

SPORTS

Wrestling champs crowned



Which U.S. presidents visited Oregon? 2A

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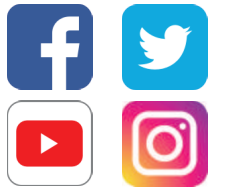
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Good day to our valued subscriber David Keffer of La Grande

The future is now

Grande Ronde Hospital buys futuristic training robot

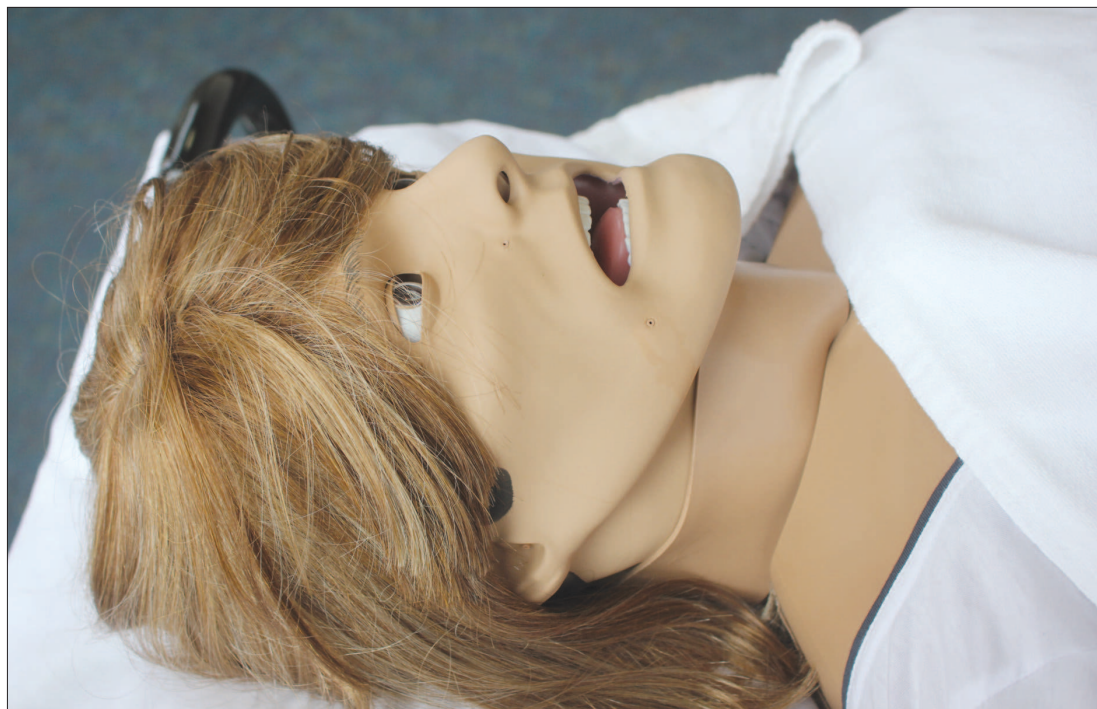
By Amanda Weisbrod
The Observer

Grande Ronde Hospital has purchased a futuristic training robot, and unlike the humanoid droids in films like "Ex Machina," "I, Robot" and "The Terminator" series, this one has an altruistic purpose.

The Sim Man 3G, manufactured by health care technology and research company Laerdal, is basically an extremely advanced upgrade of the rubber and plastic CPR simulation mannequins used in high school health classes. It can breathe, blink and, most important, respond in real time to treatment provided by trainees in the simulation.

Mary Sue Elliot, nurse manager of the education department at GRH, began the simulation training program about two years ago in order to boost the skills of doctors and nurses at the hospital.

"Because we're a rural area, we don't see a high volume of a lot of



things. A gunshot wound or a mom who just delivered a baby and she's having postpartum bleeding can be a challenge in a small hospital," she said. "We don't have that many nurses on at any given time, (but) if you practice your protocols you (will) know what to do."

The Sim Man's long list of optimized features includes reacting to medications with appropriate symptoms and side effects, dilating its pupils when introduced to light stimuli, and excreting mock bodily fluids like tears, sweat, blood and urine. With this new training tool, GRH staff can practice rare, high-stakes scenarios with zero risk to patients.

See **Sim Man** / Page 5A



Cherise Kaechele/The Observer

(TOP) The holes near the Sim Man's nostril, mouth and eye secrete mock bodily fluids during certain simulations. (BOTTOM) Michael Shepherd programs a simulation while Mary Sue Elliot prepares to check the Sim Man's heartbeat.

Lee appears in court for arraignment

By Cherise Kaechele
The Observer

Ronald D. Lee did not say a word when he appeared via teleconference in front of Union County Circuit Court

Judge Thomas Powers on Friday afternoon for his indictment hearing.

Lee, 71, La Grande, is currently being held without bail on one count of murder for allegedly killing his soon-to-be ex-wife Loretta Williams in November 2018.

He was arrested late last week after a grand jury granted an indictment.

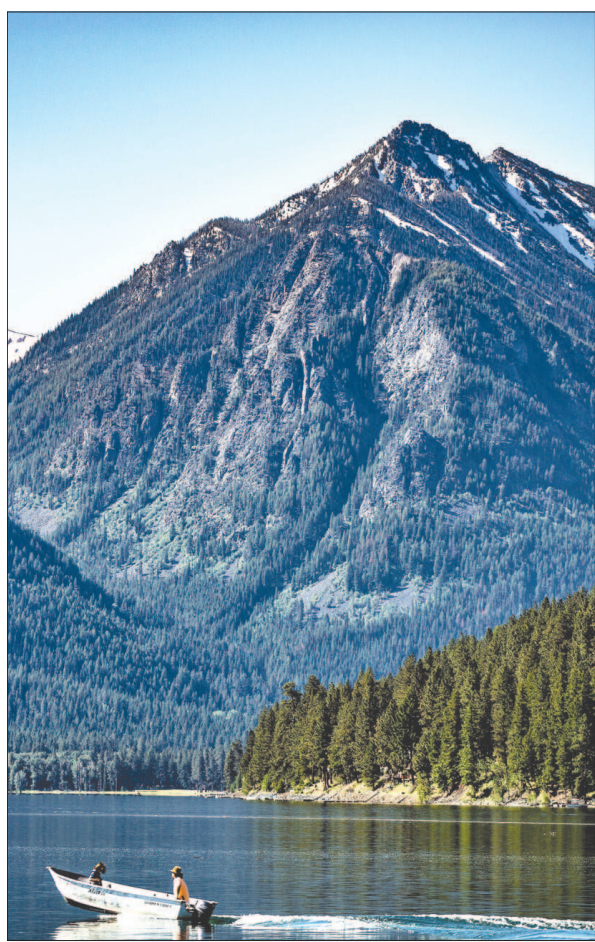
Union County District Attorney Kelsie McDaniel requested Lee continue to be held without bail due to the concern for the safety of Williams' family.

McDaniel argued Lee has violated multiple court orders previous to this in another proceeding, which is another reason why he should not be released.

Defense attorney Rick Dall, who has not officially been hired by Lee but was speaking on his behalf, said he cannot be held without bail unless there is substantial proof Lee is guilty.

A release hearing request was made and is usually held within five days of the request, but in this case Powers called for a status check hearing that will take place

See **Lee** / Page 5A



Courtesy photo

The 1,800 acres of East Moraine is set to become Wallowa County land in 2020 with the purchase.

Wallowa and state partnership launches funding campaign to purchase East Moraine

Wallowa Lake Moraines Partnership must raise \$2.9 million by Jan. 29, 2020

By Max Denning
The Observer

Less than a month after securing a purchase agreement with East Moraine landowners, the Wallowa Lake Moraines Partnership has launched its campaign to raise the remaining funds needed to make the land public.

The Ronald C. Yanke Family Trust has agreed to sell 1,800 acres known as the East Moraine to the partnership, a public-private coalition made up of the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners, Wallowa Resources, Wallowa Land Trust and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The acres will become county land in 2020, as long as the partnership can raise the approximately \$2.9 million left to purchase the land by Jan. 29, 2020. It has already raised \$3.7 million, largely from a grant provided by the Land and Water Conservation Fund run by the federal government.

Kathleen Ackley, executive director of Wallowa Land Trust, said she might

be worried about raising such a high dollar amount if it was any for other piece of land.

"We've been working on this project for almost a decade and the community has been so supportive," Ackley said. "It's been bipartisan support all the way up and down the line."

The East Moraine is located outside the town of Joseph at the base of the Wallowa Mountains on the eastern side of Wallowa Lake. In 2011, the moraines partnership was formed with the goal of stopping development on the East Moraine. The Yanke Family Trust had been considering selling the land to a developer who wanted to build homes and possibly a conference center.

"People really love this landscape (and were opposed to) the idea of it being potentially becoming a housing development or a conference facility," Ackley said. "The loss of it as a working landscape, the loss of the ability to access it, and the impact of that develop-

ment would change the culture of what it feels like to be at Wallowa Lake."

In a rendering of the development potential, the moraines partnership mocked up the location of 15 homes, a conference center and a private boat dock to demonstrate the impact development could have on the moraine.

The partnership's plan is to create the East Moraine Community Forest, which currently includes 7 miles of dirt logging roads that would be open to non-motorized recreational use. Until recently, the East Moraine's trail had long been utilized by local hikers.

With just less than a year to raise the remaining funds, the partnership is hard at work making its case to donors in Wallowa County and across the region. On Thursday, it launched its online campaign — found at morainecampaign.org — which includes photos aplenty, information on the campaign, the use of the money and

See **East Moraine** / Page 5A

Making characters jump off of the printed page

Dan Kramer is slowing the sands of time at 93

By Dick Mason
The Observer

Recorded voices of famous cartoon characters are almost never heard in the third-floor hallway on the north side of Grande Ronde Retirement Residence. But listen closely and there is a solid chance one may hear

a master craftsman using a bandsaw to create images of comic strip stars like Dick Tracy and Popeye, ones so authentic-looking they seem to have jumped off the printed page.

The craftsman is Dan Kramer, an artist for whom plywood is a canvas and the hallway outside his GRRR apartment is his gallery. Over the past several years Kramer has made replicas of more than 40 cartoon

characters using only plywood, his bandsaw, water-based paint and varnish. All are displayed in the hallway outside his apartment.

Kramer, who at age 93 has a Li'l Abner-like spring in his step, speaks humbly of his creations.

"It is just something I enjoy doing," he said.

Kramer begins by copying an outline of a cartoon character on

plywood. Next he switches on the bandsaw in his apartment and, with dexterity artists many years his junior would envy, cuts out the shape.

"Sawing is the hardest part. It is so touchy," Kramer said.

He noted that cutting finely detailed features like hands is particularly challenging.

"You have to be careful," he said.

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