

ACE

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designed around, but also saw college students and adults of all ages attending,” West said. “Based on (observation), a decent number of people in attendance were not people who regularly attend events at Art Center East.”

K-12 schools in the Grande Ronde Valley submitted a range of art projects on display in the center’s main gallery, which will remain open for viewing through Nov. 14. Created in the folk art tradition with bright colors and patterns of Día de los Muertos imagery, the space was adorned with “alebrijes,” or sculptures of fantastical animals; “calacas,” decorative skull figures; “calavera,” sugar skull masks; and “papel picado,” “pierced paper” tissue banners. A three-piece mural created by EOU art student and ACE board member Damian Garcia, also dominated one of the gallery walls.

“One of the focuses of this event was to make the gallery an interactive and fun space, and I think we achieved that goal,” West said. “Kids were getting their faces painted, then trying on costumes for the photo booth. Families posed together for pictures. All of it together, combined with the festive crowd, created a nice feedback loop.”

A centerpiece of the event was an “ofrenda,” or altar, built around the gallery’s fireplace as a space for community members



to display photos and mementos honoring their deceased loved ones. Paper and pens were available to write a name or a message in memoriam to place among the candles and paper flowers decorating the altar.

“Lots of people left photos and wrote messages to loved ones on the ofrenda,” West said, noting that many of the notes left were in children’s handwriting.

“I particularly loved how kids explored the ofrenda, their eyes running over it, searching its contents and reaching out to touch the colorful items or peer at a photograph,” West said. “It’s a visually exciting thing, and everyone was drawn to that side of the room, taking time to look at all the photos and objects. I think it left an impression on people.”

West noted her excitement in continuing the celebration in the

future, based on this year’s success, as well as ACE continuing its partnership with UCSCC and La Fiesta. She said ACE would likely seek other business partnerships to help cover costs.

“We’ve already started brainstorming ways to build on what we’ve started, so I’d say there’s a pretty good chance that Día de los Muertos and the community ofrenda will return to Art Center East in the years to come,” West said. “We want the spirit of community to grow with it. I think (the event) succeeded in combining fun and lightheartedness with something authentically meaningful. That feels like an accomplishment.”

West encourages anyone who feels inspired to contact the center at 541-624-2800 with suggestions, ideas or interest in helping plan next year’s Día de los Muertos event.



Audrey Love / The Observer

The Baker County Major Crime Team is continuing its investigation into the death of a 2-year-old boy who died Sunday at the Trauma Center in Boise of a gunshot wound, District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff stated in a press release.

Cook Memorial Library challenges community to ‘Read Together La Grande’

The Cook Memorial Library received a grant of \$1,704 from the La Grande Community Library Foundation to purchase PastPerfect museum software and assorted archival supplies for its archives. The library does not receive funds from the city’s budget for supplies or personnel. The library is very appreciative of this grant, which will help conserve the historical papers of Union County residents and businesses.

The community is invited to participate in a city-wide reading challenge, “Read Together La Grande,” to reach a shared goal of one million minutes of reading. The La Grande Literacy Alliance — composed of the La Grande School District, Mountain



Valleys Reading Council, OTEC and Imagination Library, IMESD, and the library — is challenging everyone in the community to read for 20 minutes a day. Go to www.cityoflagrande.beanstack.org to sign up or download the Beanstack Tracker app.

The library will be closed Nov. 12 for Veterans Day and Nov. 22-24 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Literacy Center hours are 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Drop-ins are welcome. The Literacy Center

will be closed Nov. 23-25.

Children’s Storytime is the first Thursday of the month at 11 a.m. Storytime Yoga with Kitia is changing to one Tuesday per month. In addition, there will be a Tuesday afternoon LEGO Club and Art Club; contact the library for dates and times.

Toddler Time is now Mondays at 10:20 a.m. in the Community Room. Children from 14 months to 4 years and their caregivers are invited to sing, dance and play at this weekly event.

Teen Writing Circle meets from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 8. Teens are also invited to make paracord bracelets at iCraft at 4 p.m. Nov. 16. Book clubs meet the first Thursday of the

month: the middle school club at 3:30 p.m., and the high school club at 4:30 p.m. Contact Celine for details. Teen events are open to those in middle and high school.

Foreign Film Friday is at 7 p.m. Nov. 9, with a screening of “Thelma,” a Norwegian supernatural thriller about a young woman who unleashes inexplicable powers.

Page Turners book club for adults meets at 1 p.m. Nov. 13 in the Archives Room. The book for November is Chris Bohjalian’s “The Sleepwalker,” about the disappearance of a mother and the repercussions on her family, especially her eldest teen daughter. The club meets the second Tuesday of the month.

Baby Tot Bop, for those 3 and

younger, is at 10:30 a.m. Friday mornings in the Community Room. Please use the exterior Community Room entrance for this event.

Children up to age 5 may be signed up for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library online or at the library and are also eligible for Ready2Learn library cards. Every month the card is used, the child is automatically entered into a prize drawing.

Library hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, noon to 6 p.m. Friday, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday.

For more information, visit us at 2006 Fourth St., La Grande, or call us at 541-962-1339. Find out more at www.cityoflagrande.org/library or our Facebook page.

MILESTONES

Joe & Phyllis Bechtel — 65th anniversary

Joe Bechtel and Phyllis Phippen were married Nov. 8, 1953, in La Grande. The Bechtels have farmed and ranched in the Elgin area all 65 years of their married life. They have three daughters: Vickie Hook of Sheridan, Shellie Rysdam of Hermiston, and Tammie McEnroe of Haines. Joe and Phyllis are still active in the Cattlemen’s Association and the Elgin Stampers. They stay busy helping others gather and



ride their cattle and enjoying their six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

A field trip to remember



Courtesy photo

Oregon Connections Academy students recently visited the Pick’N Patch farm in Cove for a field trip sponsored by the online school. The students learned about the fall harvest. Students walked through a corn maze, climbed a straw tower and selected a favorite pumpkin to take home. The ORCA online academy schedules around 200 field trips across the state during the school year to enhance real-world learning and encourage socialization for students, according to Laura Dillon, Oregon Connections Academy Outreach Manager. Shown above from left are Addison Steffer, 10, of Baker City, a Fourth grade student at Oregon Connections Academy; her 7-year old brother Axel Steffer, a Second grader at Oregon Connections Academy and (standing in front) their 3-year old brother Beaux Steffer. The three are exploring the corn maize.

Adding personality to pumpkins



Courtesy photo

Minnie Shoemaker displays a pumpkin she painted at the second annual North Powder Pumpkin Painting Contest on Oct. 27. The contest was conducted at the Wolf Creek Grange in North Powder. Each entrant painted a pumpkin to take home. There were 24 entrants in the contest, up four from 2017. Prizes were awarded to the top placers in three age categories, children 6-12, junior 13-27 and senior 18-100.

MILESTONES

Retta Hoxie - 101st birthday

Retta (Zachow) Hoxie of La Grande, was born Nov. 7, 1917, in Cleveland, North Dakota, the second daughter of Ed and Frona Zachow, and has lived in the Grande Ronde Valley since 1952. She will celebrate her 101st birthday with her family. Her daughter and son-in-law, Ruth and Lonnie Lester, also live in La Grande. She has five grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson.



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