

Full schedule at library resumes in September

The State Library awarded us a \$3,000 "Refreshing Youth Collections" grant. The grant allowed 300 books to be added to our children's and young adult collections. Look for the Institute of Museum and Library Services and State of Oregon logos inside the grant-purchased books.

Join us for a special screening of the documentary film "I'll Push You" at 6 p.m. on Sept. 28 in the Community Room. This is an inspiring story of two best friends, one wheelchair-bound, who travel the Camino de Santiago in Spain. The screening will be followed by an open-ended discussion.

Gentle Yoga for adults led by Kitia Chambers will be held from 10:05 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. Sept. 13, 20 and 27 and October 11, 18 and 25 in the Community Room. Registration is highly recommended. Contact the library to sign up for the dates you plan



OFF THE SHELF
ROSE PEACOCK

to attend. No experience is necessary. Mats are available, but feel free to bring your own, and wear comfortable clothing.

The Literacy Center is opening for the school year on Sept. 17.

Teen Writing Circle meets Sept. 13 and 27 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. String Art is the Friday iCraft on Sept. 21 at 4 p.m. Teen book clubs meet the first Thursday of the month, 3:30 p.m. for the middle school club and 4:30 p.m. for the high school club. Teen events are open to those in middle and high school.

Ucycle an old T-shirt into a new bag from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. Sept. 15. Participants in this Saturday event will learn two no-sew methods to create a T-shirt tote bag. Bring a T-shirt or

wide-strapped tank top.

Foreign Film Friday resumes Sept. 14 with a 7 p.m. showing of a 2015 Lithuanian film, "The Gambler." The film is about a paramedic with a gambling problem who raises the stakes by betting on the lives he is trying to save.

Page Turners book club for adults meets at 1 p.m. Sept. 11 in the Archives Room. The book for September is "Short Nights of the Shadow Catcher" by Timothy Egan.

Children's Storytime is the first Thursday of the month at 11 a.m. Storytime Yoga with Kitia is offered for children the remaining Thursdays of each month at 11 a.m. in the Community Room. Baby Tot Bop, for those three years old and younger, is held at 10:30 a.m. Friday mornings in the Community Room. Please use the exterior Community Room entrance for this event.

Children ages newborn to

five may now be signed up for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library online or at the library. Each month the registered child will receive a free book in the mail. See the library for applications or register online.

Ready2Learn library cards are available for children age five and younger. Every month the card is used, the child is automatically entered into a prize drawing.

Wednesdays is weekly Toddler Time for children ages 14 months to four years and their caregivers. Come sing, dance and play Wednesdays, now at 10:30 am in the Community Room.

Visit us at 2006 Fourth Street, La Grande, call us at 541-962-1339, or find out more on our website, cityoflagrande.org/library and Facebook page.

Rose Peacock is a library technician at Cook Memorial Library.

Public transit driver aids motorist with vehicle fire

By Trish Yerges
For The Observer

Northeast Oregon Public Transit driver Lynn Halliday came to the aid of another motorist in Elgin Aug. 20 when that driver's pickup truck suddenly burst into flames around its wheels as it was parked on the side street south of the Elgin Opera House.

"I had just delivered a (medical) client back to his home in Elgin, and I was getting ready to come back to La Grande when I saw this guy in an old pickup coming down off the Minam into town," Halliday said. "His pickup was smoking really bad."

The unidentified driver of the pickup continued straight to the side street between the Elgin Opera House and Subway, a dead end street that leads to the recycling center. There, the driver pulled over to see what was causing that much smoke.

Halliday followed him to see if he needed any help.

Thinking it was just a mechanical problem, the driver asked Halliday where the nearest mechanic shop was, but Halliday didn't know. He directed the driver to the Chevron station to find out.

Halliday then returned to his van because there

seemed to be nothing going on.

"Just as I pulled away I looked back in my rear-view mirror, and his truck had burst into flames around the axle," Halliday said. "It looked like the grease might have caught on fire, so I ran to get my fire extinguisher to spray it out."

Halliday said it was fortunate the fire was caught early.

"The driver thought maybe the bearings got really hot and that ignited the grease around the leaking bearings," Halliday said. "If it would have kept going, it would have gone up into the truck and caused a lot of damage."

All of the vehicles used by the Public Transit Hub carry fire extinguishers, and all their drivers are taught how to use them by the La Grande Fire Department.

Halliday, 57, recently marked his 20-year anniversary with the company, and this is only the second time he's had to use his fire extinguisher. He said it's a good thing his company places fire extinguishers in the vehicles.

"After I put the fire out, the driver thanked me, and I went back to work to report it to my boss," Halliday said.

The Elgin Fire Department was not notified in this instance.

Sunscreen is not the answer to skin health

By John Winters

Natural sunlight contains many colors, or wavelengths of light. Plants and animals all have ways of enjoying this free energy while minimizing harm. Turns out sunlight is important to human health, too.

Two specific reasons sunlight is good for our health is Vitamin D and the p53 enzyme system. Recent years have seen an explosion of study and understanding of Vitamin D. As you probably recall, Vitamin D is actually a hormone that directly affects almost every cell in your body. Heart health, immunity, moods, cancer protection and tumor suppression are all very positively affected by adequate Vitamin D levels. There are more than 7,700 studies on PubMed about Vitamin D and cancer, and almost 900 about Vitamin D and skin cancer alone.

Vitamin D production begins in your skin. Your body can make up to 1,000 IU per minute but automatically controls the amount made. Synthetic Vitamin D2 added to foods is much less usable, and oral supplementation could lead to the rare overdose.

If you can't be in full summer sun, take oral D3 and monitor your blood levels of 25-OH Vitamin D. Natural sunlight is the safest, most effective way to attain optimal Vitamin D levels. Your skin needs ultraviolet light, specifically ultraviolet B, to produce Vitamin D. Glass blocks UVB, and tanning beds are usually ultraviolet A, so don't help you make Vitamin D. The Earth's atmosphere filters out much UV light, especially when the sun is low in the sky, such as mornings, evenings and during non-summer months. This effect is so great, that we Oregonians could sunbathe all day in December and make no Vitamin D. You'd have to go to Southern California to get enough ultraviolet sunlight,

which is why supplementing Vitamin D in the winter months can improve your moods and immunity.

UVA causes 90 percent of skin damage and aging, according to the Life Extension Foundation. UVA light is able to penetrate to the deeper skin layers where your melanocytes and dividing skin cells reside. The body routinely copes with DNA damage caused by UV light and many other factors, but excessive damage tips the scale toward diseased tissues and possibly even cancer. Sunlight triggers the melanocytes to produce melanin, the pigment that protect the dividing cells from damage. This is why sun exposure turns skin brown.

UVB does not penetrate the skin as deeply and is required by your body to make Vitamin D.

Enter sunscreen. Dermatologists and others advise we avoid the sun, slather on sunscreen, cover up and avoid midday sun. All these steps are designed to minimize exposure to UV light and also result in much lower Vitamin D and p53 levels. Sunscreens block UVB, which prevents Vitamin D production, but lets in UVA, which penetrates and causes skin damage and aging.

A survey of 13 studies on the relationship of sunscreen use and melanoma skin cancer found that sunscreen appeared to decrease risk in three studies, while it was inconclusive or caused increased cancer risk in the other 10.

A common message we hear is that sun exposure is dangerous and leads to skin cancer and premature aging. Some experts warn us to apply sunscreen daily, even if we work indoors, claiming the exposure to sunlight walking to the car is dangerous. They maintain that sun exposure has a linear relationship to skin cancer and that any unprotected sunlight increases your risk of cancer.

A more accurate message about sun exposure is

that too little or too much may cause problems. Some exposure to direct unprotected sunlight is good for your health. Too little or too much is not. People living in areas with more sunlight have fewer cancers of the colon, lungs, pancreas, blood and breast.

Doctors point out that adequate sun exposure may prevent over 1 million cancer deaths this year in the U.S., while melanoma kills 76,000. Moderate sun exposure can afford you the cancer protection and minimize the risk of melanoma skin cancer.

Malignant melanoma is by far the most deadly form of skin cancer. It accounts for only 4 percent of skin cancer diagnoses, but causes 80 percent of the deaths. It occurs on protected body areas and is increasing in incidence more than any other cancer over the last 20 years. Recreational sun exposure — intermittent and uneven — leads to increased risk of melanoma.

Body parts that get the most sun have the lowest rates of melanoma. Sunburns increase the risk of melanoma, but consistent sun exposure leads to less melanoma. Other more common skin cancers are related to sun exposure, but cause far fewer deaths than malignant melanoma. Basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma usually occur on the hands, face, and ears due to accumulated sun exposure and account for 20 percent of all deaths due to skin cancer.

Because the midday sunlight contains the best relative balance of UVA to UVB light, sensible midday exposure may actually be a good idea. In fact researchers state the advice to avoid midday sun is wrong and may even promote cutaneous malignant melanoma.

I was hoping this subject would be less complex, but it's not, so I offer these basic guidelines to help you best care for your skin. Never burn. Sunburn occurs when exposure exceeds your skin's ability to protect itself. Don't go "zero to sixty" on the first

day. Gradually increase sun exposure from maybe five to 10 minutes to 30 minutes or so. Altitude, time of year, time of day, clouds, genetics, skin type all affect duration of safe exposure. Move around while in the sun to evenly expose all sides, instead of sunbathing on your back for an hour. Moderate, gradual sun exposure is healthier than no exposure, or excessive exposure. Cotton clothing has a sun protection factor of 10 to 15 or you can buy clothing with a higher SPF. Covering up or seeking shade are safer options than sunscreens. Consult the Environmental Working Group website for the safest most effective sunscreens.

A diet high in antioxidants will help protect your skin. Fresh fruits and vegetables, green tea extract, selenium and Vitamin C and E are helpful. Topical creams with Vitamin C and E repair oxidative damage to the skin. If you are unable to be in the sun take Vitamin D3 supplements so that your serum Vitamin D is 50 to 80 ng/ml.

A 2007 Annals of Epidemiology review of 17 studies found sunscreens offered no protection. In fact, sunscreen users had 1-1/2 times the risk for skin cancer. They found that sunscreens contain toxic ingredients, and don't offer all the protection we think. Also the average user doesn't apply it as thickly or as often as the claims are based upon. Sunscreens lull people to stay in the sun longer than they might if unprotected, and there is currently no uniform measure of UVA protection. Covering up can offer a safer, more effective option. Choose and use sunscreen carefully.

John Winters owns Winters Naturopathic Clinic in La Grande. He has been practicing in La Grande since 1992. He is trained and licensed as a primary care provider with a specialization in natural medicine. His scope of practice includes all aspects of family health and wellness, from pediatrics to geriatrics.

Rural FD receives grant



Courtesy photo

Medical Springs Rural Fire Protection District, which serves Union County and Baker County residents in the Medical Springs area, was the recipient of a Wild-horse Foundation grant. The district used the funds to purchase a supply cache trailer to house its home defense sprinkler kits, portable tanks and a remote pumping station. According to Judy Whitley of the Medical Springs RFPD, the district is not funded by taxes and relies on private and public grant money to increase its capability. The district participates in both the Union County and Baker County Fire Defense Boards, and Whitley stated that the supply cache trailer is ready to roll for mutual aid to help neighboring departments.

Send us your Community item

Deadline: Noon Thursday

Forms: The Observer front desk has wedding, engagement, anniversary and birth forms.

Anniversary: 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 50th or more.

Birthdays: Know of a Union or Wallowa county resident turning 75 or older? Let us know the date, time and place of the celebration and send a recent, good-quality photo.

Community scrapbook: The Observer can't get to every event in Union and Wallowa counties. But we can make space available for those groups that take photos of their events and gatherings.

Reach us:

• Mail: 1406 Fifth St., La Grande, OR 97850

• Email: news@lagrandeobserver.com



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