

LOCAL BRIEFING

From staff reports

Public invited to weekly bingo

LA GRANDE — American Legion Post #43 in La Grande hosts bingo every Thursday evening at the Legion Hall, 301 Fir St. The games are open to the public and are cash only. Early-bird games begin at 6 p.m. and regular games go from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Diverse Zumwalt Prairie exhibit opens Friday

JOSEPH — The Joseph Center for Arts and Culture invites the public to the opening of its new exhibit, "The Wild Landscape: Art and Words of the Zumwalt Prairie," on Aug. 3. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. The diverse exhibit includes poetry, essays, a soundtrack, a short film, paintings and photographs and will be

open until Sept. 11 at the Joseph Center, 403 N. Main St., Joseph.

The exhibit depicts the wild nature of the Zumwalt Prairie Preserve and also considers the question of what "wild" means in a landscape that has been influenced, harvested and managed by humans for millennia.

An exhibit catalogue is available as a paperback book for \$15. A painting by Jakob Hasslacher will be up for silent auction during the exhibit to raise funds for Joseph's art education program.

During the exhibit's run, Joseph will offer several related classes. For more details, go to www.josephy.org.

Make 'Art @ the Market'

LA GRANDE — Art

Center East invites the community to stop by its booth at the La Grande Farmers Market Aug. 4 and 25 for Art @ the Market, featuring free art activities for all ages. The booth will be open throughout the market, from 9 a.m. to noon. Anyone interested in volunteering is encouraged to contact sarah@artcenter-east.org for details.

Bible conference focuses on covenants

LA GRANDE — Grace Bible Church of Union County invites the community to "The Covenants in Scripture," a conference featuring speaker Brian Borgman, at 1114 Y Ave., La Grande, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Aug. 4. Lunch will be provided. A nursery will be available for chil-

dren younger than 2. For more information email pastorphilgarwood@gmail.com, call 541-786-4495 or go to www.gracebible-la-grande.org.

Anthony Lakes Resort hosts bike festival

NORTH POWDER — This Saturday is the fifth annual Anthony Lakes Mountain Bike Festival. The event runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aug. 4 at 47500 Anthony Lakes Highway, outside North Powder. There will be guided rides for all levels, a children's park and scenic chair rides, plus live music by the Powder Rhythm Band from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and a barbecue. The festival will also celebrate the new Broadway Flow Trail, a 2-1/2 mile flowing trail down the existing

Broadway ski run. For more information, call 541-856-3277 or go to www.anthonylakes.com/blog/mountain-bike-fest.

LG School Board meets next week

LA GRANDE — The Board of Directors of the La Grande School District will gather for a regular board meeting Aug. 8. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the District Office Conference Room, 1305 N. Willow.

Art exhibit at library features NE Oregon scenery

LA GRANDE — Cook Memorial Library, 2006 Fourth St., La Grande, is currently displaying photographs by local artist Crystal Collier. Photographs are printed in large format on canvas and metal

featuring images such as flowers, steam engines and Northeast Oregon scenery, including High Valley and Hot Lake. The water wheel images from Hot Lake hold particular value to the artist, a La Grande native.

"The water wheel was designed and handcrafted by my father, James Patrick 'Jim Bob' Collier, who dedicated his last working years to Hot Lake Springs," she said.

The exhibit is free and will run until the end of September.

Extension office closed during the fair

LA GRANDE — The offices of OSU Extension Services of Union County will be relocating to the Union County Fairgrounds Aug. 1-3. Normal business hours will resume on Monday.

Easing loneliness for Central Oregon seniors

By Markian Hawryluk
WesCom News Service

Every day Dr. Kristin Stratton sees one or two elderly patients who say they are lonely.

"It's a huge issue especially in Bend and Central Oregon," the internist at Summit Medical Group Oregon-Bend Memorial Clinic said. "They either come here to be with their adult children or they come here to retire, and they end up being extremely lonely and having a hard time connecting to social activities here."

Loneliness is much more than a social concern. It's a health risk. Research shows that older people who feel lonely are at higher risk for a number of health problems, use more health care services and are more likely to die prematurely. With Central Oregon's 65 and older population growing at twice the national rate, local aging experts fear there are too few resources to help isolated older adults.

To fill the gap, the Central Oregon Health Council has partnered with the San Francisco-based Institute of Aging to bring a friendship line to the region. Local seniors and

adults with disabilities can call for free and speak to trained volunteers 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The line was launched in 1973 by Patrick Arbore, director of the institute's Center for Elderly Suicide Prevention, to serve seniors in the Bay Area. It now handles some 13,000 calls a month. The contract with the Central Oregon Health Council is the line's first outside of California.

"It was really to try to introduce another way of engaging older people and younger disabled individuals," Arbore said. "We've talked to thousands and thousands of people, many of whom are lonely, and that's why they call us, because it's safe for them."

People can call the friendship line and have confidential discussions with trained volunteers.

The line is also an accredited suicide prevention hotline, and staff know how to handle those calls. But the vast majority of callers aren't in crisis. They're just lonely and have nowhere else to turn.

The line also has a call-out service, where doctors or other health professionals can, with the permis-

sion of their patients, have the volunteers call their patients. A friendship line client can receive up to seven calls per week.

Each call can last approximately 10 minutes. "It's very hard for older people to say, 'I need you. I'm lonely,'" Arbore said. "Referring someone to the friendship line is a way that feels comfortable to them. What we're doing is creating a conversation, not a confrontation."

According to an AARP survey, 1 in 3 adults over the age of 45 say they are chronically lonely, and a 2009 study found that some 43 percent of older adults not in senior housing lived alone. Arbore cautions not to conflate the two. Some people live alone and do not feel lonely, while others could live with a spouse or close to family and friends, yet still feel profound loneliness.

"When you look nationally, older people often live within 5 or 10 miles of at least one family member," Arbore said. "But what that statistic often doesn't give you is the quality of that connection. Just because an older person has a family member nearby,

that doesn't mean they're not lonely."

When adult children move away, he said, they often continue to call from a sense of obligation. Oftentimes, those conversations focus on mundane topics like the weather. Children rarely ask the more pertinent questions: How are you handling dad's death? Are you getting out of the house? Are you eating?

The older people get, the more their social circle tends to shrink. Friends and family die or move away. Reduced mobility and transportation issues prevent them visiting those who remain nearby, while vision and hearing problems can make socializing difficult. Many adults feel embarrassed about those limitations and even more ashamed to admit they're feeling lonely.

"If we were all friends living in the same community, if you came to see me and I didn't open the door or wouldn't talk, you would do something," Arbore said. "But when people slip into loneliness and social isolation, and no one cares, that's a problem."

And that can take a significant toll on their

health. A University of California, San Francisco, study found that people over the age of 60 who reported feeling lonely had a 45 percent higher risk of early death.

In 2015, John Cacioppo, a psychologist at the University of Chicago, described how loneliness triggers a physiological reaction similar to the fight-or-flight response. That in turns tamps down the immune response and increases inflammation in the body. Loneliness has been linked to worse cardiovascular health, anxiety, depression and risk of suicide.

Cacioppo also found that loneliness can increase a person's risk of premature death by 14 percent, or twice the impact of obesity. Researchers have calculated that the effect of loneliness on early death is the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes per day.

That has the potential to be a particularly troublesome and costly problem in communities such as Central Oregon that have become popular destinations for retirees. According to U.S. Census data, from 2010 to 2014, Oregon's senior population

grew 18 percent, outpacing the national average. Deschutes County had the biggest increase in the state over that time, increasing 31 percent.

The friendship line is being brought to Central Oregon with state funds under an older adult behavioral health initiative launched several years ago. That initiative placed two behavioral health specialists with the Central Oregon Health Council and charged them with investigating what services were missing for older adults.

They identified loneliness as a major issue in the region and committed to funding the first year of calls to the friendship line at \$5,000 per month for the first 499 calls.

"We're happy to get the ball rolling, and then we would hope that as the community sees the value, that more folks will come to the table and underwrite it," said Angela Jensen, one of the two older adult behavioral health specialists at the council. "If we all do our little piece, we can together make this happen, and it won't be a burden on any one particularly agency or service."

— OBITUARIES —

Myron Gibbs
Enterprise

Myron Gibbs, 83, of Enterprise, died July 30. An obituary is forthcoming. Bollman Funeral Home is entrusted with the arrangements.

Stephen Hewitt
Union

Stephen Hewitt, 61, of Union, died July 31 at his home. An obituary is forthcoming. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory will be handling the arrangements.

— PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT —

UNION COUNTY SHERIFF
Arrested: Christina Cantor Parsons, 37, unknown address, was arrested on a Union County warrant on a charge of contempt of court.

Arrested: Carl Jonathan Coons, 45, was arrested on a Laramie County (Wyoming) warrant on a charge of aggravated assault.

Arrested: Jesse Willard Johnson, 37, unknown address, was arrested on a parole and probation detainer.

LA GRANDE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Arrested: Katrina Louise Vandever, 26, unknown address, was arrested in Malheur County on a Union County warrant on a charge of failure to appear in court on an original charge of second-degree theft.

Cited: Tyler Scott Karr, 27, unknown address, was cited on a charge of harassment-domestic.

Arrested: A juvenile was arrested in La Grande on a Deschutes County warrant on a charge of a probation violation.

LA GRANDE FIRE DEPARTMENT

The La Grande Fire Department responded to five calls for medical on Monday and eight calls for medical, one grass fire, one odor check and one illegal burn on Tuesday.

OREGON STATE POLICE

Arrested: Benjamin A. Raugh, 27, Belfair, Washington, was arrested on charges of reckless driving, recklessly endangering a person, driving while suspended and exceeding the speed limit by driving more than 100 miles per hour in a 70 mile per hour zone.

Marion's 90th
Birthday Celebration

Please join the family of Marion Indihar at an Open House celebrating her 90th Birthday!

Date:
Sunday, Aug. 5th, 2018

Time:
3:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Location:
Hurricane Creek Grange
82930 Airport Lane
Joseph, OR. 97846

Light refreshments served



Fast Furniture Delivery Services

You'll find that our team will try to deliver your furniture right after your purchase is made, if our delivery schedule allows it. You can also arrange to haul off your used items. Call us for more details.

Furniture Delivery Schedules for Tuesday - Friday

Tuesday: Wallowa County, Elgin, Imbler, and Summerville
Wednesday: La Grande area
Thursday: Baker County, Keating, Union, and Cove
Friday: La Grande area

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