

## DEER

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health and population level of mule deer at the study site. They will do this by comparing pregnancy rates, winter fawn survival and body composition of mule deer before and after the elk herd was reduced.

Relying on data from radio collars, biologists will also be able to determine if the movement patterns of mule deer are influenced by the reduction in elk. Clark said elk prefer isolated areas far from people and appear to push mule deer out of these areas, which may mean the smaller animals end up closer to forest roads, which is not a safe place.

"They are more vulnerable to poaching and road hunt-

ing (during hunting seasons) and can be hit by vehicles," he said.

Mule deer may also suffer when pushed out of preferred habitat by elk because the area they want to be in may contain shrubs and other vegetation that are more nutritious than that found in other areas.

"We have all of the area mapped for nutrition," Wisdom said.

Predation is another possible factor in the declining mule deer population being examined by Starkey Project biologists.

Predation will be studied with help of radio collars attached to mule deer and predators and cameras in the Starkey enclosure. The collars and cameras will allow researchers to deter-

mine when a deer has been killed, so they can get to the kill site soon after an attack and find evidence revealing the reason for the deer's demise.

"If we can get to the site in a day, we will be able to determine the cause of death," Wisdom said.

Predators known to take mule deer in the Starkey Project include cougars, coyotes, black bears, bobcats and wolves. Wisdom said these predators have no trouble going over or under the Starkey Project's eight-foot fence.

Of the mule deer predators coming into the Starkey Project, wolves are among the least common.

"We have wolves in there less than 10 days a year," Clark said.

Wisdom said when the elk

population in the Starkey Project enclosure is reduced, researchers will be watching closely to see if this will cause predators to attack mule deer there more frequently.

Predators are not the only enemy deer face. Clark said he has seen two fawns that were stomped to death by elk.

"Elk can be very aggressive when dealing with other animals," he said.

Predation, nutrition and elk are being looked at separately as part of the mule deer decline study, but Clark said it may be found that none of them alone is the culprit.

"It may be that the reason for falling mule deer numbers is a combination of all three," he said.

## ELGIN

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household's existing monthly water and sewer bill would be applied toward the purchase of the complex. There was no dissent from either council members or those in attendance concerning the purchase and the council voted to proceed with the sale.

Municipal Court Judge Laura Eckstein said progress was continuing on the newly enacted community service program within the court system, which allows residents the option of working off their fines through labor via the Public Works Department. That option is now being offered to all qualified candidates, namely those with a large amount of fines and a low ability to pay. Eckstein reported an "unusually high" amount of compliance concerning cases overall.

The Public Safety Department reported an Aug. 3 incident at the community center pool. Two minors, working as lifeguards, were accosted by an individual who stole the till from the cash register. The individual was caught and charged with trespassing and theft. In response, the Parks and Recreation Department will seek a grant to help fund the implementation of security updates to the facility.

The Indian Valley Estates subdivision sewer and water system is moving forward, according to city engineering. Before the final design is submitted, the Public Works Department will help refine the design and construction concept for a domestic water distribution system and sanitary collection system. City engineering also hopes to apply for funding through a Business Oregon grant to help offset cost.

The Parks and Rec-

reation Department reported a record month for the RV park for July and is working on bids for the construction of underground sprinklers for the park. Other potential construction includes the renovation of the day-use area to add six or seven RV spots. This week will be the last week of full-time operation for the pool, though it will continue holding specialty classes through the rest of the month. Repairs to the pool area will be made after the conclusion of the season.

The Safe Routes to School project will move forward, installing a new sidewalk route spanning from the front of the high school down Birch Street connecting to 10th Avenue, with sidewalks on both sides of the street. Another sidewalk project is taking place this week from Division Street to the front of the high school.

La Grande EMS and fire services have brought to the city's attention the mislabeling or absence of address numbers posted on residents' homes, making it difficult to locate residences in emergency situations. In response, the groups have been traveling street by street looking for homes misnumbered or without numbering, notifying residents by letter asking them to post the correct address. House numbers are provided at city hall free of charge.

City council meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Elgin City Hall, 180 N. Eighth Ave.

## DIGGING

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all the bones from the necropolis," Gambill said.

Artifacts unearthed at the site have revealed cultures of Hellenistic, Roman, Armenian, Byzantine and Medieval periods. Gambill was digging a site active in the Byzantine period (330-1453 A.D.) or what Gambill described as the early Christian period.

"We were doing a Byzantine work on top of an ancient Roman city," Gambill said. "Pirates were very active in the Roman Republic in the area, too. Their ships sometimes were in a cove nearby where they could hide and then come out and attack other ships."

Every Friday during leisure time, Gambill and the other students in her team swam in that same cove.

"It's very beautiful (there)," she said. "The water is so pretty, sort of aqua (colored), and it gets darker the deeper it goes out. Our team was working right on the cliff edge, so we looked at a beach every day. It was so hot and we would just stare at it."

In the Byzantine watchtower where Gambill was excavating, pottery was discovered, which helps to date the building. Every day, Gambill and the other students washed the pottery pieces with a brush and made drawings of them. In a nearby depot building on site, Turkish students in the restoration team put the pottery pieces back together and the pieces were analyzed by a woman who would date and identify the pottery.

"My professor told us that we were a very successful archeology team and that he was very happy with our work," she said.

One of their successful finds was discovered by Gambill herself.

"I found this really cool spiral pottery handle in a building that we had not yet identified," she said. "It probably belonged to a jug. We also uncovered two buildings to the floor level, which is a pretty big accomplishment."

One of the buildings they excavated to the floor level may have been a small house for a bishop, and the other was the watchtower, which had one-foot-wide stone walls.

"We think the site dated to between 300 A.D. and 400 A.D. when Constantine was emperor," Gambill said. "Other teams found two random inscriptions in Greek from a different site that will help us date the buildings."

Other artifacts that were found include a lot of green glass.

Gambill said the tools they used ranged from big to small.

"We used a lot of large pickaxes and actually broke all of them, digging out tree roots," she said. "We also used brushes and trowels and (every day) measured elevations to show how deep we had gone with the digging."

The students took daily photographs of the site and kept official journals that were handed over to the Turkish government at the end of the month.

The students put in long days, starting their 30-minute bus ride at 5:30 a.m., but despite the grueling schedule, Gambill said she felt deeply satisfied by the experience and loved the Turkish people.

"I want to go back again next year, but I'll have to do some fundraising to get there," she said.

## ISLAND CITY

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its Sept. 10 meeting. Applications are due by Sept. 7. Applications are available at Island City City Hall, 10605 Island Ave. For information call 541-963-5017.

The city council positions up for election were also discussed during Monday's meeting. Up for election are Positions 1, 3 and 6 and the mayor's position. One person each has filed for Positions 1 and 6 but nobody has filed for Position 3 or the mayor's position. The incumbents in the seats up for election are Stan Terry (Position 1), Sharon Vermillion (3), Don Starr (6) and Mayor Delmer Hanson.

To be listed on the Nov. 6 ballot, candidates must file by 4 p.m. Aug. 23 at city hall.

The city council also finalized the revised dates for public hearings on the three

options proposed for the Grande Ronde River Greenway Project. The hearings will be conducted Aug. 21, Aug. 28 and Sept. 6. Each will begin at 6 p.m. at Island City City Hall. At each hearing, the city council will provide information on one of the options and will take public input.

The options, presented to the council in May by the Greenway Exploration Committee, address how Island City should use a \$1.1 million grant from the state for Phase II of the Grande Ronde River Greenway Project. The grant, awarded in 2016, is for a trail that will run from the area east of Riverside Park in La Grande to a pond in Island City north of Highway 82, a distance of 1.25 miles.

Option A, called the "Funding Application Route," will be discussed at the Aug. 21 hearing. This route starts at the

end of the trail now in place near May Lane and travels east along the Grande Ronde River until it connects with three private properties. The trail would cut across at least one private property and then possibly skirt other properties along the river using a boardwalk. The cost of this option would be close to the grant funding the city has received from the state.

Option B, "Ditch Easement," will be discussed on Aug. 28. This route follows the same path as Options A and C until it reaches private property. The pathway would then follow a ditch easement through two to five other properties before reaching the Island City park area at the pond site.

Option C, the "Two Bridge Route," will be discussed at the Sept. 6 hearing. This option calls for a pathway from May Lane that would follow the river until it reaches a

severely eroded cut bank and a private property. At this point, a bridge would be built on the north side of the river, and a second bridge would be constructed on the south side of the river farther down the trail. This is the most expensive option, with a total cost of \$2.69 million.

## BUSINESS

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has good ownership, a solid board of directors and very good employees, noting a couple who have been at the company for 45 years.

Don Stephens founded La Grande Paint and Glass in 1968 after working at similar stores in Ontario and Baker City. Eighteen years ago, Don's son Jeff took over the business.

Don told The Observer in July his success can be

attributed to good customer service.

"Service was the main thing that built the business," he said. "Good service and honesty."

Jeff said he appreciated the community's support.

"I'm thankful for everybody who has come into the business and continues to be a customer," Jeff said. "You've got to be appreciative after that much time. We're very thankful for all the people who have participated in us being here today."

Kavanaugh, who took over as Chamber executive director in February 2017, said these Union County businesses are enjoying well-deserved successes.

"Clearly those four businesses have learned and figured out the secret of success," he said. "They offer quality products. They are convenient and easy to do business with. The people who work there are absolutely fantastic people, and you know when you go there you can trust them."

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