

## LOCAL BRIEFING

From staff reports

**Walden tours biomass facility today in Wallowa**

WALLOWA — U.S. Rep. Greg Walden will tour Integrated Biomass at 3:30 p.m. today. The facility is located at 75100 Lower Diamond Lane, Wallowa. According to integrated-biomass.com, the company takes wood that is underutilized by the traditional logging industry and turns it into useful things like firewood, poles and clean energy.

“By doing so, we help forest restoration projects, reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires, and decrease waste,” the website states, “all while creating new jobs in a community faced with economic hardship due to closing timber mills. Most important, you get quality wood that’s better for the planet.”

**Meals on Wheels drivers needed**

LA GRANDE — Community Connection is seeking volunteers to be Meals on Wheels drivers. For more information, call Sydney Gleeson at 541-963-7532, ext. 1104, or stop by the Union County Senior Center, 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande.

**Pre-registration required for Joseph youth art camps**

JOSEPH — The first

of two youth art camps offered by the Joseph Center for Arts and Culture will be held next week. “Where the Wild Things Are” is open to ages 5-8 and will be held from 10 a.m. to noon July 30-Aug. 2. The cost is \$45 for four days of painting and/or clay work. Pre-registration is required; go to joseph.org, call 541-432-0505 or stop by the center at 403 N. Main St., Joseph. Registration is also open for a camp for ages 9-13 to be held the week of Aug. 13. “Far-Away Places” will offer printmaking and/or clay work.

**Join collaborative effort to track bumble bees**

LA GRANDE — A unique opportunity to contribute to the conservation of bumble bees is free and open to all July 29 from noon to 4 p.m. at the U.S. Forest Service La Grande Ranger District Office, 3502 Highway 30. Participants will learn about bumble bees and how to participate in the Pacific Northwest Bumble Bee Atlas, a collaborative effort to track bumble bee populations, which are suffering along with honey bees.

Idaho, Oregon and Washington are home to nearly 30 species of bumble bees, and several

of them face an uncertain future. This citizen science project aims to collect data to better understand the status of our native bumble bees. There is no cost to join the army of trained volunteers. Instruction will be followed by field work. Participants are asked to bring a sack lunch. For more information, call the Ranger Office at 541-963-7186.

**Public-use restrictions increase on national forests**

As of today, Phase B Public Use Restrictions are in place on the Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests due to high fire danger, the potential for human-caused fires, and concern for public safety. Operating an internal combustion engine, such as a chainsaw, is prohibited, and campfires are allowed only in designated campgrounds and recreation sites. Liquefied or bottled gas stoves and heaters are allowed for cooking and heating. Information on the use of generators and smoking restrictions are available on the forest’s websites. For a list of designated recreation areas and campsites where campfires are permitted during Phase B Public Use Restrictions, contact:

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest information hotlines in La Grande at 541-962-1234 and in Joseph at 541-426-5552; www.facebook.com/WallowaWhitmanNF

Malheur National Forest information hotline in John Day at 541-575-3000; www.facebook.com/MalheurNationalForest

**Discounted carnival wristbands available before fair begins**

LA GRANDE — Wristbands allowing wearers to enjoy unlimited rides for one day during the carnival at the Union County Fair are now on sale. Wristbands purchased before the fair begins on Aug. 1 are \$20 and are available at D&B Supply, Looking Glass Books, Hines Meat Company and Island City Market. Wristbands sold during the fair will be \$25 each.

**Chip sealing planned next week in La Grande**

LA GRANDE — The City of La Grande Public Works Department will conduct chip sealing beginning July 30 on Fir Street from the railroad tracks to Y Avenue; on Y Avenue from Fir Street

to Spruce Street; and on Fourth Street from K Avenue to Penn Avenue. Work will begin at 6 a.m. and continue until the work is completed. Expect road closures and detours in these areas and plan to use alternative routes. Contact Public Works at 541-962-1325 for more information.

**Schedule for Greenway public hearings altered**

ISLAND CITY — The Island City City Council announced it is postponing the start of the public hearings for the Grande Ronde River Greenway Project due to unforeseen issues. The council is holding three hearings (originally set for Aug. 7, 21 and 28), each of which will focus on one of the three proposed options for the Greenway path. The Aug. 7 hearing has been canceled, but the Aug. 21 and 28 hearings will be held as scheduled. The remaining third date will be announced at a later time. Each hearing will begin at 7 p.m. at Island City City Hall. Public input will be taken at each meeting.

**Oregon Humanities Conversation focuses on race and place**

JOSEPH — NEOEDD is hosting the Oregon

Humanities Conversation Project “Race and Place: Racism and Resilience in Oregon’s Past and Future,” led by Anita Yap and Traci Price, at 7 p.m. July 31 at The Place, 301 S. Lake St., Joseph. This event is free and no registration is required. The conversation will explore the answer to: How does Oregon’s history of racism influence our present and how can understanding historic and current impacts of racism in Oregon contribute to our sense of place and vision of the future?

**La Grande Farmers Market plans special ‘4th Tuesday’**

The La Grande Farmers Market has planned special events for “4th Tuesday at the Market” throughout the summer. From 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. July 31, all are welcome to celebrate the market with beer, margaritas, music and food. In addition to the weekly market selling sustainably raised meats and produce, handcrafted art and jewelry, and homemade treats, there will be a beer garden and a BBQ. Mamacita’s International Grill will have fresh margaritas and fresh fruit smoothies on their patio, and the “Beer Choir” will encourage live music from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

## OBITUARIES

**Harry J. Harmon**

La Grande

Harry J. Harmon, 98, of La Grande, died July 25 at a local care facility. An obituary is forthcoming. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory will be handling the arrangements.

**Harold V. Hall**

Union

1924-2018

Harold Vernon Hall, 94, of Union, died July 17 at his home. A graveside memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Aug. 4 at the Union Cemetery. Arrangements are entrusted to Daniels-Knopp Funeral Center/

Harold was born in 1924 to Jesse Roy and Maude (Swiger)

Hall and lived in Union his entire life. He saw many changes over his lifespan, from outhouses to indoor plumbing, push lawn mowers to riding lawn mowers, from four-party telephone lines to handheld cellphones, and from console radios to 360 cable channels.

Harold signed up for the U.S. Army the day after graduating from Union High School and entered the service on July 31, 1943. He served in the Pacific Theater during World War II in the Army-Amored Division, Company D, 763rd Tank Battalion and reached the rank of corporal. Harold received many decorations including the Bronze Star. He was honorably discharged on Feb. 9, 1946, at Fort Lewis, Washington.

Upon returning to Union in 1946, Harold worked for the U.S. Forest Service for three

years and then for the Ronde Valley Lumber Company in Union. In 1966, Harold began working for the Union Pacific Railroad, doing track maintenance until his retirement 20 years later. He also served as a volunteer firefighter on the Union Fire Department and the Union Rural Fire Department for many years.

On May 30, 1956, Harold married Anita (Harris) Jacob in Winnemucca, Nevada, and became an instant father of three children. Later, two more children were born. In the summertime, the family enjoyed camping, especially in the Eagle Caps at Tamarack Park and Castle Rock and at Copperfield Park on the Snake River.

The family also took to the hills to pick mushrooms and huckleberries in their favorite

spots. A special favorite for the family was taking car rides around the Grande Ronde Valley with an ice cream cone treat

Harold and Anita enjoyed gardening and preserving the bounty throughout their lives, and Harold continued to preserve and supervise preservation to the last days of his life.

Survivors include his children and their spouses, Peggy and Tom Cox, Nate Jacob, Judy and John Cox, Marianne and John McCullough and Wayne and Lisa Hall; 11 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren; one nephew; and many cousins.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Anita; parents, Jesse and Maude Hall; and sister, Virginia (Hall) Taylor.

Memorial donations may be made to the VFW Post 4060 or to the Union EMT.

## PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

**UNION COUNTY SHERIFF’S OFFICE**

Accident: At least one person was injured in a traffic accident Thursday on Robbs Hill Road. The accident was reported at 2:06 p.m.

Arrested: Attoway Reader Davis, 24, La Grande, was arrested on charges of contributing to the sexual delinquency of a minor, second-degree sexual abuse, third-degree rape, sexual misconduct and third-degree sodomy.

Arrested: Carl Ray Odums, 49, unknown address, was arrested by the Nampa, Idaho Police Department on a Union County warrant on a charge of probation violation. The alleged probation violation was connected to an original charge of first-degree theft.

**LA GRANDE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Arrested: Trevor Alan Nichols, 21, unknown address, was arrested on a state parole board warrant on a charge of probation violation on original charges of dangerous drugs and driving while suspended, misdemeanor.

Arrested: Seth David Mikalov, 19, unknown address, was arrested on a charge of trespassing.

**LA GRANDE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The La Grande Fire Department responded to five calls for medical and one fire on Wednesday and 10 calls for medical on Thursday.

## Search continues for missing John Day couple after house fire

**■ Cadaver dogs did not find human remains at the site of the house fire**

By Richard Hanners

EO Media Group

The Grant County Sheriff’s Office has no new leads on the couple who are missing following a house fire near John Day last week.

Sheriff Glenn Palmer said the “phone’s been off the hook” as numerous friends and family have called his office after Terry and Sharon Smith’s home on Nan’s Rock Road burned to the ground July 17-18.

Foul play is not yet suspected, but law enforcement are still looking for the Smiths’ vehicle, Palmer said. Friends and family who have contacted the sheriff’s office said it was unusual for the Smiths to have lost contact with them, he said.

“They’re a very social couple,” Palmer said.

Palmer confirmed cadaver dogs searched the debris from the house fire and found no human remains.

A search effort was planned for the surrounding area Tuesday, he said.

A statewide press release was issued by the sheriff’s office last week, asking anyone with information about the location of Terry Smith, 67, and Sharon Smith, 65, or their silver 2006 Toyota Tacoma pickup truck with license plate 714 EGG to contact law enforcement. Palmer said the press release was not sent to Hawaii, where the Smiths had a home.

Cathy Hinshaw, Sharon’s sister who lives in Hawaii, said she spoke to Sharon the evening of the fire, and Sharon said they were headed to bed. Hinshaw said she then got a call about 4 a.m. from a friend of Sharon’s who lived near Nan’s Rock Road informing her about the fire.

The Smiths’ disappearance is very unusual and could suggest foul play, Hinshaw said. She said the Smiths were very social and she talked to Sharon two or three times a day. She said she and Sharon have known Terry since they were in their early teens in Springfield and often went

camping together.

Hinshaw also said the Smiths sometimes let people stay on the 80-100 acre property on Nan’s Rock Road they bought in the mid-1990s, but the man who served as a caretaker for the property was gone at the time of the fire.

Locating the fire initially proved difficult, John Day Fire Chief Ron Smith told the Blue Mountain Eagle. A “glow” was observed by people west of Mt. Vernon and reported to authorities about 10:15 p.m. on July 17, but the reporting party thought there was a fire on Canyon Mountain.

According to John Day dispatch, crews from the Forest Service, Oregon Department of Forestry, John Day fire and Mt. Vernon fire responded to Nan’s Rock Road around 12:15 a.m. in an attempt to locate multiple fire reports.

By the time initial attack crews from ODF arrived, the house on Nan’s Rock Road was completely burned to the ground, Smith said. John Day fire crews secured the perimeter to prevent the fire’s

spread to the surrounding area, which included heavy timber and open meadows covered with dry grass, he said.

The road is in a very isolated area and in rough condition, Smith said. There were no nearby neighbors who might have seen the fire and called it in right away, he said.

Smith said he saw remains of solar panels indicating the house may have been off the grid. He said many people who live in this area are not year-round residents.

Palmer encouraged anyone who knew the location of the Smiths or their pickup to contact the sheriff’s office at 541-575-1131.



Courtesy Photo

John Day couple Sharon and Terry Smith have been missing since their house burned down on July 17-18.

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