

SCHOOL

Continued from Page 1A

income families, allowing them to qualify for free and reduced cost lunches under the federal government's school meal program. The superintendent said this is a reminder that many students in the school district are from families at or near the poverty line.

"It is important that we have services for them," he said. Parking at La Grande High School was also discussed at Wednesday's meeting. Mendoza said the new student parking lot on the western end of K Avenue

will soon be paved. The parking lot is located where the old Central Elementary School was before it was torn down less than a year ago. The school was replaced by the new Central at Second Street and H Avenue, which is where the LHS student parking lot was.

LHS senior Tristan Weimer, the school board's new student representative, said the new parking lot is welcomed by students. He said before it was put in, student parking was limited and a number of students parked in residential areas near the school and often received parking tickets.

Also at the meeting, in an action

item, the school board addressed a complaint filed against it on Aug. 15 by two people who live in the La Grande School District. Their complaint alleges the school board violated district policies and Oregon Department of Education standards by the way it handled a complaint they submitted to the board earlier this year.

The original complaint concerned a school district employee who was allegedly not fulfilling his job responsibilities, said Joe Justice, chair of the La Grande School Board. The board took no action on the complaint because it determined it was not

substantiated.

The complainants asked in their Aug. 15 complaint that the school board bring in an outside investigator to evaluate the board's response to the complaint submitted earlier this year. The board voted Wednesday not to have an investigation conducted, in part because members were worried about how this would be viewed by the public.

"We would have to hire an investigator to investigate ourselves," Justice said. "To investigate our body (in this manner) might be construed as a conflict of interest or bias."

He also said the board decided not to investigate itself because its response to the original complaint had been evaluated by the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon School Boards Association. He said both organizations told the board its actions were well within the law and adhered to the La Grande School District's policies.

"We are confident that our actions are in compliance with the law and our policies," Justice said.

The complainants now have the option of submitting their Aug. 15 complaint to the Oregon Department of Education, Justice said.

BLEED

Continued from Page 1A

by Botts. At the beginning of the class, he took the participants through the basics of stopping the bleed. Making sure you are safe from harm is the most important part, he said. After your safety has been secured, make sure someone has called 911.

The next step is finding the bleed and putting a compress over it.

Misusing a tourniquet is one of the common mistakes people make.

"People may wait too long to apply a tourniquet or it's not tight enough," Botts said.

He added the tourniquet is likely going to hurt the recipient. It must be tight in order to stop the bleeding.

"The only thing more tragic than a death is a death that could've been prevented," he said.

Botts said everyone should buy tourniquets and put them somewhere they will always have them. They can be easily purchased online and are relatively cheap, he said.

Tourniquets used to have a bad reputation for being the reason why people lost an arm or a leg. That's not the case.

"People who have had a total knee replacement have tourniquets on for more than an hour and they don't lose their leg," Brock said.

The class also included instruction on hands-only

CPR. Statistics show people shy away from CPR because they are uncomfortable with the mouth-to-mouth portion of it, according to EMT Dusty Alam. Hands-only CPR, which can still save lives, is more widely taught now.

Alam said pumping a person's heart through CPR will work well enough until first responders arrive since there is still oxygen in the blood.

"You want to make sure they're on the floor (when performing CPR) or on something solid," Alam said.

A lot of times medics respond to a scene where a person is administering CPR to a victim on a bed. That doesn't work quite as well as being on the floor, he said. If the victim is on something solid, you will use less energy when pumping their chest and thus be able to sustain the CPR for a longer period of time.

Alam also said medics often respond to scenes where family members are standing around the victim, not performing CPR. He emphasized the chances of a person surviving an incident in which he or she needs CPR grows exponentially the sooner it is administered.

Betty Sprenger, one of the participants at Wednesday night's class, said she's the kind of person who will help someone when they're in trouble.

"I'm 83 years old and I have 16 grandkids. You just never know (when you're



Cherise Kaechele /The Observer

LGFD Capt. Tyson Botts was on hand to help answer questions at the Stop the Bleed class on Wednesday night. Participants were learning to stuff a wound by practicing on a pool noodle with a slit in it and inserting gauze into the cut.

going to need this information)," she said. "We like to go on an annual hike. We

need to be prepared." Sprenger said she also leads a young girls church

group and would like to get the members and their mothers to take the class, too.

Brent Lewis, who also participated in Wednesday's training, said he took the class for his own knowledge. He's taken previous CPR classes through Red Cross, but the information and techniques have changed.

"The change in medical approach is different (from the last time I took it)," he said. "I felt I needed to know it. The tourniquet part was very interesting. It's very important for people to get an update about this because it's very useful. (Tragedies) can happen and do happen. There needs to be Good Samaritans to step up."

Brock said any group can call the fire department and schedule the free class. Their phone number is 541-963-3123.

"It's an hour of someone's evening, and it's an hour well spent," she said. "A little teaching goes a long way."

APARTMENT

Continued from Page 1A

heating and cooling system per unit and three washer/dryer units per floor (non-coin operated). Residents won't have designated parking and will likely use the public parking lot behind the building off Washington Avenue. One of the buildings, however, has an alleyway entrance via staircase.

"They're certainly above average (cost) for La Grande's rental market, but when you consider what's included in the rent it certainly makes more sense. You're getting a lot for what you're paying," said O'Toole, who was asked to manage the property after working with the Penningtons on a major renovation project on a separate property he oversees.

"It's definitely a business investment and hopefully something that can be a long-term source of income for us," Pennington said. "(It) is something we can be proud of, knowing that we took two of the ugliest buildings in town and made something useful and productive out of it. Once we get the outside done, I think it'll be something everybody can appreciate."

Construction on the buildings' outer facade is set to wrap up in six to eight weeks. In addition to the residential portions on the second and third floors, a local business (yet unnamed) will expand into the ground floor of the space by fall 2019, as that area currently remains under construction.

"I think it's a good start at alleviating the housing crisis, but there's a crisis even after all these are occupied," O'Toole said. "I'm still getting phone calls at my (real estate) office every day for houses and apartments. We have a huge demand and small availability, and when things do become available it's beyond what (a lot of people) can afford."

The reasoning behind the Penningtons construction and design aesthetic was not only physical appeal, but aimed to provide current and potential residents with modern, upscale housing options.



Cherise Kaechele /The Observer

The Imperial and Oddfellows apartments offer studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments with all utilities included plus fiber internet, an energy-efficient heating and cooling system per unit and three washer/dryer units per floor (non-coin operated).

"We knew (more upscale housing) didn't exist here, with the exposed brick and quartz (countertops) and stainless (steel appliances). We figured there would probably be a lot of interest in that, because it seems like something you'd (find) in more trendy areas," Pennington said.

The modern upgrade is a far cry from the buildings' storied history. Known collectively as the IOOF/State Theater building, the Oddfellows portion was built in the 1890s and once housed the International Order of the Oddfellows. The adjacent Imperial building was erected in 1910. Both are registered Historical Contributing buildings in the downtown area and retain at least some of their historical architecture.

The conjoined buildings have housed a number of additional businesses throughout the years — the Imperial Hotel, La Grande Post Office, Tropidera nightclub, Elkhorn Steakhouse and, the buildings' last occupant, Renegade bar. The Urban Renewal Agency bought and renovated the property in 2012 with a \$200,000 grant from the Oregon Coalition Brownfields Fund to put the buildings back into market-

able shape. URAs renovations on the project included abatement of hazardous materials (including asbestos, mold and lead-based paint), new roofs and windows, an exterior paint job and minor masonry work.

Inside, the building was stripped down to the studs and left ready for remodeling.

"There were certainly a few issues, but we didn't really encounter anything we didn't expect," said Pennington of the construction process. "We had considerably less issues because of the amount of demo the Urban Renewal Agency had already done. A lot of issues one would normally encounter in a building like that were done when we bought it."

Despite both buildings being more than a century old, "the construction was tough to undo because everything was really well built. In that era, the craftsmanship was that good," Pennington added.

The size of the buildings, however, caused some difficulties.

"The only challenge, really, was the scale of it," he said. "Walking up flights of stairs to do (construction) on the third floor was the tough part."

TREASURER

Continued from Page 1A

Doherty graduated from Enterprise High School in 2000 and attended online college courses. She said she worked in real estate before joining the county assessor's staff. She was there three years before moving to the treasurer's office.

"I really enjoy working in the treasurer's department and the variety of work and the people of the community," Doherty said.

The complexities of the job appeal to her, as well, she said. "You have to know all the budget numbers and which money is coming from the state," Doherty said.

Along with property taxes, the treasurer's office takes in money for the Wallowa Lake Service District and transient lodging taxes, as well as working with schools, the Education Service District and managing foreclosures.

"Process is very important. There is a process for everything that goes on in county government," Doherty said.

Velda Bales is another candidate for treasurer with a strong background in accounting. An Enterprise High School graduate, Bales said she earned an accounting diploma and certificate from the La Grande College of Business.

The former 4-H horse club leader now serves as a 4-H resource leader and served on the Wallowa County Fair Board for nearly eight years.

Bales said she was recently appointed to St. Katherine Catholic Church's financial council. She said she also helps her husband, Greg Bales, a pilot, with Wallowa County Pilots Association events like the annual fly-in at the Joseph Airport in August.

Professionally, Bales said she has more than 33 years experience as an office manager, doing bookkeeping and accounting for her family's businesses as well as at Main Street Motors in Enterprise.

With a son in college, now seemed a good time to run for office.

"I've thought about running for treasurer in the past. I thought it might be a good move for us at this time," Bales said. "I've always enjoyed working for, and with, the community and I've been involved enough to think that's what I want to do."

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