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GRANDE RONDE HOSPITAL

VIOLENCE AGAINST NURSES: PROTECTING NURSES FROM HARM



The Observer is doing a series focusing on violence against nurses and the challenges hospital staff are seeing. This is the second story in the series.

By Cherise Kaechele
The Observer

Grande Ronde Hospital Emergency Room Nurse Manager April Brock walked through the ER. Every nurse she saw, she asked one question: Have you been physically assaulted by a patient in the last month?

All of them said yes. Some even laughed at the question — indicating that violence against nurses is so prevalent, the answer is obvious. Of course, some said. Others said it's happened multiple times in the last couple of weeks.

The troublingly high number of nurses experiencing violence at work prompted the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems to begin a pilot program to create a toolkit that will keep nurses — and patients — safe.

Grande Ronde Hospital participated along with four other hospitals in Burns, The Dalles, Coos Bay and Portland.

Brock said GRH has made multiple improvements to keep staff safe. In the emergency room, the nurses station now has a partition between staff and those who walk through the ER. The height of the counter and the additional partition above that deter people from jumping over or lashing out at the staff.

After a certain time of the day, hallways are blocked off from patients. It limits wandering, which was a problem previously. Nurses were coming across patients in odd parts of the hospital at night. All

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GRH participates in program to stop violence in health care

The overall goals for each participating hospital were to:

- Reduce incidence, risk and cost of staff injury related to patient handling and mobility and/or workplace violence.
- Implement evidence-based best practices that will assist to sustain safe patient handling and/or workplace violence efforts at each facility.
- Enhance the culture of safety and empower health care employees to create safe working environments.
- Address patient handling and related ergonomics/safety issues and/or workplace violence proactively.

From June 2015 through May 2017, each facility worked with a Worker Safety Initiative consultant to assess and develop a new or enhance an existing workplace violence program or Safe Patient Handling and Mobility program.

Each hospital designated a project leader and formed or engaged an existing interdisciplinary committee to manage the project. These committees will also facilitate and provide future oversight of the workplace violence or Safe Patient Handling and Mobility programs.

Implementation of all program elements and evaluation of the workplace violence programs is in process and a "continuous improvement" approach will be used to sustain and enhance the programs at each facility.

— Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems

LG rural fire chief bound for Tangent

By Dick Mason
The Observer

La Grande Rural Fire Chief Larry Wooldridge's days of responding to 3 a.m. emergency calls are not over, but his days of driving first responder vehicles quickly through Ladd Canyon in icy conditions soon will be.

Wooldridge has been named the new chief of the Tangent Rural Fire Department in Linn County. Wooldridge will begin his new job Jan. 2, 2019.

"It is an excellent opportunity. I'm excited," Wooldridge said.

Wooldridge has been with the La Grande Rural Fire Department for 10-1/2 years, the last 9-1/2 as its chief. Wooldridge has also served as the head of overall fire-fighting operations in Union County in recent years as the Union County Fire Defense Board Chief.

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EOU looking into renaming Pierce Library

Library's original namesake is linked to the KKK

By Max Denning
The Observer

After decades of scrutiny due to its namesake's connection to the Ku Klux Klan, Eastern Oregon University's Pierce Library may be renamed.

Originally named Walter M. Pierce Library, after the 17th governor of Oregon who resided in Eastern Oregon, the building was renamed in 1999 to simply the Pierce Library to include the contributions of his third wife, Cornelia Marvin Pierce, who was Oregon's first state librarian.

Walter supported the 1926 ballot measure to fund the Eastern Oregon State Normal School, which would eventually become Eastern Oregon University.

The building was renamed after a committee at EOU was tasked with looking into Walter's connection with the La Grande Chapter of the Ku Klux Klan. According to meeting minutes from the Campus Assembly in 1999, "It was determined that Walter M. Pierce was not a member of the KKK La Grande Chapter, while he did attend a few meetings."

The research brought forth information on Cornelia, which prompted the

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'Tis the season for package thefts

By Cherise Kaechele
The Observer

While this season can be a happy time for many, it's also likely to see a rise in crime. With the ease of online shopping, consumers can shop from the comfort of their own homes and have the packages delivered to their door — where the packages are just as easily swiped by so-called "porch pirates."

According to an article printed by PR Newswire, a press release website, a new poll from PEMCO Insurance found nearly half of the poll participants have had a package stolen from their home. Of those surveyed in Washington and Oregon, 94 percent stated they order items online, and nearly half of those respondents have had packages stolen. Despite those disheartening statistics, many said they don't do anything to protect their deliveries from thieves.

La Grande's United States Postal Service Postmaster Kelly Carreiro said his carriers are

instructed to leave packages in a place where they can't be seen by people on the sidewalk.

"In the past, we have seen a high theft rate (of packages during the holidays)," Carreiro said.

He said Amazon packages are usually always left on the porch because the company does not want the carriers to bring the packages back if the homeowner is not there.

"But (Amazon) will take responsibility for any type of loss," he said.

The deliverer can't be held liable for a package that is stolen. Carreiro encourages those who have had a theft to report it to the police.

La Grande Police Lt. Gary Bell echoed that.

"Any time someone has been a victim of a crime, we encourage them to file a report," Bell told The Observer. "If we happen to recover the property, then we'll know who to get (the items) back to."

Bell said filing a police report

is fairly simple: either go to the police department or request that an officer come to your home and give a description of the stolen item.

Bell said there are things that can be done to prevent the theft.

"If at all possible, (have) someone be at the location when the package arrives," he said, adding you can track most packages, which helps you know when it's going to be delivered.

Or, he said, "If at all feasible, have the package delivered at work when someone can sign for it. You can also install video cameras at your homes. Those are becoming more and more affordable. That's a nice security feature all the time, but it won't necessarily keep people from (stealing) a package."

The PEMCO Insurance poll found despite the reality of package theft, residents take a relaxed approach to protecting their deliveries. Of those who take action, 38 percent said they combat thieves

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Preventing porch pirates

In time for some of the busiest delivery days of the year, PEMCO Insurance offers some steps consumers can take to keep porch pirates at bay:

- Instruct shippers to deliver packages to a specific location hidden from plain sight. For example, "inside the carport" or "behind the planter box."
- Require a signature before packages can be left. Just realize that if you're not there to sign, you'll need to work with the shipping company to reschedule delivery.
- Install a lockbox on your front porch or use other technology-enabled security devices to keep your packages safe until you get home.
- Ship your order to a trusted neighbor who you know will be home during delivery hours.
- Or, if your employer permits it, use your work address rather than your home address for deliveries.

—PR Newswire

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight
31 LOW
A shower or two

Thursday
43/31
Mostly cloudy

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FRIDAY

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