

LOCAL BRIEFING

From staff reports

High winds cause power to flicker Friday

LA GRANDE — At 12:04 p.m. Friday, OTEC announced multiple blinks on its La Grande District substation breaker serving the Union and Cove areas. OTEC crews isolated the problem area and restored power to some members at 1:15 p.m. Power was restored to the remaining members at 1:48 p.m. According to OTEC, the cause is believed to be high winds in the area.

OTEC reminds the public to stay away from downed

power lines. To report an outage or the cause of any outage call 1-866-430-4265.

Union/Cove/North Powder XC reunion planned

UNION — This year the Union/Cove/North Powder cross country program won its 20th Oregon state team championship. To celebrate the program's unique position in Oregon XC history, a get-together will begin at 11 a.m. Dec. 22 in the UHS small gymnasium. Program alumni, coaches, family and friends from all years since the program started in

1975 are invited to attend. Included will be a photo shoot with past title team members as well as all 20 first-place trophies and all 45 top-four trophies.

A shopper at ACE Gift Gallery will win unique clock

LA GRANDE — Shoppers at Art Center East (including gift gallery items and classes purchased) will earn a raffle ticket for each \$15 spent for a chance to win an original, one-of-a-kind Stephen Wadner clock. The winner will be drawn at 4 p.m. Dec. 20. The ACE Gift

Gallery is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday and noon to 4 p.m. on Saturdays.

On Dec. 22, ACE will offer extended hours for holiday shopping. The gift gallery will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. the last Saturday before Christmas. New arrivals in the gift shop include full-size Hiroko Cannon prints, jewelry, Kevin Boylan glassware and knitted gift bags.

Help kids cope with divorce, separation

LA GRANDE — Learn how divorce or separation impacts your children and

what you can do to help them at a workshop offered from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Jan. 17, 2019, in the Misener Conference Room, 1001 Fourth St., La Grande. The workshop is facilitated by Mary Lu Pierce and sponsored by the Family Law Advisory Committee. Cost is \$30 per person (cash or check only). The fee may be waived by prior order of the court, or if attendance occurs prior to or within 45 days of filing for custody, dissolution, separation or modification. Support persons and community members may attend free of charge.

Do not bring your children. Child care is not provided. For more information call 541-962-9500 ext. 42.

Translator District Board meets Wednesday

LA GRANDE — The Blue Mountain Translator District Board of Directors will hold a regular meeting at noon Dec. 19 in the Meeting Room of Umpqua Bank, 1215 Adams Ave., La Grande. The agenda and board packet will be posted at www.bmtd.org/public-notice prior to the meeting.

OBITUARIES

Sandra M. (Lee) Leavitt

La Grande
1961-2018

Sandra Maur Leavitt, 57, of La Grande, died Dec. 11 at OHSU in Portland. A funeral service will be held at 10 a.m. Dec. 18 at the Island City Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory is handling the arrangements.

Sandra was born May 28, 1961, in Pendleton, to Harry Richard Lee Jr. and Maur Jeanne Littig. She graduated from Powder Valley High School in 1979 and attended Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho. At age 21, Sandra served an 18-month mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Japan. She later attended what is now Eastern Oregon University and Walla Walla University, earning bachelor's and master's degrees in social work.

On Aug. 14, 1993, Sandra married Jeffrey Lorin Leavitt, and the couple resided in La Grande. Sandra enjoyed reading, collecting, crafting, gardening and being with her family. She was a devoted mother who found joy in her kids and her "grandlittles." She was a member of the Sisters on the Fly glamping group and enjoyed camping and spending time in nature. With her sister Stephanie, Sandra was the other half of Sister Shic. They made and sold crafts and vintage items at local shows and bazaars.

Sandra took pleasure in the simple things in life and found joy in small, everyday moments. Through hardships and trials, she had the ability to find peace, love and contentment. She loved life and counted her blessings often.

Survivors include her husband, Jeff, of La Grande; children and their spouses, Alexa Lee and Eric Lougee of Hermiston, and Zoey Leavitt, Max and Rachel Leavitt, Riley Leavitt and Eli Leavitt, all of La Grande; siblings and

their spouses, Stephanie and Gareld Smith of Cove, Suci Lee of Mountain View, Wyoming, Grant and Vickie Pedro of North Powder, Cameron and Gaylann Pedro of Medina, Ohio, Michael and Darcy Pedro of Summerville, and Michelle Daniels of Portland; and three grandchildren.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.

Audrey J. Mann

Formerly of North Powder
1958-2018

Audrey Jean Mann, 60, of Portland and formerly of North Powder, died Nov. 16 at OHSU after a prolonged battle with Huntington's disease and cancer. A private, natural burial was held Nov. 27 at Riverview Cemetery in Portland.

Audrey was born July 25, 1958, in Baker City, to Arel Leo and Donna Dee (Free) Mann. She grew up in North Powder and graduated from Powder Valley High School in 1976.

In 1980, Audrey graduated with a bachelor of arts degree from what is now Western Oregon University. She worked as an administrative legal assistant for Legal Aid Services of Oregon for more than two decades.

Audrey's daughter, Roya Khodaparast, was born to her and Ahmad Khodaparast on Aug. 2, 2003, and she was the light of Audrey's life the last 15 years. Roya described her mom as her "best friend, the most important person in my life."

Audrey was an adventurer who motivated her siblings and friends to be all they could be. She loved reading. According to her dear friend and college roommate, Linda, Audrey was "so smart she always out-argued me in every discussion."

Survivors include her daughter, Roya; husband, Ahmad; nephew, Brendan McInturf, as well as many

other nephews and nieces; and siblings, LaDonna Haefer, Catherine Mann, Bonnie Mann, David Mann and Susan Johnson.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Arel and Donna, and brother, Charles Mann.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

UNION COUNTY SHERIFF

Arrested: Michael Paul Lubeck, 36, Pendleton, was arrested on a second-degree charge of disorderly conduct.

Accident: Nobody was injured Friday in a traffic accident on Highway 204 in the Elgin area. The accident was reported at 3:21 p.m.

Arrested: Clint Jacob Predmore, 27, unknown address, was arrested on a Union County warrant charging failure to appear in court on a charge of driving under the influence of intoxicants.

LA GRANDE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Accident: Nobody was injured in a traffic accident at First Street and Washington Avenue Friday. The accident was reported at 8:08 a.m.

Arrested: Dylan Douglas Greene, 26, unknown address, was arrested on a state parole board warrant charging a parole violation. The alleged parole violation is connected to an original charge of being a felon in possession of a weapon.

Cited: One juvenile was cited on a charge of being a minor in possession of intoxicants-marijuana.

Arrested: Terri Lynn Fry, 54, unknown address, was arrested on a Union County warrant charging order to show cause. The warrant was connected to an original charge of driving under the influence of intoxicants.

Arrested: David Michael Denham, 25, unknown address, was arrested on a Union County warrant charging failure to appear in court on a charge of second-degree trespassing.

Man hand-makes stringed instruments in backyard

By Jayati Ramkrishnan
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Les McMasters picks up his guitar and strums. Surrounded by bandsaws, tools and hundreds of wooden boards, he begins to sing in a smooth tenor, picking away at the guitar he built in that same room.

In the past 35 years, Les McMasters has honed a musical hobby and some woodworking knowledge into an art form.

In a shop a few feet from his Hermiston home, McMasters spends thousands of hours a year building guitars, dulcimers and mandolins.

The craftsman behind McMasters Guitars has long been interested in music, and has played the guitar since 1958, when he was in high school. Around the same time, he began taking all the woodshop classes his high school offered, and parlayed those skills into a career in pattern-making in the U.S. Navy.

Though he did small repairs on his own instruments, the two interests didn't really converge until about 20 years later, when he started trying to teach himself how to build his own instruments.

"I had no previous knowledge," he said. "So I started doing research."

He began designing and building his own instruments, and now makes about four a year to sell to customers.

McMasters spends at

least 300 to 400 hours on each guitar he makes, with some of his most challenging projects approaching 2,000 hours.

That time doesn't come cheap.

"My prices start at \$4,000," McMasters said, guessing he spends at least \$1,800 on parts for each instrument. That doesn't include labor, he said.

For McMasters, the time is worth the end result.

"The whole guitar, every part of it, is very tight work," he said. "If you start slacking on anything, the quality is going to slip. To me, that's pretty much unacceptable."

In the back room of his shop, McMasters has a shelf filled with thin pieces of wood, which come from as far away as the rainforests of Brazil and India, and as near as the Blue Mountains. He uses spruce, black walnut, bigleaf maples and tamaracks from Oregon and Washington.

"We have some nice trees here in this country," he said. "They're good tone woods, and sound very pretty."

But some of his most striking pieces use woods that have become increasingly difficult to get — a fact McMasters laments. Many of the woods he uses, like Honduran Mahogany and Brazilian Rosewood, are listed in the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) appendix, a list of species that are vulnerable or endangered, and use of them is limited. Others are

on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List, another database of species and their status.

"They're being very specific with what's being shipped out of the country, who's logging and how," he said. "It's OK to protect our resources, but it can get a little overbearing."

Because he's been collecting woods for more than 30 years, McMasters said most of his pieces that are now on those lists did not qualify when he purchased them.

To create the instrument, McMasters puts the piece of wood through a bandsaw, and bookmatches the boards — one by one, the boards will fall off the saw, and he opens them up like a book, so they mirror each other. He then uses hand tools to work on smaller details. He finishes the instrument with tuners and strings that he gets from a few small suppliers around the U.S.

McMasters is currently working on a guitar that he will keep for himself. The instrument, still not quite finished, has a deep brown back, made of Macassar ebony, and a spruce board for the front. A thin border of iridescent abalone seashell surrounds the edge of the guitar as well as the sound hole. In a nearby tray, there are several abalone letters that McMasters has carefully cut out, which spell out his name.

"When I retire (my old) guitar, I'll start playing that pretty one," he said.

What's Cooking ?

by Sandy Sorrels of

TEN DEPOT STREET

Happy Holidays! The weather outside might be frightful, but inside Ten Depot Street it is warm and cosy. And we have some wonderful food and entertainment this week.

Tuesday, December 18 Joseph artist, *An American Forrest* (Forrest Van Tuijl) is playing along with *Margo Cilker*. An American Forrest is country music written with a love of Eastern Oregon cowboy life. *Cilker* is a young traveling Americana songwriter from California who writes about life on the road (which includes a stint in Spain), heartbreak and a longing for country life. Then Thursday evening, *Brent Smith and Friends* are doing their old-fashioned Christmas show from 8 to 10. Included in this group are many of the great musicians who have performed at Ten Depot in the past, Luke McKern, Roger Barnes, Andy Steele, Jeannette Smith, Jocelyn


Berado and more. What a great way to get in the spirit, in our turn-of-the-century bar with the giant Christmas tree and wonderful music!

Tonight for our **Monday Barbecue Night** we are serving *Spicy Jamaican Jerk Chicken* with dipping sauce for just \$12.95. We are also have all week, Lamb Chops, pasture raised from Colorado.

New Years Eve is just two weeks away. Celebrating at Ten Depot Street is a great way to welcome in the New Year. Again this year, *The Holly Sorensen Band*, will play from 9:00 until 11:00.

Ten Depot's doors will be open from 9 am next Monday, Christmas Eve, for last minute **Ten Depot Gift Certificates** purchases.

Ten Depot Street will be closed December 24, 25, and 26 and open again on Thursday, December 27.



BLUE PLATE SPECIAL \$10.95

Baked Alaskan Sock-eye Salmon, noodles, cilantro coleslaw, bread
(served Monday through Friday)

November is National Hospice Month

Join Grande Ronde Hospital in honoring our hospice care team



You're Safe in Our Hands

Know Your Hospice

Did you know GRH Hospice is the only local hospice care provider that is not for profit?

Did you know GRH Hospice has served Union County families for more than 30 years?

Did you know GRH Hospice is the only local hospice care provider that consistently ranks higher than the national average across all Medicare measurements and metrics?

Check us out—www.medicare.gov/hospiceCompare





963-CARE (2273)



Granada Theatre

1311 Adams Ave., La Grande

Fri., Sat. & Sun., December 21st, 22, & 23rd

Friday Dec. 21st times will be 8:30 am, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm
Sat & Sun Dec. 22nd & 23rd 8:30 am & 10:30 am

••••• The Star PG
••••• Sherlock Gnomes PG
••••• Teen Titans Go! To The Movies PG

We wish to express our appreciation for your patronage during the last year, so we wish you a Happy Holiday and invite you to use this Free Theatre Ticket. Be our guest at the Merchant's Free Show.

| | |
|--|--|
| Aaron's | Les Schwab |
| AC & L Inc. Action Plumbing | Loveland Funeral Chapel |
| Alegre Travel/All About You | MJ Goss Motor Company |
| Allstate Insurance - Brent Wylam | Mountain Valley Therapy |
| Amazing Changes | Mountain Works Bike Shop |
| Blue Mountain Auto Parts | Nate Conklin State Farm Insurance |
| Bugs & Butterflies | Carpet One |
| Cell Fix | Northwest Furniture & Mattress |
| Claudson's Sew & Soak | Oak St Burger King/Oak St. Mobil |
| Coca Cola | Old West Credit Union |
| Community Bank | Oregon Trail Electric Co (OTEC) |
| Copy Club | Papa Murphy's - Robert Hulden |
| Cornerstone Dentistry LLC | Peanut Gallery, The |
| Country Financial Insurance - Paul Swigert | Red Cross United Drug |
| Domino's | RE/MAX Real Estate |
| Eli Maves Dental | Rise Inc. |
| Domino's | Rock And Sons Tire & Auto |
| Farmers Insurance - Greg Blackman | Rosewood Cottage |
| Fitzgerald's Flowers | Safeway |
| Globe Furniture | Sea Brite Dental PC |
| Grocery Outlet | Side A Brewing |
| Hines Meat Co. | Short Stop |
| Island City Market & Deli | Sorbenots |
| Johnson Electric | Stratton Insurance |
| John Howard Real Estate | Tap That |
| Koza Family Dental | Top That/Union Stoplight/Cove Drive-in |
| La Grande Paint & Glass | Union County Chamber of Commerce |
| La Grande Stereo Music | US Bank |
| Legacy Dodge | Western Communications (The Observer) |
| | Wheat and Insurance |