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Good day to our valued subscriber Marion Shoopman of La Grande

Return of clock downtown keeps a family legacy alive

By Dick Mason
The Observer

Four and a half decades ago, a freight-truck driver stopped in La Grande around midnight to visit a donut shop.

Minutes later the trucker hit his accelerator, and suddenly time stood still.

The driver knocked over a 10-foot clock tower near the edge of the sidewalk at 1108 Adams Av-

enue as he pulled his truck out of a parking spot. The clock he toppled was a La Grande icon, one that had been on Adams Avenue since about 1925 and was the property of Loren and Betty Hughes, the owners of Birnies Jewelers.

The timepiece would remain out of commission until it was painstakingly restored by La Grande welder Matt Orth-

mann and set back up in front of La Grande City Hall.

Witnessing the unveiling of the clock on Oct. 18 was an unforgettable moment for Betty Hughes. She succeeded in keeping her emotions in check at the ceremony, but it was not easy.

"I can get emotional pretty fast. But I told myself, 'You can keep it under control,'" Hughes said.

The longtime La Grande resident recalled how she felt the evening the clock was hit.

"The police called us around midnight. We were pretty shocked," said Betty, whose husband, Loren, died in 2016.

The clock is a family heirloom and Hughes easily turns back the hands of time when discussing its history. She said

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Grant allows Imbler H.S. music program to buy new instruments

Trish Yerges
For The Observer

Imbler High School's music program teacher Becky Mullarkey recently received grant funding that was sweet music to her ears.

The high school now has much-needed new music instruments, thanks to \$9,236 in grant money.

"The Imbler Education Foundation (IEF) helped the Imbler music program complete grant applications to the Wildhorse Foundation and Soroptomist International," member Kathy Christensen said.

Christensen initiated the IEF grant application for the music program. The IEF is led by board members: president Liz Sullivan, vice president Julia Novotny, treasurer Rick Denis, secretary Linnea Denis and additional members Josh Burright and Jeff Whitaker.

Christensen said she felt optimistic the grant application would be favorably considered by the Wildhorse Foundation because in the past two years, the Foundation had successfully applied for \$20,000 from Wildhorse for the purchase of a plasma cutter for J.D. Cant's agriculture class and about \$1,500 for Lego robotics for Nancy McDonald's seventh and eighth grade science classes.

Since public schools can apply for only one grant per school year from Wildhorse, Christensen suggested this year's focus should be a grant for the music program.

"We turned the application in to Wildhorse before the April 1 deadline, and heard back from them right at the beginning of the school year, so we ordered the instruments," Christensen said.

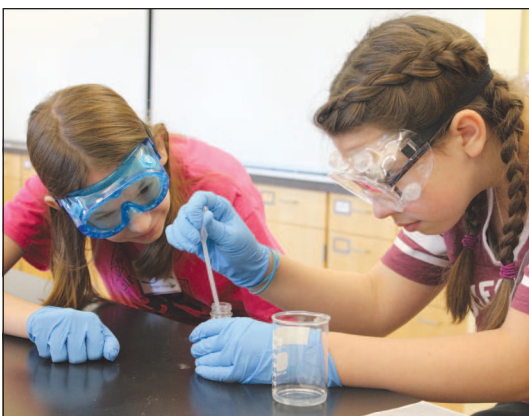
Not only did the music program receive the full requested grant amount of \$8,536.05 from the Wildhorse Foundation, but also \$200 from the Soroptomist's Small Donations Committee, and an added bonus gift of \$500 from Imbler's Parent Action Committee.

With the combined funds, Mullarkey purchased instruments from Musician's Friend online, including a drum set, a euphonium, a baritone, a pair of Timpani drums and a

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Girls gather around a stream table (left) to construct makeshift watersheds out of sand to test the effects of erosion. In the chemistry lab (below), girls conduct experiments dealing with a mock oil spill.



GIRL POWER

By Audrey Love
The Observer

It's been said that "the future is female" — and for the organizers and 100-plus girls in attendance at this year's "Girls in Science" event at Eastern Oregon University, the future of science may very well be female as well.

Hosted in collaboration by Northeast Oregon Area Health Education Center

and EOU, Girls in Science brings together girls in sixth through eighth grade from across Eastern Oregon to spend the day immersed in a range of hands-on activities that explore topics in chemistry, biology, mathematics and computer science — all while trying to solve this year's theme of "Something's Fishy: An Environmental Mystery." "It's a chance for them

to envision themselves as scientists," said Dr. Karen Antell, professor of biology at EOU and one of the program's founding members.

Now in its 18th year, the popularity of the program has grown exponentially — so much so that the number of girls in attendance has been limited to around 100 in order to provide each with the best experience.

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MIDDLE SCHOOLERS FROM ACROSS EASTERN OREGON EXPLORE SCIENCE AT ANNUAL ALL-GIRLS EVENT



Audrey Love photos/The Observer

Girls in Science, an all-day event for girls in sixth through eighth grade, brings together girls from across Eastern Oregon interested in exploring science. Throughout the day, the girls dabble in topics such as biology, chemistry, math and computer science through hands-on activities and experiments, held largely at Badgley Hall on Eastern Oregon University's campus.

Hells Canyon Trails Association seeks more members with open house

By Max Denning
The Observer

In just its second year, the Wallowa Mountains Hells Canyon Trails Association has grown exponentially to almost 60 active members, but that hasn't stopped the organization from continuing to recruit new members.

Today, the trails association based in Wallowa County will host an open house at 6:30 p.m. in the Lewis Auditorium at Zabel Hall on the Eastern Oregon University campus. At the open house, the association hopes to entice members of the La Grande community

to join their group.

The WMHCTA works on making sure there's access to the Eagle Cap wilderness and Hells Canyon trails by going on excursions on the trails and moving logs and other debris. In 2018, according to Jim Akenson, chairman of the WMHCTA's board of directors, the group cleared more than 80 miles of trails and moved approximately 850 logs. That's an increase from 2017, when members cleared approximately 27-1/2 miles of trails. To complete trail clearing, the WMHCTA works with a hired trails coordinator and the Forest

Service, which directs them to where work needs to be done.

"We cover areas pretty thoroughly and communicate what needs to be done where," Akenson said.

But, that doesn't mean the organization has run out of projects.

"We always seem to have more projects we could be working on than we have people," he said. "That's why we're looking for additional membership."

Akenson said he is hoping to reach out to communities outside of Wallowa County, such as in La Grande, Baker City and Union. He said currently most of the

organization's members are from Wallowa County.

"The La Grande area has a huge amount of potential, because there are a lot of people in that community who recreate where we do the trail work," Akenson said.

The organization formed in 2016 because of worries about the lack of access to Wallowa Mountains wilderness areas.

"We got together a group of volunteers, who represented different entities in our community, that had concerns about the increasing lack of access to the Hells

Canyon and Eagle Cap Wilderness and the adjacent recreational areas," Akenson said.

The WMHCTA is a part of the Eagle Cap partnership, which also includes Eastern Oregon University. This gives them access to more resources in Wallowa County and also allows them to host events on EOU's campus. While the event will be open to all community members, Akenson said the organization would like to recruit some more young people.

"Obviously we would like to

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section



Tonight
38 LOW
Partly cloudy



Tuesday
51/38
Clouds and sun

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