our members.

Like everyone else, our depositors are focused on maximizing the value of their deposits and getting the best combination of rates, service, and access to their money. We have responded by creating new deposit products, improving our deposit rates, and creating products that serve our members across different levels of wealth and income.

We use a variety of tools to manage liquidity to make sure we have enough money to meet the need for credit in the communities we serve. The most important strategy is to do a really good job delivering value and quality service to those who trust us with their deposits. The best strategy for liquidity is to earn and build trust every day, while maintaining sources of emergency liquidity for adverse market conditions.

The Mid Oregon Difference

Simple

“I recently had the pleasure of working with Mid Oregon Credit Union. The transaction was a seamless and painless process...”

—Steve, Member Redmond Branch

Trusted

“Mid Oregon is an amazing [Credit Union] and has even better employees. I wouldn't want anyone else handling my finances.”

—Travis, Member Old Mill Branch

Secure

“They [Mid Oregon] always make time to handle my issues and are always on top of fraud before it even gets to occur.”

—Brandi, Member East Bend Branch

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Eight convenient branches in Bend, La Pine, Madras, Prineville, Redmond & Sisters.

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The **Central Oregon Builders Association (COBA)** announced the hiring of **Galen Blyth** as its new executive vice president. A longtime leader within the organization and respected member of the regional construction and small business communities, Blyth brings deep experience, strong relationships and a passion for industry advocacy to the role.



Galen Blyth

Blyth has longstanding roots in Central Oregon's construction community, having served as one of the longest-tenured members of COBA's Board of Directors. In addition to his leadership within the association, he has owned and operated a small business in Bend for more than 20 years and he and his wife have raised their two children in the community. His background reflects a strong commitment to supporting local businesses, workforce development and sustainable growth across the region. As executive vice president, Blyth will oversee the association's strategic direction, member engagement, industry advocacy efforts and community partnerships. His leadership will support COBA's continued mission to promote and protect the building industry while strengthening the region's housing and construction workforce.

Tim Knopp, who led COBA as executive vice president for 23 years, stepped down in January to serve as Oregon's Chief Prosperity Officer following his appointment by Governor Tina Kotek.

Sisters GRO, an independent nonprofit founded in 2006, partners with local donors each year to support students pursuing higher education and career training.

This marks a milestone year for the organization, awarding a record \$385,250 in scholarships (up \$30,000 from last year); distributing 152 individual awards among 68 students (up from 140 awards in 2025); increasing the minimum award from \$500 to \$1,500; launching a new Endowed Scholarship Fund; introducing eight new scholarships; and surpassing \$3.4 million in total scholarships awarded since inception.

Saving Grace has hired **Megan Kantrim** as its development director. Kantrim brings more than 15 years of experience in fundraising, events and marketing across nonprofit and mission-driven organizations. She most recently served as director of events and community relations at Economic Development for Central Oregon (EDCO), where she led the organization's events and community engagement efforts, including the Bend Venture Conference. Her background also includes development and engagement roles with the High Desert Museum, CASA of Central Oregon and international nonprofit Vitamin Angels.



Megan Kantrim

In her new role, Kantrim will oversee fundraising strategy, including major gifts, grants and community-based initiatives supporting Saving Grace's programs across Central Oregon.



Joseph L. Mansfield

Continuity Group recently announced that **Joseph L. Mansfield, CLU, ChFC**, has joined the practice as of April 17, 2026, as managing director – investments, bringing approximately \$230M in client assets. He will be based in Continuity Group's Bend office. Mansfield's addition reflects the practice's continued growth and its commitment to providing experienced advisors with a simplified, well-supported path to independence.

Mansfield brings decades of experience and a deeply client-centric planning philosophy to Continuity Group. His planning approach centers on helping clients navigate retirement income planning, long-term care considerations, tax-aware strategies, multigenerational wealth transfer and thoughtful legacy and estate planning strategies.

He emphasizes creating stable, reliable income strategies for clients transitioning into retirement and aligning estate and wealth-transfer strategies with each family's values and long-term goals.

Mansfield began his career during a period of significant generational wealth transitions, which underscored the growing need for trusted financial guidance. He has held leadership roles including vice president, first vice president and senior vice president. He holds a bachelor of science from Santa Clara University and the Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU) and Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC) designations.



Danielle Hurley

HWA Civil Engineering & Surveying announced that **Danielle Hurley** has joined the team, returning to her hometown of Bend to continue her professional career.

A Summit High School graduate, Hurley has a deep appreciation for the Central Oregon community and a strong personal connection to the region. She brings valuable experience in civil engineering design and project management, including work on large-scale development projects in Southern California. Her decision to return reflects both a professional and personal commitment to the place she has always called home.

Hurley will support a range of civil engineering projects, helping HWA continue its mission of delivering thoughtful, high-quality solutions tailored to the needs

of Central Oregon.

TEN OVER STUDIO announces four new additions to its growing team.

Thomas Fagan, Architect, CPHC, joins as an architect, bringing years of experience running a well-regarded design practice in Central Oregon. Known for creative work that feels both distinctive and grounded in its surroundings, Fagan is also a PHIUS certified passive house consultant.

Jon McAlpin, Architect, LEED AP, joins as project manager, bringing 45 years of experience and a strong reputation in custom home design on the California Central Coast.

Joslyn Amato, SITES AP, joins as landscape senior designer, with 13 years of experience in landscape design-build and a strong focus on sustainability.

Moises De La Cruz joins as a designer, bringing technical versatility and careful attention to documentation and BIM coordination.



Thomas Fagan



Jon McAlpin



Joslyn Amato



Moises De La Cruz

Kernutt Stokes announced that four of its partners have been named to *Forbes'* 2026 Best-in-State CPAs list. Managing Partner **Steve Ritchie**, CPA, CFE, and Partner **Haley Lyons**, CPA, were recognized for the second consecutive year, while Partners **B. Dean Huber**, CPA, CPC, and **Tiffany K. Nash**, CPA, were named to the list for the first time.

The *Forbes* Best-in-State CPAs list highlights leading professionals across the country who are recognized for their expertise, leadership and contributions to the accounting profession. Honorees are selected through a rigorous evaluation process that includes peer nominations, industry research and an independent review by an advisory board.

Kernutt Stokes also announced the promotion of **Andrew Ditton** to manager.

Ditton joined Kernutt Stokes in 2023 and provides tax consulting and compliance services, as well as business consulting, to clients across a range of industries including beverage, construction, manufacturing, transportation, commercial real estate, medical and dental and professional services. He holds a bachelor of science in economics from the University of Oregon.

Ditton is based in the firm's Bend office.



Steve Ritchie



Haley Lyons



Dean Huber



Tiffany K. Nash



Andrew Ditton

Visit Central Oregon has announced that 12 recipients will be awarded a total of \$300,000 in grant money as part of the Central Oregon Future Fund. Now in its fourth annual cycle, the grant program supports local tourism projects that benefit both visitors and Central Oregon residents. Visit Central Oregon selected the 12 recipients from a total of 26 applications requesting more than \$1 million in funding.

The recipients represent a wide range of tourism-related projects — from a new event complex expanding Cowdeo youth rodeo programming in Jefferson County, to a trail project in Sisters with a goal to create the first fully verified accessible adventure trail system in Oregon.

Visit Central Oregon chose the 12 recipients in cooperation with eight advisory grant reviewers, which included industry representatives from regional tourism and hospitality, media/publishing, outdoor recreation and Central Oregon's rural communities, including the Warm Springs Reservation and Warm Springs Reservation community-based nonprofit.

Each of the recipients has at least one thing in common: every project awarded a Central Oregon Future Fund grant emphasized tourism-related programs and enhancements in line with the Fund's pillars of promoting accessible adventure, cultural tourism and stewardship. The 26 applications included nine accessible adventure projects, 14 cultural tourism projects, and three stewardship projects.

Sisters High School students were recently awarded \$385,250 in scholarships during the **Sisters GRO's** annual Senior Celebration.

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Continued from previous page

The 12 recipients include five accessible adventure projects, six cultural tourism projects and one stewardship project.

In addition to the Future Fund, Visit Central Oregon supports stewardship projects through the Central Oregon Destination Management Studio, which is a regional collaborative process. That program includes more than \$100,000 in support for stewardship projects, including Dark Sky initiatives, a trails improvement project managed by the Deschutes Trails Coalition, and the development of an arts and heritage program focused on Central Oregon's music culture.

The 2026 Central Oregon Future Fund grantees include **Jefferson County Event Complex, Wasco County Fairgrounds, High Desert Food and Farm Alliance, Sunriver Nature Center and Observatory, Deschutes Land Trust, Sisters Trails Alliance, Ballet Bend, BendFilm, Oregon Adaptive Sports, ThinkWild, ScaleHouse and Wake Creative, Inc.**

The **Latino Community Association (LCA)** strengthened its client services team in Bend, welcomed a new coordinator in Prineville, and hired an executive liaison this year.

LCA hired **Anthony Sanseri**, a temporary assistant since August 2025, as client services coordinator in our busy Bend office. Sanseri graduated from Bend High School and lived in Ecuador for about 25 years, working as a volunteer and teaching English. With this experience, he can understand the challenges of adapting to life in a new country.



In Prineville, **Maria Juliana Mellen** brings skills in management and customer service from her education in business and hospitality in Bogota, Colombia, to her role as client services coordinator. In 2019, she enrolled in a work and travel program that brought her to Camas, Washington, where she met her husband. The couple and their daughter later moved to Central Oregon, where they enjoy outdoor activities. With her experience as an immigrant, Mellen wants to help build "a strong, supportive community where people feel welcome, supported and empowered to achieve their goals."

In Bend, **Ana Gutierrez** came on board as an executive liaison to LCA's executive director, from a career centered on law and community service. She grew up in Idaho and earned a bachelor's degree in international studies at Utah State University. She has worked as a deputy criminal court clerk and legal assistant, and most recently, in Eagle County, Colorado, helping community members navigate complex systems. Ana is an author and published her debut novel, *When Darkness Falls*, in 2025, the same year she and her husband moved to Bend.

First Interstate Bank recently was awarded a Gold badge on the 2026 Where You Work Matters list, an unprecedented rating of how well 1,750 large employers are creating high-quality jobs in the United States.

First Interstate's Gold badge serves as recognition of its investments in the growth and future of its workforce, placing the organization in the top tiers of all companies assessed and demonstrating organizational strength across the criteria assessed by the List.

The Where You Work Matters List rates nearly 55,000 jobs across 1,750 U.S.-

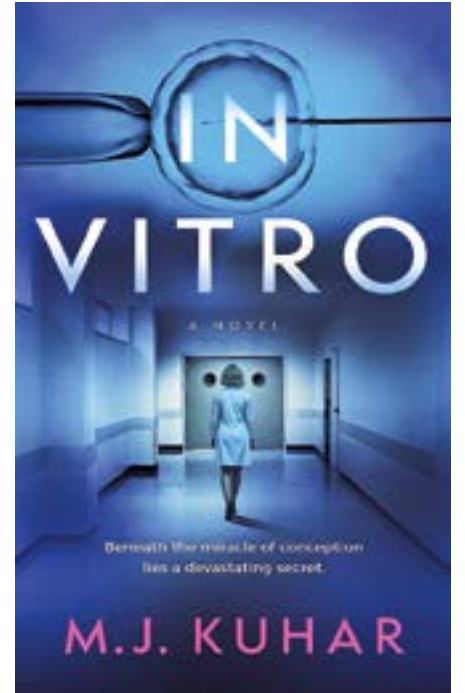
based employers, using the publicly available career progression data of more than 12 million American workers. In a time of rapid change and mounting economic instability, the List highlights companies with highly effective workforce strategies that provide them with a differentiated business advantage toward innovation, productivity and brand loyalty.

In Vitro, a novel by first-time Bend author **M.J. Kuhar**, has recently made an appearance on the Amazon list of top 25 medical fiction books in the country. The day of its release in December, it was in the top ten nationally of medical thrillers; it was number 23 in the last week of March on the broader medical fiction compilation.

In Vitro is set in a renowned in vitro fertilization (IVF) clinic in Virginia, where a young doctor is faced with a moral dilemma – whether to continue helping couples desperate to conceive a child achieve their dreams, or to confront the well-respected director of the clinic about his unscrupulous deeds. Kuhar expertly describes both sides of the struggle.

A retired physician, college faculty member and administrator, Kuhar spent a year working in an IVF clinic as a fellow and began contemplating the plot for the book then. After working in private practice as an OB GYN doctor for ten years, she moved into academia, serving first as a faculty member at Central Oregon Community College, and then an administrator at COCC, Lane Community College (Eugene and Florence) and Blue Mountain Community College (Pendleton). She retired in 2018 from her role as vice president of instruction. It was after retiring that she began pursuing her dream to write this book.

As for the book, Kuhar balances the detailed science of the process with the extreme emotional roller coaster experienced by the hopeful parents. Kuhar chronicles the daily challenges of Dr. Joyce Porter as she continues to compassionately work with her patients going through the IVF process, while also learning more about questionable practices led by the director.



BOOK JACKET IMAGE | COURTESY OF M.J. KUHAR



PHOTO | COURTESY OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Sisters Habitat for Humanity announced the completion of the Village Meadows development, a 21-home affordable housing neighborhood. The

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New hires, promotions, accolades, awards, retiring? Send us your

Who's Who!

Send a high resolution head shot and a short, 100- to 150-word writeup to CBN@CascadeBusNews.com to be seen in the next edition of *Cascade Business News*.

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final two homes will be dedicated on March 20, marking a milestone for the community and the households who now have access to safe, stable and affordable homeownership.

Construction began in 2015, and over the last decade, the project has brought together volunteers, donors and future homeowners to create a lasting impact in Sisters. With hands-on support from volunteers, individuals helped build and move into their new homes.

With Village Meadows complete, Sisters Habitat is turning its attention to Larch Commons, a new development of 25 homes offering a mix of affordable and workforce housing to meet the growing needs of the community.

Members of **100+ Women Who Care of Central Oregon** have collectively donated \$19,500 as of April 15 to **M Perfectly**, a Central Oregon nonprofit dedicated to ensuring the long-term success of women in recovery.

M Perfectly's mission is simple yet powerful: to equip women in recovery with the education, opportunities and resources they need for long-term success. M Perfectly believes that when women are empowered to overcome their past and build a new future, they create a ripple effect of positive change that strengthens families, communities and society as a whole.



PHOTO | COURTESY OF 100+ WOMEN WHO CARE CENTRAL OREGON



MICHELE MICHAEL



Sunriver Music Festival
49th SEASON AUGUST 10-20, 2026 SUNRIVER & BEND, OREGON
STRAWBERRY SKIES BY MICHELE MICHAEL

Sunriver Music Festival has selected **Michele Michael's Strawberry Skies** as its featured artwork for 2026.

Each year, the Festival features an artist local to Central Oregon for the season's poster. Artists were invited to submit their artwork for consideration and a jury of professional artists from the Artists' Gallery Sunriver assists in making the final selection. Michael's 18x24" acrylic on canvas painting, which has been custom framed by Eastlake Framing, will be auctioned at the Raise the Baton fundraising party on July 18 in Bend. Details and tickets at sunrivermusic.org.

Fine art quality reproductions of this work will grace the cover of the program magazine for the 49th season of Sunriver Music Festival. Posters are available for \$35. Framed posters are \$85. Notecards with Festival art are \$25 for a pack of ten available at the Sunriver Music Festival office. Clothing and other merchandise are also available online at sunrivermusic.org/merch. Call 541-593-1084 or email tickets@sunrivermusic.org with merchandise questions or purchasing information.

About Michele Michael, in the artist's words:

"I was raised in the countryside of Ohio farmlands and spent my youth creating everything from hand-drawn paper dolls to detailed illustrations in Microsoft Paint. I spent most of my teenage years and 20s dismissing my creativity, instead studying photojournalism and working odd jobs. I moved out west to Olympia, Washington in 2009 and immediately fell in love with the natural beauty of the mountains, rivers and coastlines of the American West, as well as the outdoor recreation community. I started working at REI, and did so for over ten years, which gave me a business mindset, an intimate knowledge with retail, and most importantly, the introduction to my husband and business partner, Jeff.

"That job also took me to multiple locations in Washington, Alaska and Oregon. After living all over the Pacific Northwest, I deepened my love of the outdoors and was drawn to bigger adventures. However, I did not feel compelled to capture the beauty of the natural world in art until Jeff and I spent a year traveling the world. With the rise of social media, and being exposed to artists of all kinds, I felt inspired to finally paint and draw again. I started posting my small sketches on Instagram and was encouraged by friends and strangers. I got my first commission while living in New Zealand; it was a request to draw... the Three Sisters mountains! When we returned stateside, we settled in my

husband's hometown of Bend, and I started my art business shortly thereafter.

"I started designing stickers and got my first retail account in 2018. My art and business has slowly grown, and I am proud to have my art in many local shops, as well as seven National Parks (and counting!). Along with my husband, we support our family with our business. I still live in Bend (in Three Rivers area now) with Jeff, our two young children, and our mutt dog. In 2022, I made the leap to pursue art full-time. I feel like the luckiest gal in the world to make art for a living!"

Sunriver Music Festival's 2026 summer season will be held in Bend and Sunriver from August 10-20. Events are at the iconic Tower Theatre in downtown Bend and the historic Great Hall at Sunriver Resort. Artistic Director and Conductor Brett Mitchell will lead world-class orchestra musicians and acclaimed soloists in a remarkable 49th season.

Sunriver Music Festival is a year-round nonprofit presenting world-class orchestral performances and supporting music education throughout Central Oregon. Through a commitment to excellence, collaboration and innovation, the Festival seeks to foster a lifelong love of classical music in its many diverse forms.

Cayuse Holdings (Cayuse) recently donated \$5,000 to the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter at Nixyaawii Community School (NCS) of the Pendleton School District. On April 8 at a spirited student assembly, Cayuse presented a ceremonial check to the group, rallying the FBLA team as they prepared to head off to the State competition.

With these funds, FBLA students purchased matching polos and blazers — the team's first-ever coordinated uniforms — and received critical support for travel expenses to the Regional and State competitions. The gift marks a step forward in helping young leaders represent their school and community with pride.

Representatives from Cayuse Holdings were on hand for the assembly, including board member Leo Stewart, and Cayuse staff member Dazon Sigo.



STUDENTS DAIJHA ROPER (SOPHOMORE), BRODY KENNEY (SOPHOMORE), NEVAEH MOORE (SENIOR) AND RYAN TITUS MCCOY (SENIOR); NCS FBLA FACULTY LEADER CHRISTINA GRACE-THOMAS; CAYUSE HOLDINGS BOARD MEMBER LEO STEWART; AND CAYUSE STAFF MEMBER DAZON SIGO | PHOTO COURTESY OF CAYUSE HOLDINGS



Kelly Chambers

Kelly Chambers of Puyallup, Washington, has been appointed by President Donald J. Trump to serve as the Pacific Northwest Regional Administrator for the **U.S. Small Business Administration** (SBA). In this role, Chambers will oversee the SBA's programs, offices and operations across the Pacific Northwest, serving small businesses in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

Chambers previously served as Washington State House Representative from 2018 to 2025, where she held leadership roles, including House Republican Caucus Vice Chair, Ranking Member of the Appropriations Committee; and Regulated Substances and Gaming committee; in addition to serving as a committee member on the Healthcare and Transportation committees.

A longtime small business owner, Chambers owns Visting Angels, an in-home senior care company, operating in Tacoma, and Newberg, employing approximately 200 people. She is also the owner of Lomcevak Cellars, a winery and vineyard located in Lake Chelan, Washington. The five-acre vineyard and winery produces estate grown Pinot Gris, Gewurztraminer, Syrah, Malbec and Tempranillo varietals.

Chambers is actively involved in civic and nonprofit leadership. She serves on the board of directors for Puget Sound Honor Flight, a nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring America's veterans by transporting them to Washington, D.C. to visit the memorials built in their honor. She previously served as a Leadership Council Member of National Federation of Independent Businesses and Health Care Providers Council of Pierce County.

Chambers brings extensive legislative, business and community leadership experience to the SBA as she assumes responsibility for supporting and strengthening small business throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Mosaic Community Health, Sisters School District and Deschutes County Health Services are expanding access to critical substance use disorder (SUD) treatment for adolescents across Central Oregon, thanks to new funding from the state's Rural Health Transformation Program.

For the past two years, the three partners have collaborated on the UpShift program, a school-based initiative providing SUD screening, early intervention and diversion services for students experiencing low- to moderate-risk substance use (Levels 0-2). Based at the Sisters School-Based Health Center, the program connects students with timely behavioral health support—often as an alternative to suspension—helping them stay engaged in school and on a path to recovery.

With this new funding, the partnership will expand services to include youth with higher-risk (Level 3) substance use needs and extend care to additional rural communities in Central Oregon.

Currently, many adolescents requiring more intensive treatment must travel outside their communities for weekly services—creating barriers to access, consistency and recovery. This expansion will bring comprehensive care closer to home, incorporating both in-person and telehealth options, along with

Today is Opening Day for Bend Farmers Market

by ANN PISTACCHI-PECK, Market Manager — Bend Farmers Market

The Bend Farmers Market returned to downtown Bend today, ushering in another season of fresh food, community connection, and lively Wednesdays in Brooks Alley, just off Drake Park. The market brings together local farmers, ranchers, bakers, and artisan food producers for shoppers eager to enjoy the freshest flavors of the season.

The Bend Farmers Market is a true farmers market dedicated to supporting the viability of local farmers, ranchers, and food producers who grow, raise, and create food in Oregon, with a strong emphasis on Central Oregon agriculture.

Visitors can expect a wide variety of seasonal produce, pasture-raised meats, eggs, locally made cheeses, fresh flowers, baked goods, pantry staples, and handcrafted food products. Each Wednesday offers a changing snapshot of the high desert growing season and an opportunity to meet the people who produce the region's food firsthand.

"We have been hard at work planting and cultivating food for what will be our eighth season vending at the Bend Farmers Market," said Ashley Thompson of Sungrounded Farm. "We hope to see you there to support our amazing community of local producers and celebrate the beginning of the high desert growing season with us."

Beyond shopping, the market has become a weekly gathering place where neighbors connect, families spend time together, and visitors enjoy one of Bend's favorite summer traditions.

"Small acts like attending the farmers market each week, eating nourishing food, and making community are what our collective souls really need right now," said Megan Kellner-Rode, co-owner of Boundless Farmstead.

"If you're looking for truly local, seasonal food produced in Central Oregon, come to the Bend Farmers Market," said Courtney Schuur of North 44 Farm.

The Bend Farmers Market welcomes shoppers using EBT/SNAP benefits and offers a \$20 weekly match through the Double Up Food Bucks program for fresh fruits and vegetables, along with a \$10 weekly Protein Perks match for cheese, meat, poultry, eggs and seafood.

The market runs every Wednesday from 11am to 3pm, May 6 through October 14, 2026, in Brooks Alley in downtown Bend.

2026 Market Vendors:

Bend Breakfast Burrito, Berkey's Blueberries, Beruna, Blue River Ferments,



PHOTO | COURTESY OF BEND FARMERS MARKET

Bohemian Roastery, Bombaci Pasta, Boundless Farmstead, Brandywine Fisheries, Broadus Bees, Chili Royal, Compassion Kombucha, Curmuffins, Dan's Smoked Salmon, DD Ranch, Deschutes Canyon Garlic, Deschutes Gourmet Mushrooms, Deschutes Produce, Farmhouse Pies, Field's Grassfed Beef, Fixa Foods, Good Friend, Happy Harvest Farm, Hummus Stop, Lazy Z Ranch, Leaven & Love, M's Bakery, Marquam Hill Berries, Mill Fire Baking, Mountain Town Foods, Noosh, North 44 Farm, Oh Ghee, Pine Mountain Ranch, Rainshadow Organics, Rawmona's Kitchen, Rooper Ranch, Royal Juice, Sakari Farm, Sungrounded Farm, Sweet Yeli's, The Crows Croft, Tumalo Lavender, Upriver Organics, Windy Acres and Zodiac Farms.
bendfarmersmarket.com

Central Oregon Youth Conservation Corps Provides Over 50 Jobs for Local Youth

by SHELBY SAUER — Heart of Oregon Corps

Long sunny summer days are ahead, and Heart of Oregon Corps' Central Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (COYCC) program has summer jobs for young people! This is a great opportunity for youth ages 16-18-years-old to gain job skills and learn more about natural resources while improving public lands and reducing the threat of wildfires in our community.

Over 50 local youth will be selected for this competitive summer program and earn \$16 an hour, working 36 hours a week, Monday through Thursday.

Hands-on projects in Central Oregon's beautiful forests and high deserts include building trails, maintaining fences, piling hazardous fuels, restoring campgrounds, and improving wildlife habitat on the Deschutes and Ochoco National Forests and Crooked River National Grassland. Non-project days include a first-day hands-on training, Central Oregon Community College tour, job fair, and end-of-season awards celebration.

In 2025 alone, COYCC members dedicated 12,000 hours to improving public lands across Deschutes, Jefferson, Crook, and northern Klamath counties.

"The conservation work the COYCC crews do has a positive impact that can be seen across our Central Oregon public lands," said Nick Swagger, Forest Service Volunteer & Partnership coordinator. "We collaborate with Heart of Oregon Corps and the Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council to organize one of the country's biggest and longest teen-serving youth conservation corps."

The COYCC program runs from June 22 through

August 13. Members will work nine hours a day, Monday through Thursday. Youth crews meet daily at a U.S. Forest Service site in Bend, Redmond, Sisters, Prineville, La Pine/Crescent, Madras, and Warm Springs. In this program, youth will gain work experience, leadership skills, and guided professional development while earning money and making friends!

"The COYCC program educates and provides hands-on experience for youth who are our future environmental stewards," said Shelby Sauer, Heart of Oregon Corps Youth Conservation Programs Recruitment and Data coordinator. I have seen firsthand what a meaningful impact this program has on the youth who participate."

That's not all! We offer this amazing work experience for up to 30 youth who participate in our Camp LEAD program, a paid camping experience for youth experiencing disabilities. Members learn our leadership, empowerment, and advocacy curriculum while camping at Caldera near Suttle Lake in Sisters and working on conservation projects. Youth are paid \$16 an hour for about 21 hours of project work they complete over the Monday-Friday camp. Then up to eight participants have the opportunity to join the COYCC bridge crews for the last three weeks of the season.

Mandatory COYCC information sessions are being held across Central Oregon. Youth and parents who are interested in this opportunity should attend one of the in-person sessions. Information session details



PHOTO | COURTESY OF COYCC

and our simple online application can be found at heartoforegon.org. For questions or more information, contact Youth Conservation Programs Recruitment and Data Coordinator, Shelby Sauer, email recruitment@heartoforegon.org or call/text 458-206-0535.
heartoforegon.org
fs.usda.gov/r06/ochoco • fs.usda.gov/r06/deschutes

Who's Who

Continued from previous page

enhanced staff training to meet the needs of more complex cases. The initiative is part of a broader statewide effort to improve rural healthcare access and outcomes, particularly for behavioral health and substance use prevention among youth.

Services offered at Mosaic SBHCs include annual well-child visits, vision and mental health screenings, vaccinations, sports physicals and general health concerns; primary care, including diagnosis and treatment of illness or injury, developmental screening and chronic condition management; and behavioral health services, helping youth build skills to cope with social, emotional and health challenges, with referrals to specialty care when appropriate.

Mosaic operates seven school-based health centers across Central Oregon, working in close partnership with school districts, county health departments and community providers to ensure continuity of care.

Multi-Modal Transit Takes Center Stage

by **STEPHANIE SHAVER** — Project 4: Marketing + Design + Branding

Commuter Options is inviting Central and Eastern Oregonians to trade four wheels for two feet (or two wheels) this spring with the return of the May Walk & Roll Challenge. Running from May 4 to May 17, the challenge is the centerpiece of a month-long regional celebration of sustainable transit, community connectivity, and healthier lifestyles.

Whether commuting to the office, running errands at the local market, or simply enjoying the spring air, every trip counts. Participants are encouraged to log any “walk or roll” activity — including walking or biking to a bus stop — to support multimodal transportation.

Log at least four trips during the two-week challenge to be entered into a prize drawing! Thanks to our generous community partners, there are more than 20 opportunities to win gift cards to favorite local businesses, including FootZone, Blue Eyes Burgers & Fries, El Sancho, and Strictly Organic.

A Month of Movement Across Central Oregon

The May Walk & Roll Challenge serves as the connective tissue between several key community events designed to get Oregon moving:

• **May 5 – The Bend Bikeways Reveal Community Ride!**: Hosted by the City of Bend, this ride kicks off at

5:00 p.m. at City Hall (710 NW Bond St). Participants will receive route maps and swag before departing at 5:30 p.m. to explore the newly installed traffic diverters and wayfinding signage in the Old Bend and River West neighborhoods. The ride concludes at 7pm at Papi Chulo’s in the Box Factory, showcasing the city’s progress in building a connected, protected bike network.

• **May 6 – National Walk & Roll to School Day²**: Commuter Options and its Safe Routes to School partners encourage students and families across the region to join thousands of schools nationwide in an active morning commute. Whether it’s a “Walking School Bus,” a “Bike Bus,” or simply a “Park-and-Walk” (parking a few blocks away to walk the rest of the way), the event highlights the benefits of physical activity and the need for safer school zones. Go to blschools.org/parent-resources/safe-routes for suggested walking and rolling route maps for many schools in the Bend La Pine School District.

• **May 4–17 – The May Walk & Roll Challenge**: During these two weeks, every trip logged on Get There Connect increases your chances to win. Whether you are walking to the store, rolling to the office, or biking to a transit stop, your movement counts toward



PHOTO | COURTESY OF COMMUTE OPTIONS

regional prizes and carbon reduction goals. “This challenge is about more than just prizes; it’s about celebrating the vibrant, sustainable ways our community moves,” says Brian Potwin, executive

Continued on Page 31 ▶

Meal of the Year at COCC Raises More Than \$400K for Scholarships

by **MARK RUSSELL JOHNSON**, Staff Writer, Marketing & Public Relations — Central Oregon Community College

The Central Oregon Community College Foundation’s Meal of the Year, one of the region’s longest-standing fundraising events — first staged in 1978 — raised more than \$400,000 for student scholarships during the April 11 celebration on the Bend campus.

“We are deeply humbled by the ongoing support from the Central Oregon community,” said Zak Boone, vice president for college advancement and executive director of the COCC Foundation. “It’s our signature

scholarship-focused fundraiser each year, and contributes greatly to the \$2.4 million we award annually, impacting some 400 COCC students. These scholarships truly change lives.”

The four-course-meal event, with food prepared and served by COCC’s Cascade Culinary Institute staff and students, included a tribute to scholarship recipients and a live auction.

The event also honored David and Deborah Bourke of Bend for their longtime support and involvement

with the Foundation. Beginning with a donation in 1996, the couple has supported nearly one hundred students with scholarship gifts. David also served on the COCC Foundation’s board of trustees from 1998 to 2005, serving as president from 2000 to 2002. “It’s an honor and privilege to be recognized this year by the college and Foundation and you can count on our continued support going forward,” David said at the event.

cocc.edu

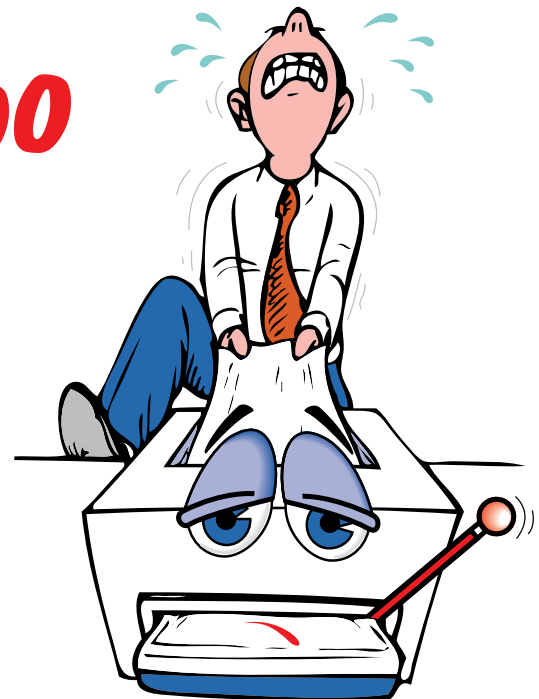


THE EVENT HONORED DAVID AND DEBORAH BOURKE OF BEND FOR THEIR LONGTIME SUPPORT OF STUDENTS, WITH A PRESENTATION BY COCC PRESIDENT GREG PEREIRA | PHOTO COURTESY OF COCC

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AdvenChair & Wanderlust Tours Ready to Roll for 2026 AdvenTours

by CAM DAVIS

AdvenChair, a local trailblazer in all-terrain wheelchairs, and Wanderlust Tours, Central Oregon's long-time leader in guided adventures, have just announced the schedule for their third series of accessible outings known as "AdvenTours." On the heels of a virtually non-existent Central Oregon winter, the two partners are virtually chomping at the bit to get started.

"The one good thing about a winter with very little snowfall is that many trails are dry and ready to go," said Geoff Babb, AdvenChair's Founder and Chairman. "After two years of working with Wanderlust Tours to create life-changing experiences for people with special needs, we can't wait to get rolling again."

The collaboration between two outdoor industry pioneers that launched in 2024 has given people with mobility challenges of all ages the chance to experience some of Oregon's most inspiring natural places. Combining AdvenChair's unmatched durability, safety, and comfort with Wanderlust's unique style of education, interpretation, and



JARED GARFIELD OF WANDERLUST TOURS GIVES GEOLOGIST LINCOLN FOREMAN A HANDS-ON LOOK AT SMITH ROCK STATE PARK.

environmental appreciation earned them the prestigious Partnership Award at the Oregon Governor's Conference on Tourism last year.

With more people from the Pacific Northwest and beyond discovering the quality and variety of the AdvenTours, it has become a real labor of love for the team at Wanderlust Tours.

"The options and opportunities for exploration and discovery that the AdvenChair provides are virtually endless," said Courtney Braun, Owner of Wanderlust Tours. "And with family and friends encouraged to participate, all of the tours have been extremely rewarding for our guests as well as our guides."

AdvenTours begin where the pavement ends.

In addition to Wanderlust's regularly scheduled public tours in 2026, the next six months feature a popular array of AdvenTours that explore the best of Central Oregon and beyond:

- **Accessible Guided Scenic Hike at Smith Rock State Park**, Sunday, May 24, 8am-1pm (*Additional date available on Sunday, July 19*)
- **Accessible Guided Hike Deschutes River Trail: Benham Falls**, Sunday, June 21, 8am-1pm
- **Accessible Guided Fort Rock Sunset Hike**

& Stargazing, Friday, July 10, 7:30pm-Saturday, July 11, 12:30am

- **Accessible Guided Crater Lake National Park Hike**, Saturday, August 29, 8am-5pm
- **AdvenTours Accessible Guided Paulina Creek Hike**, Saturday, September 19, 8am-1pm
- **AdvenTours Accessible Guided Scenic Hike at Tumalo Creek/Shevlin Park**, Saturday, October 25, 8am-1pm

All AdvenTours depart from Wanderlust Tours headquarters in Bend's Fred Meyer Shopping Center on SE Third Street and cost the same as their regular guided hikes. Guests are encouraged to visit advenchair.com/events for the latest updates and information.

Follow your own path. Not the beaten one.

In addition to the pre-arranged AdvenTours, AdvenChairs are also available to Wanderlust guests for special custom tours with advanced reservations. A perfect example of this was evidenced last September when Hannah Crutchfield from Alabama discovered AdvenTours through Visit Central Oregon. With the help of the AdvenChair and a small team from Wanderlust Tours, she and her partner had no trouble reaching the top of Tumalo Mountain with its breathtaking view of the Cascades.

"It's been the most amazing experience I think I've ever had!" said Hannah. "Being able to do something that I can't do on my own has been absolutely fantastic! I feel on top of the world!"

"Seeing Hannah summiting a mountain together with her partner was pretty special," Braun said. "I'm looking forward not only to getting more folks out into the beauty of Central Oregon's outdoor spaces on our regular tours, but also to learning what other places guests want to see and explore."

With countless trails already in peak condition, AdvenChair's Geoff Babb is equally excited to offer more custom tours to places that many folks have only dreamed about. "I've witnessed the smiles from so many people who wouldn't be out in the wilderness without the AdvenChair," said Babb. "Whether it's a family with a child who is disabled or a grandparent who can be with their grandkids on their favorite trail as they pass the love of the outdoors on to future generations, it's very heartwarming to see."

About AdvenChair:

AdvenChair is an all-terrain wheelchair designed for people with mobility challenges who want to venture off the beaten path and experience the grandeur of the wilderness. It is the brainchild of Geoff Babb, a fire ecologist and avid outdoorsman from Bend, who loved to ski, mountain bike and backpack with his wife and twin boys until a near-fatal brain stem stroke on November 10, 2005 forced him to use a wheelchair.

While the stroke forever changed his ability to move, Babb soon discovered that the biggest obstacle to experiencing a simple outing on local trails with his family again was not so much his body, but the frailties of common wheelchairs. Rather than lobbying for wheelchair-accessible wilderness trails,



JOSE OLALDE, LEFT, AND CARTER GUDELL OF WANDERLUST TOURS GIVE LINCOLN FOREMAN A GRAND TOUR OF BENHAM FALLS | PHOTOS COURTESY OF ADVENCHAIR



COURTNEY BRAUN, FRONT, AND JARED GARFIELD, CENTER, OF WANDERLUST TOURS GUIDE ADVENCHAIR FOUNDER GEOFF BABB DOWN FROM TUMALO MOUNTAIN

Babb chose to develop a wheelchair capable of adapting to the trails, and the AdvenChair was born.

On November 10, 2017, exactly 12 years to the day after his stroke, Babb survived a second brain stem stroke, which was a major setback. Yet it made him more determined than ever to share his all-terrain chair with other people dealing with permanent or temporary limited mobility. While developing the first AdvenChair, Babb also launched The Onward Project, LLC, to inspire, encourage and enable outdoor adventures for people of all abilities.

About Wanderlust Tours:

Since 1993, Wanderlust Tours has welcomed guests to vibrantly share the natural and cultural history of Oregon in order to instill appreciation and protection of the environment. We hold great respect for the natural surroundings of our beautiful central Oregon landscape and hope to introduce people to these delicate ecosystems while maintaining a low impact on the environment. Wanderlust Tours is made up of people who are passionate about the intricacies of nature. We thrive on sharing our knowledge and passion for the natural world with those who join our tours!

advenchair.com • wanderlusttours.com



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Largest Employers

Continued from page 3

year at the same time.

The top five private traded-sector businesses, those that primarily sell their goods or services outside the local market and bring revenue into the region from national or international markets, include:

1. BASX Solutions (Regional) – An industry leader in manufacturing high-efficiency data center cooling solutions, cleanroom systems, custom HVAC systems, and modular solutions. The company recently completed a 36,000 square-foot weld shop in Redmond and opened an additional location in Sisters.
2. Bright Wood Corporation (Regional) – The largest independent manufacturer of window and patio door components and engineered dimension lumber in the U.S. The company was founded in Madras, Oregon in 1960.
3. Les Schwab Headquarters & Tire

Centers (Regional) – Founded in 1952 as a single shop in Prineville, the company's Prineville campus evolved into a longtime headquarters and operations hub, including large-scale warehousing and tire distribution facilities supporting regional logistics.

4. Meta Platforms, Inc. (Prineville) – One of the largest hyperscale data center campuses in the U.S., Meta's Prineville site was its first wholly-owned data center (operational since 2011). The campus has expanded to nearly 4.6 million square feet, representing over \$2 billion in investment.

5. Epic Aircraft, LLC (Bend) – Founded in 2004, Epic Aircraft is a leading designer and manufacturer of high-performance, all-composite, six-seat single-engine turboprop aircraft. Their flagship model, the Epic E1000, is known for its speed, range, payload, and luxurious features, catering primarily to business and private aviation markets.

Of the top traded-sector businesses, Medline ReNewal experienced the most significant increase in new jobs, adding 73 positions, a 22.88% rise

compared to last year.

"Across Central Oregon, traded-sector companies continue to demonstrate the strength and momentum of our regional economy. These businesses bring new revenue into the region and their growth is a key reason we're seeing Central Oregon outperform much of the state. At EDCO, we work with more than 400 companies each year and we consistently see how critical the traded sector is to driving investment, job creation and long-term economic resilience for our communities," said Jon Stark, CEO of EDCO.

When companies consider relocating to, starting or expanding in Central Oregon, EDCO serves as a key partner in navigating the region's business environment, providing in-depth market intelligence and industry insights spanning traded-sector industries such as advanced manufacturing, technology and bioscience, as well as local-serving sectors like healthcare, education, retail, and construction.

EDCO supports businesses at every stage by offering services including

site selection assistance, connections to workforce and training resources, guidance on incentives and financing, and access to a strong network of regional partners. In addition, EDCO fosters entrepreneurship through mentorship, programming and resources designed to help scalable companies launch and grow in Central Oregon.

View the lists in their entirety at edcoinfo.com/about-the-area/major-employers. Data for the lists is self-reported and not audited and should only be used as an informational guideline. Businesses are asked to provide the total number of employees, not full-time equivalency, during their most recent pay period or, for companies with seasonal patterns of employment, their seasonal high. Numbers only include employees working in Central Oregon and contain contractors or interns if they are full-time and long-term. Some businesses chose not to participate in these lists and are therefore excluded.

edcoinfo.com

Bend High

Continued from page 3

and celebrate this important investment in youth health."

A family-friendly open house will be held on Thursday, May 21, from 4:30-6pm, offering an opportunity for community members to tour the new facility, meet the care team and participate in a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The event will also include light refreshments and prize drawings.

Community members can also preview the space in advance through a virtual tour at bit.ly/BendHighSBHC.

The new site is located approximately 100 yards from the previous SBHC location, which was housed within a portion of the high school scheduled for demolition as part of the district's ongoing campus modernization. The new clinic occupies a separate building owned by the school

district and made available through a partnership agreement supporting continued access to student-centered healthcare services. The Bend High SBHC served nearly 700 students last year, and demand for accessible youth healthcare services continues to grow.

"School-based health centers are an important service for students and families, and Deschutes County is pleased to be a partner in supporting this work," said Heather Kaisner, Deschutes County Public Health Director. "These centers function like a doctor's office on school grounds, offering a range of medical and behavioral health services to help keep kids healthier and in school. Being on the school grounds helps to get students back in class more quickly and reduces the time parents need to take off work in order to transport their child to the doctor."

The expanded facility nearly doubles the size of the previous space and includes three medical exam rooms and two behavioral health rooms, enhancing

Mosaic's ability to meet growing demand for youth health services. Hours of operation remain unchanged:

- **Monday, Wednesday, Friday:** 8am-5pm
- **Tuesday:** 9am-6pm
- **Closed Daily** from 1-2pm

The entrance to the new SBHC faces Glenwood Drive and can be accessed via both Glenwood Drive and NE 6th Street. A parking lot with designated spaces for pediatric patients is available off 6th Street, with additional on-street parking along Glenwood Drive.

The relocation is part of a broader, four-year redevelopment of the Bend High campus. In November 2022, voters approved a \$249.7 million bond to improve safety and modernize aging schools across the Bend-La Pine School District. Approximately 59 percent of those funds are dedicated to Bend High. The project, designed by BBT Architects and constructed by Kirby Nagelhout Construction, began in summer 2024 and

is expected to be completed in phases through 2028.

"School-based health centers provide ease and convenience in addressing the physical and mental health needs of our students, so they may have greater success in school and life," Acting Superintendent Lisa Birk said. "We're pleased to see the health center serving Bend Senior High School in a new location as we near the halfway mark in our four-year campus redevelopment. It's important that students and families can continue to access these services during the school day without barriers such as cost and transportation."

While Bend-La Pine Schools owns the land and building of the newly relocated SBHC, Mosaic raised funds for the refurbishment of the site, which included generous contributions from PacificSource Community Solutions (\$200,000) and the OCCU Foundation (\$10,000).

MosaicCH.org-deschutes.org/health/bend.k12.or.us/district

Residents

Continued from page 3

ideas. COCAP is committed to bringing people from diverse backgrounds together in good faith to tackle hard problems," said Josh Burgess, founder and executive director of the Central Oregon Civic Action Project.

The poll will provide new insights into participants' opinions and directly inform local community discussions. In May and June, COCAP's Community Stewards will facilitate conversations to elevate personal stories around AI and community. The polling data and stories will inform a collaborative Civic Assembly this fall where community members, local leaders, and experts will explore actionable next steps on AI's role in the region.

The Central Oregon Civic Action Project (COCAP) is a Central Oregon-based

nonprofit dedicated to bridging divides and building trust through deliberative democracy. Founded following the success of the 2024 Deschutes Civic Assembly on Youth Homelessness, Oregon's first Citizens' Assembly, COCAP creates spaces for Central Oregon residents to engage in meaningful dialogue and collective problem-solving across Deschutes, Crook, and Jefferson counties and the Warm Springs Reservation.

cocap.us/ai

RECENT TRANSACTIONS

Continued from Page 3

space in a busy, west side center at 1458 SW College Way. Congrats to Soulera Medspa on your new location.

Jenn Limoges, CCIM and **Paul Evers**, both of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Landlord and Tenant in leasing 2,762 SF at the Midway Innovation Campus. This space will be a new location for HIIT Logic fitness.

Walt Ramage and **Jeff Reed**, both of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Seller and Buyer of a 0.43 AC commercial lot with 640 SF building on Hwy 97 in Redmond, previously used for auto sales. This property closed at \$912,500.

Jenn Limoges, CCIM, of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Seller of a leased office investment at 2464 SW Glacier Pl in Redmond. This property closed at \$1,900,000, 99% of asking price, and closed within 34 days on the market.

Katy Haines, of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Landlord in leasing 1,650 SF of first floor retail space at 1404 NE Third St in Bend. This location will soon house a curated high-end resale boutique, The Sainted Buy & Sell

Walt Ramage and **Jenn Limoges, CCIM**, both of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Landlord and Tenant in leasing a 1,915 SF office at 1247 NE Medical Center Drive in Bend. Congrats to Summit O&P on your new location!

Jenn Limoges, CCIM, of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Landlord and Tenant in leasing 1,299 SF of space at 1595 NE Third St, in Prineville, OR known as Ochoco Plaza. Congratulations to Armstrong Surveying on your new office.

Jenn Limoges, CCIM, of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Tenant and Subtenant in subleasing 782 SF of retail space at 64670 NW Strickler Ave in Tumalo, OR, known as Tumalo Junction. Chopped and Faded Barbershop will add to the excellent tenant mix in this 100% leased center.

Jenn Limoges, CCIM, of **NAI Cascade**, represented the Landlord and Tenant of a 1,409 SF medical office located at 111 NW Larch in Redmond, OR.

Submit your Recent Transactions to Jeff@CascadeBusNews.com to be seen in the next edition of *Cascade Business News*

Event Details at CascadeBusNews.com/Business-Events

BUSINESS EVENTS



May 6

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

May 7

8-9am Madras - Jefferson County Chamber Coffee Cuppers at Jefferson County Library.

May 7

8:30-10am COCC Redmond State of the College at COCC Redmond Campus, Building 3, Room 306.

May 7

11:45am-1pm ConnectW Munch & Mingle at Feast Food Co.

May 7

1-2:30pm COCC Prineville State of the College at COCC Prineville Campus, 510 SE Lynn Blvd.

May 7

6:30pm Madras - Jefferson County Jefferson County Commissioner Candidate Forum at Ranch Chapel, Crooked River Ranch.

May 9

11am Madras - Jefferson County Chamber Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting at Theo's Longhouse Strong Coffee.

May 11

6:30pm Madras - Jefferson County Jefferson County Commissioner

Candidate Forum at Camp Sherman Community Hall.

May 12

8-9:30am Bend Chamber Commerce & Coffee at Mosaic Community Health.

WORKSHOPS & TRAINING



(Ongoing)

COCC Small Business Development Center Virtual Classes.

Building Permits

DESCHUTES COUNTY 4.14.26 & 4.28.26

- \$423,689.00 - Commercial (New) 454 sf. at 5801 Northwest Way Redmond 97756 OR Owner: City of Redmond 411 SW 9th St. Redmond, OR 97756
Builder: Kirby Nagelhout Construction Co. 541-389-7119 Permit # 247-26-000470
- \$125,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 18600 Skyliners Rd. Bend 97703 OR Owner: T-Mobile PO Box 1438 Bend, OR 97709
Builder: Summit Solutions Group, LLC 360-360-0333 Permit # 247-26-000092
- \$25,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 56100 Pine Mountain Rd. Bend 97702 OR Owner: Verizon PO Box 7467 Charlotte, NC 28241
Builder: Legacy Telecommunications, LLC 253-858-0214 Permit # 247-26-001401
- \$20,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 64280 N Hwy 97 Bend 97701 OR Owner: AT & T 1010 Pine St. #RM 6E-L-01-NREA St. Louis, MO 63101 Permit # 247-26-001495

CITY OF BEND 4.14.26 & 4.21.26 & 4.28.26

- \$75,000.00 - Commercial (New) 456 sf. at 1180 NW Stanhope Way Bend 97703 OR Owner: Skyliner Development, LLC
Builder: Stilson Builders 541-728-3322 Permit # PRNC202600618
- \$9,879,021.00 - Commercial (New) 1,752 sf. at 20487 Nels Anderson Pl. Bend 97701 OR
Builder: Empire Construction & Development, LLC 541-389-0070 Permit # PRNC2024036
- \$3,947,863.00 - Commercial (New) 5,144 sf. at 51 SE 13th St. Bend 97702 OR Owner: School Dist #1 520 NW Wall St. Bend, OR 97703
Builder: Kirby Nagelhout Construction Co. 541-389-7119 Permit # PRNC202508691

CITY OF REDMOND 4.28.26

- \$4,000,000.00 - Commercial (New) 11,435 sf. at 2547 SW 21st St. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Sean McGann PO Box 10691 Eugene, OR 97440
Builder: Empire Construction & Development, LLC 541-389-0070 Permit # 711-25-001841
- \$124,949.00 - Commercial (New) 584 sf. at 465 SW Rimrock Way Redmond 97756 OR Owner: School District #2J 145 SE Salmon Dr. Redmond, OR 97756 Permit # 711-25-000579
- \$80,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 2098 NW 6th St. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Central Electric Coop PO Box 846 Redmond, OR 97756
Builder: Kirby Nagelhout Construction Co. 541-389-7119 Permit # 711-26-000708
- \$63,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) 5,280 sf. at 805 E Antler Ave. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Amazon.com Services, LLC PO Box 80416 Seattle, WA 98108 Permit # 711-26-000143
- \$50,000.00 - Commercial (Alteration) at 2098 NW 6th St. Redmond 97756 OR Owner: Central Electric Coop PO Box 846 Redmond, OR 97756
Builder: Kirby Nagelhout Construction Co. 541-389-7119 Permit # 711-26-000709

Top Hat Spice Shop

Continued from page 3

store's spice blends will receive new, Oregon-inspired names. For example, Capitol Hill Seasoning will become Old Mill Seasoning, Cherry Creek Seafood Seasoning will be called Haystack Rock Seafood Seasoning, and Black River Creole will be renamed Green Wave Creole Seasoning, a nod to Bend's river wave.

In keeping with honoring local iconic places, other blends will carry names such as Obsidian Southwest, Hood River Peach Spice, Black Butte Ranch Rub, and Mt. Bachelor Seasoning Salt.

The new name, Top Hat Spice Shop, is also a nod to the local store. Perry has worn a locally made custom hat in the shop for years, becoming something of a recognizable figure to customers.

"If people don't know my name, they know 'the spice guy in the hat,'" Perry said. "It's kind of a throwback to the old days when you could tell what someone did by the hat they wore. The idea of a neighborhood shop is really important to me."

The rebrand will also introduce a new website, tophatspice.com, that will allow customers to order directly from the shop for shipping or local pickup. The Top Hat Spice Shop name will also extend to Perry's Sellwood location in Portland,

bringing both spice stores together under one Oregon-based brand.

"Now customers can order online and it comes from us, the same people they talked to in the store," he said. "For locals who don't always have time to come down to the Old Mill, they'll be able to order online and pick it up here, at their convenience."

Old Mill District Marketing Director Beau Eastes said the rebrand reflects both continuity and growth for one of the district's longest-serving retailers.

"Matt has built a loyal following over the years, and this rebrand gives him the flexibility to put more of a local stamp on the shop while keeping everything customers already love," Eastes said. "It's

the same great store, just with a new name and a more local flavor."

While some product labels have already transitioned to the Top Hat Spice Shop brand, customers will continue to see new labels and signage leading up to their grand reopening celebration scheduled for Saturday, May 16. The event will feature samples, product demonstrations, giveaways, and a chance for customers to learn more about the Top Hat Spice Shop brand. Additional details can be found at Top Hat's Instagram page, [@tophatspiceshop](https://www.instagram.com/tophatspiceshop).

"Same great spices, same great people," Perry said. "We just get to have a little more fun with it now."

tophatspice.com • oldmilledistrict.com

NFIB

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director in Oregon.

In legislative testimony against House Bill 3991, which included the transportation tax and fee increases voters will approve or reject in the May 19 election, Smith told members of the Special Session Committee

on Transportation Funding that, "For small businesses, the cost pressures of transportation fuel far outweigh challenges relating to transportation infrastructure. The 6-cent per gallon tax increase proposed by HB 3991 would add to that pressure significantly..."

"There is broad agreement across the political spectrum that transportation is a legitimate purpose for spending taxpayer dollars, but the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has been plagued

by financial mismanagement and has repeatedly failed to deliver on promises the Legislature made to Oregonians in 2017. ODOT should be held accountable and earn back the trust of Oregonians before being entrusted with new revenue, especially when transportation-related cost pressures are an increasing challenge for small businesses."

The Power of the Small Business Voice is one of the most effective in the nation. According to NFIB research, the most

common public affairs and political activities in which small employers appear to engage include initiating discussion(s) with an employee(s) regarding the impact of a policy issue on the firm and membership(s) in an organization(s) with a policy/political bent. The landing page announced today is small businesses' Townhall on the Ballot Measure 120 issue. The official No on 120 campaign website can be viewed here.

NFIB.com

Commute Options

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director at Commute Options. "Every trip logged is a step toward a healthier lifestyle and a greener Oregon."

How to Participate and Win with May Walk & Roll Challenge

Joining the challenge is simple and offers participants a chance to win prizes from local businesses:

- **Register:** Sign up or log in to your account on Get There Connect³.

- **Track Your Trips:** Log all walking, rolling, or transit-connected trips

between May 4 and May 17.

- **Win Big:** Participants who log at least four trips during the two-week challenge will be automatically entered into a random drawing for gift cards from local businesses.

For more information on the May Walk and Roll Challenge visit commuteoptions.org/may-walk-and-roll-challenge-2.

About Commute Options:

Commute Options is a nonprofit based out of Bend, dedicated to transportation options that connect people of all ages to the places they go — employees to their workplaces, students to their schools, and neighbors

within their communities. They champion active transportation and infrastructure improvements, fostering essential partnerships, and educating the community on transportation options, working towards healthier individuals, a cleaner environment, and a stronger economy.

About Get There Rewards:

The Get There Rewards program is a membership initiative for Central and Eastern Oregon businesses designed to incentivize sustainable commuting. Through the platform, employees earn points for choosing eco-friendly travel options — such as biking, walking, carpooling, vanpooling, using public

transit, or even working from home. These points are then redeemable for \$20 gift cards from a variety of national retailers. For employers, the program provides a low-cost employee benefit (\$25 per participant annually) that offers valuable insights into their organization's collective environmental impact, including carbon footprint reduction and calories burned.

¹bendoregon.gov/construction-projects/bend-bikeway-project

²oregonsaferoutes.org/blog/event/walkroll-may-challenge

³getthere.rideamigos.com/hub/landing/commuteoptions.org

Town & Country

Locavore's Rooted & Rising Gala

Photos by Leo Fremonti, Fremonti Multimedia



Oregon State Senator Anthony Broadman with guests.



Gala guests with Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Chang in the background.



Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Chang, Dr. Kate Broadman, Oregon State Senator Anthony Broadman and Bend City Council Member Ariel Mendez



Deschutes County Commissioner Phil Chang and guest



Renee Gorham and Chef John Gorham, Rancher Butcher Chef



Beau Whitaker, Whitaker Livestock



Kelly Burnham, Rickety Bridge Ranch in Redmond



Bend City Council Member Ariel Mendez



Crystal Young speaking with Evan Moran, Pioneer Ranch in Tumalo



Chef Tanner with Rebekah Alkman, Edible Central Oregon; Andrew of Audio Visions; and Tanya Earle



Crowd paddle raise for the buildout of Locavore Discovery West



Exciting finish of a paddle raise with Kelly Taylor