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River Reflections

Volume 35, Issue 52, Thursday, August 22, 2013 • Serving the McKenzie River Valley ... and Laurie Valentine of Orangevale, CA

Walterville grocery to close its doors



WALTERVILLE: C&K Market, Inc. announced on Tuesday that it will be closing its location at 39317 McKenzie Highway in Walterville at 10 p.m. on Sunday, September 8th. “We would like to thank the Walterville community and the many McKenzie River Valley tourists for their support of our store,” said Greg Sandeno, President and Chief Executive Officer of C&K Market, Inc. “Our intent is to offer jobs, within our family of stores, to all current employees.”
The decision to exit the Walterville market was made this

month as part of the Brookings based grocery chain’s evaluation of opportunities to strengthen company operations. In June, the Waldport C&K Market was closed but kept the doors remained open at the Ray’s Food Place in Waldport.
“The Walterville store has not been profitable for quite some time,” explained Sandeno “despite some excellent efforts by our employees, we have not been able to reposition it to better compete against the increased competitive pressures we are seeing in today’s retail landscape.”

Tokatee Scramble will benefit clinic

RAINBOW: The second annual Tokatee Scramble, a golf tournament benefiting the McKenzie River Medical Clinic, will take place on Sunday, August 25th, a week before Labor Day weekend. The annual event’s date has been moved up to late summer instead of fall, so more summer visitors can participate. Tokatee Golf Club, on the McKenzie Highway in Rainbow, is hosting the tournament.
Registration fees are \$75 per person, or \$300 per four-person

advanced categories. In a golf scramble, each player in a team tees off on each hole, and the team’s best tee shot is selected as the spot where all team members then play their second shots, and so forth. The fun format keeps all teams moving along briskly.
Jim Baker, president of the clinic’s board of directors, invites people to, “Come play and have a wonderful time, knowing that all the while you’re helping to support the oldest rural medical clinic in Oregon.”



Golfers will be “scrambling” at the Tokatee Golf Club this weekend as they compete in a new annual event.

team (the same as last year) and include an 18-hole round of golf, cart, range balls, dinner, complimentary raffle tickets, and beverage. All levels of golfers can play, and prizes will be given in beginner, intermediate, and

With costs of medical treatment on the rise and reimbursement payments from Medicare and private insurance companies on the decline, the nonprofit McKenzie River Medical Clinic is reaching
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Art found inside trees

BLUE RIVER: A Northwest Rendezvous in Blue River? The three-day McKenzie River Chainsaw Festival certainly fit the bill – filling the air with the sound of racing two stroke saw engines and plenty of chips and sawdust.

For Randy Gauthier of Moberly Lake, British Columbia, it almost didn’t happen. The single parent father is new to the trade. After working for 23 years as a dangerous tree faller he began carving only six months ago, deciding he had to find a better way to spend some time with his son. His love of chainsaws combined with an inner artistic ability saw the income from his new trade go from zero to \$6,000 – a month when he moved his work up to the roadside.

Gauthier said he began searching the Internet to learn more about competing. He applied to 30 events and was accepted by three. The first was for the McKenzie. It was almost his last.

Running on a tight schedule he hired someone else to truck his tools, learning too late that was a sour deal that caused him to abandon everything he needed on the other side of the U.S./ Canadian border. Pushing forward he ran into more hang-ups with ticket agents and scheduling.

Having headed out with \$2,700 in hand, he had only \$500 left when he made it to Blue River. And he had no tools.

“That’s said and done and behind me now,” the carver from the Saulteau Indian Reservation said as he took a break from cutting into a log with some borrowed equipment. “These are some of the best guys in the world. They’re absolutely great,” he added saying, “Everyone is doing anything they can to help me out.”



Eugene chainsaw sculptor Kevin Strauslin says he doesn’t start a project with a preconceived image, instead letting the grain of a log determine what the final outcome will be.

Despite being left handed and running a right hand powersaw, Gauthier still had to grin. “It’s a little challenging but I’m here to learn.”

By comparison, “Thor” (Bruce Thor) of Kent, Washington, has been carving for 15 years and has adapted to the life style of a “chainsaw gypsy.” He follows the circuit wherever there’s action – from coast to coast, varying his home base from Georgia to the Pacific Northwest.

Besides carving at shows in Japan, Germany and Scotland, he’ll be off to England soon. Asked where people might find him, Thor says it’s likely you’ll find me somewhere where someone puts me up.”

After the summer ends he will settle down for a bit to work on the backlog of custom orders carvers rack up from people who

want them to create a special piece.

Kevin Strauslin of Eugene is putting down roots. He’s just about ready to open a new gallery in Salem to showcase both his and work by other carvers. His life changed five years ago when the bottom fell out of the drywall trade when the recession hit.

By chance, he happened to make a simple carving his boss saw. Telling Kevin if he didn’t quit to take up this new vocation, his boss had to do the latter – launching a career that now generates \$90,000 a year. “I guess I was pretty much a natural,” he said, not surprisingly, grinning as well.

Randy Gauthier can be reached at: rc-gauthier@hotmail.com. To catch up with Thor, call 253-850-7584. Kevin Strauslin can be reached at 503-463-7008.

Hand Lake fire borders the wilderness

MCKENZIE BRIDGE: A small fire near Hand Lake grew to nine acres by Sunday afternoon and firefighters have kept it at that size ever since. First spotted by the Coffin Mountain Lookout, its location was reported to the Willamette National Forest’s dispatch by Sand Mountain Lookout Blake Driver; “We had a storm come through last Sunday, August 10th, and we saw strikes hit right there in the Hand Lake area. It was just a matter of time and hot and dry weather before it came back to life,” said Driver.

On Tuesday morning, the fire was straddling the Mt. Washington Wilderness boundary; half of the fire was inside, the other half outside the Wilderness boundary. It was 30% contained and has been staffed by 3 twenty-person crews, two helicopters and two fallers.

“We have staffed this fire and are fully suppressing it,” according to McKenzie River District Ranger



Light smoke rising from Hand Lake Fire, Mt Washington Wilderness. Photo Courtesy USFS.

Terry Baker, “sometimes we may choose other management options, but for this fire, on this day, with the hot and dry weather expected mid-week, we’re going

to work to put this one to rest. I am so in awe of our firefighters. For weeks now they have been systematically finding and putting

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