

Chamber Connection: The Three Horses (Los Tres Caballos) Rolls into action at 5 for 5: Community Health was on the speaker menu-Mexican food was on the food menu

By T. Myers

New Chamber member, Jose Luis, owner of Los Tres Caballos, took on preparing lunches for the 4th 5 for 5 luncheon about Community Health Care on the 23rd at LPCC. Jumping in to make meals for 60 plus people at one time is always fun and Luis lived up to the challenge. He put together, rice, beans, chips and salsa, Colorado and Verde sauce and then? Four kinds of enchiladas smothered in cheese and a container of Pico de Gallo to top it all off. (Hamburger, pulled beef, Chicken in red and in Verde sauce).

Since participants get to eat first, there were lots of happy folks when they saw the buffet laid out just for them. (Asking questions on a full tummy is always a good experience.) We welcome Jose Luis and his Restaurant as the newest member in the Chamber and thank him for his wonderful lunch at the 5 for 5.

This 5 for 5 Discussion was composed of a panel of experts made up of Charla DeHate from the Community Health Center, Jane Smiley, Deschutes County Mental Health Services, Mike Supkis discussed the LP Fire District involvement with handling medical emergencies and John Weinsheim from St Charles Hospitals, each speaking about what is happening in the South County area.

The Clinic has opened student and family services clinic days at La Pine High School and at Gilchrist and soon they are adding a Friday for the Three Rivers students and families in Sunriver. The LCHC also has contracted services with the Deschutes County Behavioral Health department and they have clinicians and referral services open at the clinic and will soon staff the South County building offices with a clinician. There are three new providers coming in July, bringing their provider number up to 12. Biggest news: The clinic is open from 8-5 Monday through Friday and 9 to 1 on Saturday for regular appointments. It also has a daily walk-in program for patients from 8:30-7 PM Monday through Friday. There is also a transportation voucher system now available to patients so they can get services in the area.

Deschutes County has added staff and clinicians to handle Mental Health concerns in the area. Jane Smiley addressed services. There are nine counselors and they have individual, family and group programs available. They work in concert with the LP Community Health Center and the schools to assist clients. As a representative of the county, Jane Smiley works most of the time behind the scenes working to get support services.

The ST. Charles Administrator discussed what the board is considering for La Pine. "Nothing is set," John Weinsheim explained. "The board decides these matters" He told about how the hospital group always works with existing medical providers in an area when they open up services. There have been careful considerations for a new clinic and what it would offer, but no final word has been determined.

Mike Supkis had the most revealing information of the day. With the numbers of medical related calls 4-5 per day- that are responded to and the cost of the transport of patients who are determined to be in need of transport figured at the cost of the transports, more that equals three times the cost of opening an Urgent Care facility here. (Note: when the community began discussing having an Urgent Care center, the costs were over \$350K per year to add it to the existing clinic. LPRFD Costs are over a million to respond and transport. Also, Mike told the group that about 25% of the calls they respond to were from people with no transportation- or they were unable to transport themselves to get help) “Don’t get me wrong, these people that call for medical assistance need help,” Chief Supkis told us. “When we have an ambulance call to handle a non- threatening emergency, it often interferes with the next call that is received and there is a delay in reaching that emergency” The community needs to be aware of how much the Fire District is doing to answer these calls and decide what kind of solution would be more economical and efficient. The next talk is set for May and we are taking reservations! 541-536-9771. Call today and get ready to learn about the natural resources and the arts in South County!