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# Health food supplied with care

Front Page

News

Main

BY GREG HITCHCOCK OF THE MINER 📅 07/03/2024 06:00 AM



How low-income families can save and still eat healthy

NEWPORT – Stephani Smith is in the farm to food pantry business providing fresh food to low-income families who utilize food banks in Pend Oreille, Stevens and Ferry counties.

Smith, who heads the Colvillebased N.E.W. Hunger Coalition, said there is food insecurity, especially in rural counties.

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, as defined by the USDA.

“We aim at improving nutrition in food pantries,” Smith said.

Smith said food insecurity is a downward spiral of not being able to afford quality food and not being able to get to the food.

“In rural areas, the price of food and fuel is high,” she said.

The N.E.W. Hunger Coalition serves 17 food pantries from 18 farm contracts. In 2023, 3,716 pounds of produce was delivered to the Ione food pantry with another 3,762 pounds to the Cusick food pantry.

Food insecurity was also greater among residents who rent or have other living arrangements as compared to residents who own homes. Of all households experiencing food insecurity, 77% reported they were either “not getting by” or “just barely getting by” and over half of households with food insecurity said price increases were “very stressful,” according to The University of Washington’s School of Public Health.

Smith said the problem with most food pantries is the quality of food to be found “Much food at food pantries is packaged and shelf stable. We offer locally grown food,” she said.

N.E.W. Hunger Coalition did a recent study and found that many health visits stem from under nutrition.

“In America, one third of food pantry clients have a family member with diabetes. Fifty eight percent have heart disease,” Smith said.

N.E.W. Hunger Coalition, in operation for over 10 years, buys produce from local gardeners and farmers and delivers them by truck to predesignated routes.

Faith Farm on Panhead Hill Road in Newport is the organization’s newest contracted farm. The farm’s owner Sandy Coelho will sell a row of carrots, which then will be succession planted with sugar snap peas or lettuce to N.E.W. Hunger Coalition for area pantries. NEWHC will purchase all that this row produces for area food pantries.

Rural Gardens is another program provided by N.E.W. Hunger Coalition to ensure the public gets food dense in nutrients.

A hands-on gardening class, Rural Gardens is free to food pantry clients.

“People can shop at free seed tables and each spring Master Gardeners volunteer to teach about gardening,” Smith said.

She said there is a movement to provide healthier food options.

“We want to improve overall nutrition,” she said.

Another business that delivers quality bulk and natural foods is Azure Standard. Based in Oregon, Azure Standard has 3,000 drop locations across the United States. The number of locations is growing.

One of the drop locations in north Pend Oreille County is at Ione Town Hall. The other drop locations are in Newport and Priest River.

Ione drop coordinator Kathy Bungard said she has been buying from them for years.

“There is little choice in the north county,” she said about shopping organically.

“I don’t think enough people are aware of the food process,” Bungard said. “If it’s organic it’s expensive and you need to buy bulk. That’s a myth.”

She said shoppers can buy single items. If you can find organic peanut butter, Bungard said a 16 oz jar from Azure costs \$7.71, the same from Walmart is \$16.49 and Amazon charges \$12.

“If I buy a case of six jars, it costs \$37.88. Financially it’s a huge savings,” she said.

Azure sells more than organic natural food having personal and household supplies and toiletries served in eco-friendly bags.

“It’s convenient. Every shopper is asked to go to the drop off location, a truck pulls up and we unload,” Bungard said.

The catch is that the whole order’s minimum to buy is \$6,000 or Azure doesn’t make the monthly drop and orders placed are rolled over until the next month. Azure doesn’t charge until they are able to make a drop.

July 7 is the next drop at Ione Town Hall and Bungard said the orders for July are discouraging.



“June was a scheduled drop but it was called off because of a lack of sales. Use it or lose it,” Bungard said.

She is promoting Ione drops through her Facebook page Azure Standard Drop, Ione, WA to get more people to shop. The page has 118 followers, but to date Azure only has 15 placed orders and 25 open orders.

Bungard said eating healthy, nutritious food is a no-brainer.

“It’s more choice, a healthy choice, and you save money,” she said.

Otherwise, people will have to drive further adding to fuel costs to receive more healthy choices.

“People drive to Costco in Spokane to shop for food,” Bungard said. “Filling up a monthly cart (from Azure) takes less effort than going shopping twice a month.”

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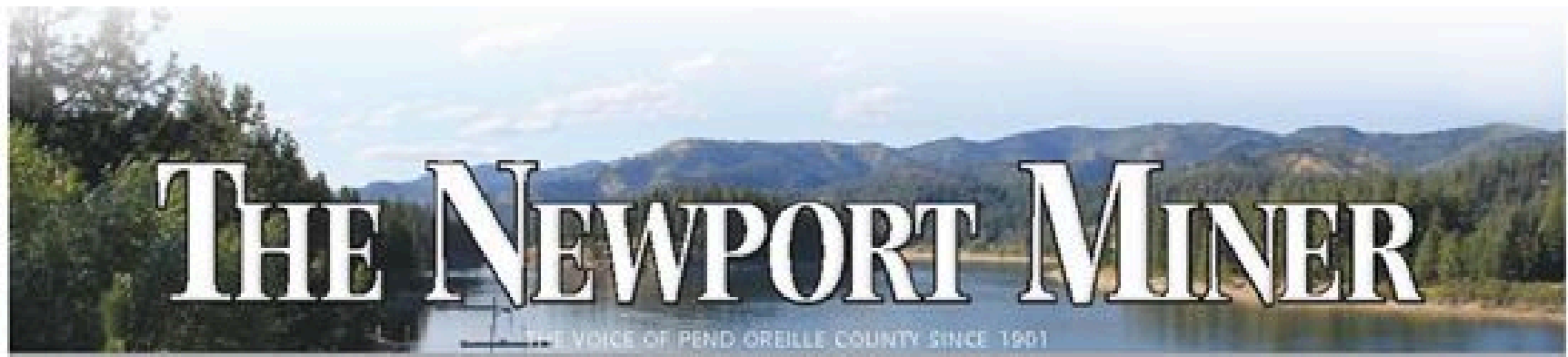


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Wednesday, November 6, 2024

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# Gentle, Smiley, Moody leading in Pend Oreille County election

BY MICHELLE NEEDVED  
OF THE MINER

NEWPORT — Initial vote tallies in Pend Oreille County show that incumbent county commissioners Brian Smiley and John Gentle are leading, as is Troy Moody, who is running against incumbent Pend Oreille PUD Commissioner Joe Onley.

In other contested races, Lisa Malpass Childress is leading for Superior Court Judge in Pend Oreille County and district wide. The position is for the tri-county area of Ferry, Stevens and Pend Oreille County. Malpass is leading 64.32% to 35.04%, or 6,142 to 3,351.

Brian Smiley is leading for Pend Oreille County commissioner, District 3, with 64.62% of the vote, compared to 33.64% for challenger Kevin Young, or 4,555 to 2,371.

Gentle is leading for Pend Oreille County commissioner, District 1, with 62.52% to Steve Haroldson Minnich's 35.78%, or 4,452 to 2,548.

Moody is leading over Onley 59.01% to 40.3%, or 4,141 to 2,828.

For State Representative, District 7 Position 1, Andrew Engell is leading 59.31% to 39.62% over Bob Ing-Moody, or



Pend Oreille County elections workers pick up ballots at the drop box in Newport Tuesday morning, Nov. 6. The box will be emptied again at 8 p.m. Tuesday night but those ballots won't be processed that day.

13,870 to 9,265.

For Position 2, Hunter Abell is beating Rocky Dean, 16,666 to 8,063, or 67.31% to 32.565. Dean is a Democrat. Abell, Engell and Ing-Moody are all

Republicans, as are all four Pend Oreille County commissioner candidates. Judges and PUD commissioners are non-partisan.

Fire Protection District No. 4's EMS levy is failing.

It needs a 60% super majority to pass, and is receiving 51.35% of the vote, or 495-469.

Fire Protection District No. 5's lid levy lift is failing, with 45.95% in favor

and 54.05% against.

Sacheen Water and Sewer District's excess levy is passing with 65.33% of the vote in favor, or 130-69 votes. Votes will continued to

be counted for the next few days. Any ballots dropped in a drop box by 8 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 5 will be counted, as well as any ballots post marked by Nov. 5.

## The slow unraveling of a quick mind

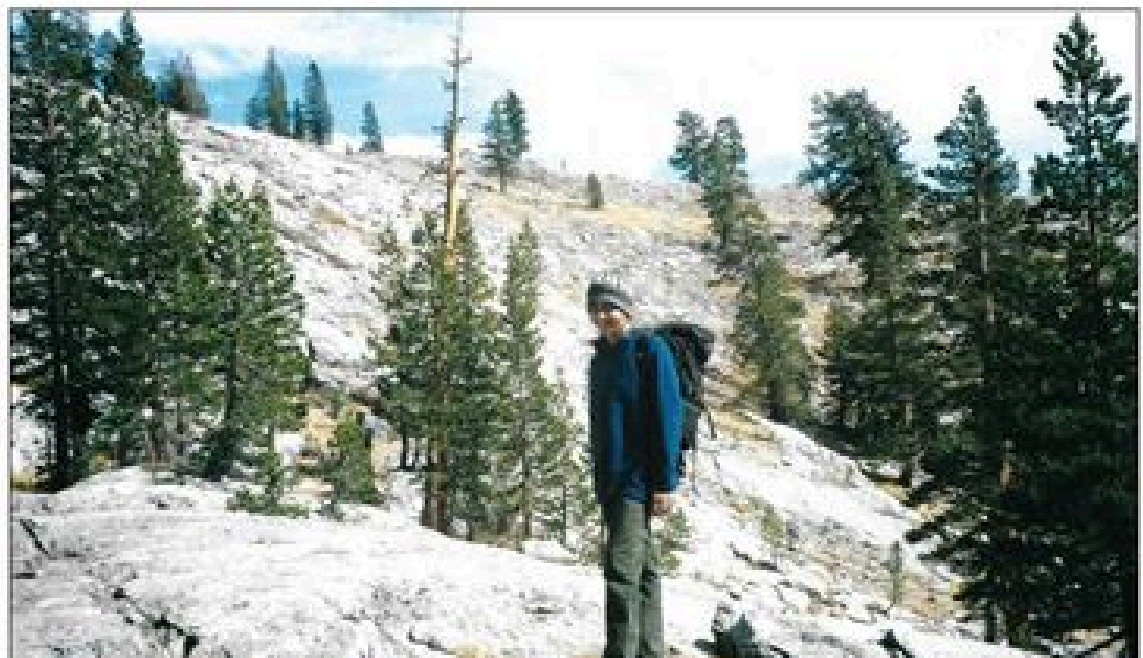
BY AMMI MIDSTOKKE  
FOR THE MINER

Editor's note: This was first published in The Spokesman-Review Sunday, Nov. 2. It is reprinted here with the permission of the author.

On the night of December 30th, 2023, Eva Masin crawled out of bed, crept silently out the back door of her home, and disappeared into the freezing night. The only trace she left was the soft imprint of her bare feet in the frost of the quiet Missoula alley. They were heading toward the river.

Masin's husband, Dave Prather sits in a well-worn chair in his living room, the long hair of his organic farming days trimmed to the docility of middle-age. The bookshelves are stuffed with titles from botany manuals to Tom Robbins novels. A guitar hangs on the wall. The air smells of herbs and teas. These, along with children's art and flourishing plants, are the domestic remnants of the woman who once lived here.

The last time Prather saw his wife, it appeared she was sleeping soundly. Yet in the weeks, days, and hours prior to that, Masin, 43, who had recently been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, was struggling to mitigate



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melodic voice and gardening skills that Masin inherited, along with her father's analytical mind. She was drawn to plants and nature, studied at Evergreen in Washington, travelled to South America and Europe, and hiked most of the Northwest.

Masin pursued a career in forestry, becoming a writer and editor for the US Forest Service. Her marriage

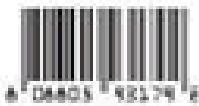
proved, was the foundation of their idyllic family and the life they built near the Mission Mountains before moving to Missoula.

For much of that life, Masin was also one of my closest friends. Her soft chuckle was the soundtrack to many of my youthful memories. In our letters and visits over the decades, there were few hints: A reference to

cope better with stress, a propensity to feel depressed in winter.

Yet none of that explained why Masin would walk away from her home, husband, and children in the middle of a winter night.

SEE MASIN, 2A



CLASSIFIEDS	8B	OPINION	4A	RECORD	10B
LIFE	7A	POLICE REPORTS	10B	SPORTS	8A
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