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Good day to our valued subscriber Cecil DeLong of Union

Warming station finds permanent home

Shelter will be open until March 15

By Max Denning, The Observer

The winter of 2016 was particularly harsh in La Grande. While many were inconvenienced by the highway closures and impassable drifts, those without homes in Union County faced an even harsher reality. With no homeless shelters in Eastern Oregon and the closest warming station in Pendleton, cold weather presents a unique set of difficulties for the homeless.



Max Denning / The Observer

The Union County Warming Station has found a permanent home at 1609 N Willow Street in La Grande.

That cold weather inspired a collection of Union County residents to organize a warming station in La Grande.

The Union County Warming Station opened in February in temporary quarters. Now, the warming station has found a permanent home at 1609 N. Willow St., in a residence that was previously foreclosed upon.

The warming station is open seven days a week, from 6 p.m. to 8 a.m. The station stops accepting people after 10:30 p.m., which coincides with lights-out at the residence. The facility can house up to 16 people a night, while two to three volunteers split the night shift.

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Max Denning / The Observer

Cami Miller, director of the Union County Warming Station, works on organizing newly delivered beds at the warming station. The station can house up to 16 individuals overnight. This will be the second year the warming station will open in La Grande.

Man accused of injuring Boise officer arrested in La Grande

Observer staff

A man accused of aggravated battery against a Boise police officer was arrested in La Grande by the Oregon State Police Thursday morning.

According to an article from KTVB out of Boise, Idaho, Kyler Olsen, 24, was behind the wheel of a vehicle when a Boise police officer pulled him over in Boise on Wednesday. During the traffic stop, Olsen intentionally hit the officer with his car and drove away.

The officer was hospitalized but is expected to recover from his injuries, according to the article.

After responding to several tips from the public and following up on leads, the U.S. Marshals Task Force, made up of Boise law enforcement officers and federal officers, located information Olsen was possibly in the La Grande area.

Oregon State Police was contacted to assist and a search of the area resulted in locating the suspect parked at a truck stop in the vehicle he was said to be driving.

Olsen was arrested on possession of methamphetamine, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle and warrants out of Idaho, including failure to appear on a charge of sexual battery of a minor, according to the jail roster. He will be extradited at a later date.

Lohner faces lawsuit

Ex-Baker Chief Lohner named as defendant against journalist

By Chris Collins, WesCom News Service

Former Baker City Police Chief Wyn Lohner said Monday that he was disappointed to learn that a 9th Circuit Court of Appeals panel affirmed the ruling of a lower court judge who found he was not entitled to qualified immunity as a defendant in a lawsuit filed against him by former journalist Brian Addison.

The ruling was not, however, unexpected, Lohner said. "They looked at the same limited information that the Federal court did and were only tasked with determining if there was a 'Question of fact,' which should be evaluated by a jury," Lohner wrote in a message to the Herald. "They did, so we will go to trial where a jury can be presented with all the facts."

The 54-year-old Lohner and the City of Baker City are defendants in the suit filed in October 2015. Lohner retired from his job as police chief on May 11 of this year after 12 years in the position. Addison, 53, claims the defendants violated his constitutional right to free speech in retaliation for an editorial he wrote in 2008 while he was working as a reporter for the former Baker City weekly newspaper, The Record-Courier. Addison also claims Baker City and Lohner interfered with his job opportunities, defamed him and deprived him of due process because of the editorial.

Published under the headline, "How About a Favorable Interpretation of the 4th Amendment," Addison's editorial criticized the police department's use of its drug-detecting dog, Turbo, during the 1A state basketball tournament in Baker City in March 2008. He called the action a violation of the constitutional

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EOU student publishing project funds memorial scholarship

English/writing course posthumously honors former faculty member and poet

By Audrey Love, The Observer

A handful of upperclassmen in Eastern Oregon University's English/writing department have taken advantage of a unique opportunity. Students enrolled in Writing 351: Professional Editing and Publishing were handed the reins in constructing the late Thomas Madden's posthumous volume of poetry as this semester's sole curriculum.

"I think everyone has a lot of pride in their work and in what we're doing," said Kaley Cope, senior English/writing major. "Just (being) involved is a great honor, seeing a real outcome that goes beyond the grade — knowing that what we're doing is something greater."

Cope is among the students in EOU Professor David Axelrod's upper division writing course tasked with editing,

designing and marketing former EOU English/writing and journalism professor Thomas Madden's currently untitled third volume of poetry, to be published sometime in December through Basalt Press.

Madden's career at EOU stretches from the 1970s until his retirement in 2000. In addition to teaching, he served as an adviser for the student newspaper, The Voice (formerly The Eastern Beacon), as well as authored two books of poetry, "Graves in Wheat" and "Lessons for Custer." Axelrod is working closely with Madden's family on the publishing project as well as the EOU Foundation to establish a memorial scholarship in his honor, to be funded by proceeds from the book's sales.

"These students, of course, never met Tom, but here he is teaching them another les-

son from 'beyond the grave,' as it were, and we're going to make this beautiful little book," Axelrod said. "It just seems like a win for everybody. This is the kind of learning experience the university wants students to have."

Madden left a body of unpublished work behind following his sudden death in June 2017, and his wife, Suzanne, agreed to Axelrod's idea of compiling some of that work into a third volume of poetry as a project for the bi-yearly class.

"Madden's passing last year provided an opportunity for this class to have a hands-on, community-involved project to work on and (produce) a real result," Cope said. "That's what makes this class different — we get to see our skills and things we've worked on in other classes actually come to life in a product, start to finish"

Students divided into four groups — editors, page design, copy editing and marketing — to tackle the project for the

duration of the fall semester, joining the group that played most to their strengths and interests.

"Each group works in that specific part of the editing and publishing process," Cope said. "A lot of (major) decisions are made within the groups. Axelrod respects our input and what we decide as a (collective) group and in our individual groups. He may give us some advice, but he's really trusting us to expand on our ideas and use our skills. He gives us a lot of freedom."

Page designers focused on formatting Madden's manuscript into a 50-60 page book, deciding how each page will aesthetically appear and finalizing cover art. Marketing — led by Cope — is responsible for advertising and informing the public about their soon-to-be finished product and planning the book's subsequent release party. Copy editors have the more time-consuming work

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INDEX table with categories like Classified, Comics, Crossword, Dear Abby, and Horoscope.

WEATHER table showing forecast for Friday (Snow showers), Saturday (Partly sunny), and Sunday (Mostly cloudy).

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