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Good day to our valued subscriber Barney Kuensting of La Grande

Three vie for Wallowa County treasurer spot

By Katy Nesbitt
For The Observer

With the departure of long-time Wallowa County Treasurer Chonelle Dutcher Price last spring, three candidates have filed for the vacated position.

Last spring, Dutcher Price was replaced by Kathy Casper. Casper left the position this summer and Ginger Goebel Burns, a Wallowa native who has been the county road department's administrative assistant for 16 years, served as interim the past several weeks. The long-time county employee said she is enjoying the position so much she decided to run for office.

"When the position first became available I didn't want it. I love my (current) job and my co-workers, but after one day at the treasurer's office I knew it was something I wanted to do," Goebel Burns said.

Goebel Burns' first job with the county was as the administrative services director, but she left the position to raise her daughter. For six years she worked at Silver Creek Financial Services in Lostine as a tax preparer before returning to work for the county. She said the treasurer position suits her drive to put the right numbers in the right places.

"I absolutely love it, though it's also very daunting," Goebel Burns said.

Challenger Carolyn Doherty was the county treasurer's department specialist who worked with Dutcher Price for seven years.

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La Grande School District enrollment increase not as high as expected

By Dick Mason
The Observer

While the La Grande School District's enrollment figure is up, it's not quite as robust as officials expected.

Early numbers show the school district now has 2,370 students, up slightly from a year ago at this time, according to figures released at a school board meeting Wednesday.

Superintendent George Mendoza said he is pleased enrollment is up, but "the increase was not as high as I would have liked."

The superintendent said he hoped enrollment would be around 2,400. Enrollment has a big impact on funding since the Oregon school districts receive about \$7,770 per student from the state.

However, the school district's business manager, Chris Panike, said the lower than anticipated enrollment will not have negative budget repercussions.

"I don't see it as a threat to the existing budget," he said.

He said the large growth the school district experienced in recent years provided a buffer.

"The growth has given us flexibility," Panike said.

Panike added enrollment tends to be in a state of flux during September, when many students are still in the process of settling in. He believes by Oct. 1, which is when the school district's official enrollment is recorded, enrollment will be about what it was a year ago, which was 2,373 students on Oct. 1.

Based on Oct. 1 numbers, the school district's enrollment rose an average of 65 students each of the previous three years.

Mendoza noted 48 percent of the school district's students come from lower-

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STOP THE BLEED

LGFD, GRH offer free classes to save lives



Cherise Kaechele / The Observer

Betty Sprenger, left, learns the hands-only CPR technique from April Brock, emergency room nurse manager at Grande Ronde Hospital, at a Stop the Bleed class on Wednesday.

By Cherise Kaechele, The Observer

Members of the La Grande Fire Department and Grande Ronde Hospital are asking for an hour of the community's time to learn to save lives.

Stop the Bleed is a nationwide coalition that came out of mass casualty incidents.

April Brock, emergency room nurse manager for GRH, said mass casualty events, where first responders cannot go onto a scene immediately since it's not safe, require civilians who are trained with basic knowledge to aid those who are injured. Those people would likely have been part of the tragedy, but are otherwise safe and unharmed and can help those who have been injured.

LGFD Capt. Tyson Botts said immediate responders — those with the person when the incident happened — can mean the difference between life and death for the victims.

The free Stop the Bleed class provides training for properly applying a tourniquet

and compressing a wound with gauze, as well as hands-only CPR. The total class time is approximately 60-90 minutes and both the LGFD and GRH are willing to teach it wherever and whenever.

"We want to go to groups and teach this — we'd love to go to the schools," Brock said.

Botts added, "You can use this (technique) at home, too. The goal is to get as many people trained as possible."

Living in a rural area, it can take a long time for the ambulance to reach a victim. The more people who are trained in emergency aid, the better the chances of survival.

The first of what organizers hope to be many, Wednesday evening's class was led

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Good Samaritan Law

Most states have some form of a "Good Samaritan" law in place to protect from liability those who give life-saving assistance.

According to the American Heart Association, it is important for lay rescuers to know they do not have to fear a lawsuit if they give CPR or provide other life-saving aid. No lay rescuer has ever been successfully sued for performing CPR on another.

The Good Samaritan laws grant limited immunity to anyone who tries to give CPR in an honest, "good faith" effort to save a life.

—American Heart Association

Movin' on up: La Grande housing crisis slightly alleviated with new apartments

■ Imperial and Oddfellows apartments wrap up residential construction downtown

By Audrey Love
The Observer

Patrons of La Grande's downtown area have no doubt heard the symphony of construction happening at 1106 Adams Ave. Two once-vacant, conjoined buildings have undergone significant transformation into the city's newest upscale residences — Imperial and Oddfellows apartments.

Through the Call for Projects grant, a program designed by La Grande's Urban Renewal Agency to revitalize buildings in downtown's Urban Renewal District, Pennington Rental Properties secured funding to purchase the buildings in December 2017. Brothers Seth, Jason and Caleb Pennington (via their construction company, Wes Pennington Construction Co.) commenced further demolition and construction of the space at the first of the year.

"It's considerably nicer than anything we've worked on," Seth Pennington said. "It kind of fits our taste, but it's also a mix of easy-to-do (construction) styles, with the barn doors and exposed brick. It kind of happened organically. There wasn't a huge set plan before we dove into it — it was kind of just decide as we go."

The Imperial building houses six apartments while Oddfellows houses eight, both offering studio, one- and two-bedroom spaces ranging from \$750 to \$1,350 a month. Construction on the residential portion of both buildings has been completed and were given a certificate of occupancy Thursday, though some residents have already moved in.

Currently, all units in the Imperial building have been



Cherise Kaechele / The Observer

The biggest one-bedroom apartment offers an open floor plan with big windows in the bedroom. Rent is \$1,050 a month and includes all utilities.

claimed, but there are still vacancies in the Oddfellows building. According to Ashley O'Toole, a real estate agent managing the properties, so far the apartments have attracted the

occupancy of college students, young couples and professionals in their 30s and 40s.

Rent includes all utilities, fiber internet, an energy-efficient

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MONDAY

LGPD TRAINS NEW POLICE DISPATCHER

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