

Umatilla DA pushes back against circuit court judge 2A

Gates swing open for CJD



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Good day to our valued subscriber Dan Pokorney of La Grande

Clinic prescribes medical marijuana to patients

■ **Tranquil Horizons provides approval for medical marijuana card to those with qualifying condition**

By Max Denning
The Observer

Tranquil Horizons Cooperative, a medical marijuana clinic where patients can seek doctor approval for a medical marijuana card, opened its doors inside the Sac Annex in La Grande Monday.

From 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Monday, the Tranquil Horizons' doctor was available to see patients who were looking to obtain an Oregon Medical Marijuana Program card, according to Timothy Proesch, owner of the business. The clinic does not sell medical marijuana, but the patients are able to receive necessary doctor approval for an OMMP card if they have a qualifying condition.

Medical marijuana has become substantially less abundant in Oregon since the legalization of recreational marijuana in 2015. There are currently only eight medical marijuana dispensaries listed in the directory kept by the Oregon Health Authority. In July 2015, the Oregon Health Authority reported to KPTV there were 300 dispensaries. In La Grande, medical marijuana remains the only type of marijuana that can be legally bought in the city.

Proesch, who also owns a medical marijuana clinic in Ontario, said he thinks there was a need for the services provided by a medical marijuana clinic in La Grande.

"It just seemed like the demand was there," Proesch said. "There's a lot of people here who were traveling quite a ways, either to Bend or to Portland or even to us in Ontario, to receive their medical card."

Proesch's clinic won't be open every day of the week or even every week. He said when he previously worked at a medical marijuana clinic in La Grande, it was only open four hours a month. Currently, the plan is to be open two days a month.

"That seems to be the ebb and flow of this business," Proesch said, adding that when the clinic isn't seeing patients, "we're busy scheduling appointments and doing the rest of the cannabis activism in the area."

In terms of activism, Proesch said he wants to educate the community on medical marijuana, and work together with the two medical marijuana

See **Clinic** / Page 5A



Rod Chandler photo

This steam tractor, built in 1913, was driven in 1939 from Wolf Creek near North Powder to La Grande at a speed of four miles per hour.

Looking back while moving forward

By Dick Mason
The Observer

Dale Chandler, a La Grande contractor and hobby farmer, does not need a key or gasoline to start the oldest of his four tractors.

What Chandler needs is unconventional — 400 gallons of water and a cord of wood.

The water and wood fuel are a spin back in time courtesy of Chandler's 1913 60-horsepower tractor made by Case Company of Racine, Wisconsin, which is powered not by gasoline but steam.

Chandler, who owns the steam tractor with his brother, Stan, has spent five years restoring and maintaining it. He periodically fires it up and drives it about 500 feet on his land. His most recent drive was less than a month ago. Steam rose up past the front tractor during the drive, slightly obscuring the view of the present but drawing the early 1900s into sharper focus.

Dale Chandler said he takes out the steam-powered tractor periodically for family and friends.

"I do it to display and entertain," he said.



Rod Chandler photo

Stan Chandler of Pendleton works on a steam tractor he and his brother Dale of La Grande own.

The tractor's features include a whistle that resembles a steam train engine, only it has a higher pitch, he said.

"It echoes all over," Chandler said. "You can hear it a mile away."

He said sometimes people recognize the sound of the whistle and

come to see the operation of the 1913 tractor. Visitors are given the chance to operate the tractor under supervision and pull the cord of its steam whistle, creating a sound of years gone by.

The steam tractor has been in the

See **Tractor** / Page 5A

The Observer receives 11 awards in ONPA competition

■ **Annual competition recognizes newspapers for their excellence**

By Observer staff

The Observer was recognized with 11 awards over the weekend by the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, including third place for overall general excellence in its category.

ONPA is a trade association composed of weekly and daily paid-circulation newspapers across Oregon. Every year, the members of its organization send in their best articles, photos, graphics and multimedia pieces for a chance to be

recognized state-wide for their efforts.

The Observer competes against other daily Oregon newspapers with circulations of less than 10,000. The general excellence award is given based on a newspaper's overall quality.

The contest is highly competitive. Other newspapers in The Observer's category include the East Oregonian, The Argus Observer (Ontario), The Daily Astorian, Central Oregonian (Prineville), The

Dalles Chronicle and The World (Coos Bay).

Reporter Dick Mason received first place in the best writing category for his story "Paying tribute to fallen heroes" published on the front page of the Oct. 20, 2017 Observer.

The story focused on two local men who wanted to honor the memory of four young men who died in a military training plane crash in 1943. The plane's remains are still located in a forested area near Tollgate, and there is now a memorial plaque at the site.

Former Special Sections

Editor Emily Adair received second place for best graphics, third place for best feature story: personality, third place for best graphic and shared third place with Editor Cherise Kaechele for best headline writing. Additionally, Kaechele earned second place for best writing, third place for best feature photo and third place for best news photo. Sports Editor Ronald Bond earned third place for best local column and the newsroom staff earned second place for best page one design.

"The Observer news-

See **Newspaper** / Page 5A

Marijuana petition goes up in smoke

■ **Signatures fall short of goal**

By Max Denning
The Observer

The citizen-led initiative to vote on the ban of recreational marijuana in La Grande came up short of the necessary amount of signatures to secure a place on the November ballot.

Robin Church, Union County clerk, said the petition came to her with only 1,199 signatures — one short of the necessary 1,200. Then, in the pre-processing phase of the signature counting, the Union County clerk's office found 47 signatures in the first 20 pages that were from individuals living outside the city limits. That caused Church to end the counting process and determine that there were not enough valid signatures to place the initiative on the ballot.

Organizers David Moyal and Christopher Jennings began collecting signatures for the petition less than two weeks prior to the July

See **Petition** / Page 5A

City announces new pet store coming to La Grande

■ **Petsense to open its doors soon**

By Observer staff

A major pet supplies store is coming to La Grande, which will provide the items community members need to keep their four-legged friends happy.

The City of La Grande announced in a press release that Petsense, a national retail chain that offers pet products and services, will open for business this summer.

The city's Economic Development office has been working with this company since spring 2017, when it was identified as a good fit for the area. The Buxton Company, which has contracted with the city to provide viable economic development opportunities to pursue, determined the pet chain had serious potential in La Grande.

In January 2017, the Urban Renewal Agency entered into a contract with the Buxton Company

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

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