

HEINE

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Heine, La Grande Police Department's newest ordinance officer, just wants to talk to you. Though after a few warnings, she might still give you that ticket. A La Grande native, Heine has been involved in some facet of law enforcement since she was a teenager, volunteering at community events put on by the police department at age 16 and serving as a cadet from ages 18 to 21. After completing a year at Eastern Oregon University, Heine became a police dispatcher at 19, working in that sector of the department for the next six years. She also serves as a reserve officer for the department. This January, she briefly left LGPD to work at the Department of Human Services in La Grande.



Chenise Kaechele / The Observer

Heine's previous experience with the police department has helped her in her new role, she said.

"I really liked the idea, after being in dispatch for over six years, of being outside (and) just being a part of the family again. In law enforcement, it's just different. It's hard to explain. But you kind of have that bond. We're all just a big family, and I missed that when I left."

— Cassie Heine, La Grande Ordinance Officer

"It's really opened my eyes, and I've gotten to work with a lot of different people within the city in this position," Heine said. "My (time as a reserve officer) has been very valuable to this position. Dispatch has also been very valuable. Thankfully I knew the radio lingo and everything else already. I knew the layout of the city, (and) I knew most of the people, so that was very helpful."

She frequents the downtown area, a hotspot for timed parking zones, patrolling at least two to three times daily — once in the morning, again in the early to mid-afternoon and one more time in late afternoon. She'll also cover school zones and EOU's campus when school resumes.

Easily spotted on a three-wheeled marked car, which she jokingly refers to as the "lawnmower," Heine spends most days combing the streets in search of more than just parking violations. Her duties stretch to include ordinance enforcement as well, such as nuisance violations, obstructions caused by overgrown trees and grass, and building code violations. From there, she either alerts the proper department to address the problem or conducts a "knock and talk"

with individual citizens.

"What we prefer to do is try to make contact with the property owners, renters or whoever it may be," Heine said of the process. "I give them a chance and unofficially say, 'Look, this is something that needs to be remedied. How long do you think you need to do this?' and I just check back. Usually that works, without any kind of official notice."

Aside from her new duties, Heine also continues her work as a reserve police officer. After graduating from a six-month academy in Baker City in 2016, Heine began working toward her ultimate goal of becoming an officer with LGPD. Despite her driven nature, however, she's in no hurry to rush the inevitable.

"The way I look at things right now is just one day at a time," Heine said. "When the time is right, it'll be right and I'll know. I know I'm enjoying (my new position) right now, and I think I'll enjoy it for at least a few years. But I'll just take it as it comes."

If you see Heine on the street, even if she's giving you a ticket, "just come talk to me," she said. "I'm really a nice person. Always keep smiling, that's what I try to do."

COLLINS

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since his arrest in November 2017. Now, the charges he's facing have grown. The recent additions are one count of unlawful possession of a weapon by a prison inmate, tampering with a witness and contempt of court.

Collins is also being held on the following charges: seven counts of first-degree sexual abuse, three counts of second-degree sex abuse, four counts of first-degree rape, one count of third-degree rape, one count of first-degree sodomy, one count of third-degree sodomy, one count of fourth-degree assault and three counts of contributing to the sexual delinquency of a minor.

Four of the victims were minors at the time of the alleged incidents, according to Union County District Attorney Kelsie McDaniel. The court documents state that at least two are younger than 16 years old, and one is listed as mentally incapacitated.

According to the documents, the publicity that would necessitate a change of venue would consider:

- Whether the publicity

actually reached the jurors and, if so, how much time has since passed.

- Whether the publicity was adverse to the defendant.
- Whether the publicity exposed the jurors to information that will not be presented at trial.
- Whether the jurors will be able to base their verdict solely on the evidence presented at trial.

Schaeffer used specific examples of articles printed in The Observer, as well as other media outlets, that included the comments in The Observer's Facebook post about the trial.

"There are instances where commentary has been provided on social media websites and many of the comments are vulgar/profane, crass and most certainly would not be admissible at trial," the attorney claimed in the motion.

In the state's response, McDaniel argued that until the jury selection actually begins, "there is insufficient information available to the court to rule on the defendant's motion."

McDaniel stated that

a change of venue is an "extraordinary measure" used when the media "saturates the community with extremely inflammatory pretrial publicity that exhibits a pattern of deep and bitter prejudice," according to the documents.

She said the United States Supreme Court ruled that potential jurors reading news accounts or having knowledge of a defendant's prior convictions does not deprive the defendant of a fair hearing.

The most common form of publicity that takes away a defendant's fair trial is the type that proclaims the defendant is guilty in advance of a trial. That would then prejudice the public against the defendant because it would interfere with most people's ability to weigh the evidence objectively.

McDaniel said she believes the media coverage on Collins' case has been minimal and the articles published have been factual, and any information reported that is public record would likely be presented during the trial.

Union County Circuit Court Judge Mona Williams ruled in favor of the state, saying the trial will be held in Union County.

"I'm glad I left and had that experience (with DHS)," Heine said. "I've always mostly been in something to do with law enforcement, but I wanted to at least go and experience something completely different to see if (law enforcement) was really what I wanted to do. (Working in law enforcement) is a big commitment."

Her separation from the department didn't last long. "Sure enough, I came right back," she said with a laugh. "I needed something more. I like to stay busy, patrol around and talk to people."

For Heine, the ordinance position was a welcome change of scenery and scheduling, as well as an opportunity to rejoin a beloved line of work and a beloved group of coworkers.

"I really liked the idea, after being in dispatch for over six years, of being outside (and) just being a part of the family again," Heine said of accepting the position. "In law enforcement, it's just different. It's hard to explain. But you kind of have that bond. We're all just a big family, and I missed that when I left."

Heine is still learning the ropes of her new position and worked with a trainer for a week and a half before patrolling solo.

SIGN

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increased her business, she said. She told one story of a woman giving her money just for hanging the sign.

"This woman came in and said, 'I want you to know how much I appreciate what you did. It's just so important that people speak up and take a stand.'"

Van Schoonhoven said the woman pulled the spare cash out of her pocket, totaling about \$9, and gave it to her.

"That blew me away," Van Schoonhoven said.

Overall, she said, she has had a "net gain" of customers, noting she did lose some due to the sign, but she gained more for the same reason.

"I had a fear of how people were going to react, and I thought it may be extreme," she said. "I was afraid. Were people maybe going to throw a brick through my window?"

In June, Van Schoonhoven replaced the sign with a flag that resembles an American flag and reads: "In Our America, All people are equal. Love wins. Black lives matter. Immigrants and refugees are welcome. Disabilities are respected. Women are



Max Denning / The Observer

Heidi Van Schoonhoven replaced the sign in her window with this flag designed by a Portland group.

in charge of their bodies. People and planet are valued over profit. Diversity is celebrated."

When asked why she changed the sign, she said, "I realized I had the confi-

dence to say all of (what's on the new sign), which is a more comprehensive message, a larger picture. I felt I had made my original point and it was time to upgrade."

EXPLOSION

911 about the explosion. When they arrived, emergency personnel found a 2-year-old and a 4-year-old alone in the home where the explosion had taken place. They were transported to Grande Ronde Hospital for evaluation and later released with no injuries, according to the release.

An investigation revealed the two children were attempting to make microwave popcorn in a microwave located above a gas range.

A small chair had been used by one of the children to prop themselves up to access the microwave. During that effort, the controls on the front of the gas range were manipulated, allowing gas to escape in the air.

The gas was eventually ignited while the children were still in the kitchen. The

back door of the home was blown apart and was blown out of the door jam.

A window was also blown out of the front of the house. The range, microwave and the refrigerator next to the range sustained significant damage, according to the release.

After the explosion, the children fled the house and took refuge inside of a vehicle parked outside the residence.

The two children were taken into protective custody, Bell said. He referred The Observer to Child Protective Services for any

additional information about the children.

Law enforcement attempted to locate Stephen and Clarissa. The couple returned to the residence at 11:25 a.m. Investigators learned they had been away from the house since 9:30 a.m. allegedly looking for a missing dog.

However, Bell said the dog was at the house when the first responders got to the home.

The LGPD was assisted in the investigation by the LGPD and CPS and the Oregon Department of Human Services.

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