

Know when to fold 'em: Be aware of the dangers of gambling addiction

By DeAnne Mansveld
For The Observer

Did you know that gambling can be addictive? March is nationally recognized as Problem Gambling Awareness Month, with the goal being to increase public awareness of problem gambling and the availability of prevention, treatment and recovery services.



Mansveld

Gambling is defined as risking something of value in the hopes of getting something of greater value.

For many people, gambling is a form of entertainment that doesn't carry any significant consequences. However, some people reach the point of addiction where they can no longer control their need to gamble, much like addiction to alcohol or other drugs.

Youth who start gambling early in life are much more likely to develop a problem when they're older.

Gambling activates the reward system of the brain the same way a drug or alcohol does. Since neural pathways are still forming during the teenage years, this activity can essentially prime the brain for future addiction issues.

In Oregon, approximately 85,000 adults

and 5,900 youth experience serious problems with their gambling. According to the 2017 Oregon Adolescent Gambling Prevalence Study, 40 percent of Oregon teens gambled in the last year. The most common forms of gambling reported by youth were internet with no money, sports, charitable games, games of skills, and cards. Entertainment/fun was the No. 1 reason youth reported that they gambled.

Smartphones, tablets and other electronic devices have dramatically increased access to internet gambling for those who are underage. The internet is as close as any public Wi-Fi. Although it is illegal for teens to gamble online, the safeguards are easy to overcome — many are as simple as a check box or the insertion of a birth date.

Also of concern is youth gambling is often accompanied by other risky behaviors. Forty-three percent of Oregon 11th graders who reported they engaged in gambling also stated they were drinking alcohol.

Teens who gamble may experience increased risk for substance use and abuse, developing gambling disorder, delinquency behaviors, damaged relationships, problems at school and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

Gambling problems can be easy to hide, but here are some signs:

- Borrowing or stealing money to play.
- Irritation or restless when not able to play.
- Unexplained absences from school or sudden drop in grades.
- Using gambling as a way of escaping problems.
- Saying gambling is a good or easy way to make money.
- Missing important events.
- Frequent mood swings — usually high when winning and lower when losing.
- Lying to people or arguing with them about gambling.
- Spending more time (and money) online.
- Trying to win back lost money or prizes.

If you or someone you know is experiencing problems with gambling, free confidential help is available from several different sources.

In Union County, the Center for Human Development has staff specifically trained to help people with their gambling problems.

Help is also available and free for friends and family members of those with a gambling problem. Additional assistance is available 24/7 at www.opgr.com or by calling 1-800-695-4648 (MY LIMIT).

Local high school artists take home top awards

Observer staff

LA GRANDE — The 2019 Eastern Oregon Regional High School Art Exhibition featured more than 300 works by regional high school students in the Nightingale Gallery at Eastern Oregon University.

Nathan Lowe, Dean of EOU's College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, gave a brief welcome to visitors and awards were presented by Gallery Director Cory Peeke. Awards were presented for exemplary work by students in grades 9 through 12.

Best of Show

Two Union High School students won Best of Show honors. Ruby Ferguson (12th grade) was recognized for her mixed media mask sculpture "Alpaca," and Saira Davis' mixed media mask sculpture "The Beast" was chosen from among the ninth-grade submissions. The 10th-grade Best of Show was awarded to Joseph Charter School's Jacob Gross for his mixed media painting "Dusk to Dawn."

Honorable Mention

Cove: Hannah Alldredge, 10th grade, photograph, "Entangled Egg"; Rachel Baird, 9th grade, photograph, "Melting Away."

Enterprise: Arian Latta, 10th grade, mixed media painting, "9 Brains 3 Hearts."

La Grande: Owen Kreutz, 12th grade, graphite drawing, "Abby Crews"; Lian Moy, 11th grade, acrylic painting, "My Bro"; Tulea Setser, 11th grade (home school), acrylic painting, "Nana."

Powder Valley: Dallon Arvidson, 9th grade, mixed media painting, "Drawin"; Autumn Davis, 11th grade, mixed media sculpture, "Lion's Mane"; Rylee Richman, 12th grade, untitled mixed media painting; Viri Rodriguez, 9th grade, mixed sculpture, "Fungi Tea-Cup"; Shelby Sieckman, 12th grade, untitled mixed media sculpture.

Union: Hannah Bello, 11th grade (two pieces), mixed media mask sculpture, "The Panther," and graphite drawing, "Highway 203"; Hunter Coon, 11th grade, mixed media mask sculpture, "Squid"; Ruby Ferguson, 12th grade, acrylic painting, "San Francisco"; Riley Later, 10th grade, reduction print, "I Sea"; Israel O'Reilly, 10th grade, untitled linoleum block.

Special awards

Four art centers also presented special awards to student artists from their areas. In addition to Baker City's Crossroads Carnegie Art Center and Pendleton Center for the Arts, La Grande organizations gave the following awards.

La Grande Arts Com-



Courtesy photo

Ruby Ferguson's, Union High School, "Alpaca" Mixed media mask sculpture 12th Grade Best of Show Award.

mission: Best of Show was awarded to Kennedy Kruse (home school) for her acrylic painting "Ice and Frost," and Honorable Mention went to Annabella Fager (La Grande High School) for her untitled watercolor painting.

Art Center East: Anna Kreutz, a 9th grader from La Grande High School, was named Union County Rising Young Artist for her gouache painting "Three Sisters."

The 2019 Eastern Oregon Regional High School Exhibition runs through March 15. The Nightingale Gallery is located in Loso Hall on the campus of Eastern Oregon University in La Grande. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

UCCC announces grant recipients

Observer staff

LA GRANDE — The Union County Cultural Coalition is proud to announce the recipients of its 2019 Cultural Enrichment Grants Program last month.

According to a press release from UCCC, from illustrated books to student symphonies, local festivals and an annual wow-wow, this year's grant recipients are among the most culturally diverse in the UCCC's history.

Individual awards went to Suzanne Achilles, who will use UCCC funds to complete work on her illustrated juvenile, non-fiction book "Scrounge-man, The Fisherdog,"

to be published later in 2019; Sarah West, who will attend the Grain Gathering, where she'll continue her study of whole grains and traditional baking to supplement the courses she offers at Art Center East; and Eden Kruger, who plans to use grant funds to purchase supplies and maintain her public studio as part of the newly established Momentum Artist Residency at the Underground Marketplace.

Organizations receiving awards include the Northeast Oregon Folklore Society and their SpringAlive 2019 event, tentatively scheduled for

May 2019. EOU's Speel-Ya Native American Club will offer a children's art table at its 49th annual Pow-Wow and Indian Arts Festival, also scheduled for May.

La Grande's downtown hq Venue will use UCCC funds to finish walls and install lighting, turning one side of its interior into an art gallery.

The Grande Ronde Symphony will purchase music and materials for its Student Symphony, and the Eastern Oregon Film Festival will use grant funds to offset costs to audiences and support programming for its 10th annual event this fall.

IHS students earn academic honor

Observer staff

IMBLER — Imbler High School released the names of students who earned a place on the first semester honor roll for the 2018-29 academic year. The following students earned a 3.25 GPA (on a 4.0 scale).

4.00:

Jared Allen, Claira Bingaman, Jake Bingaman, Kale Bingaman, Nathan Bingaman, Chloe Birkmaier, Sidney Bowman, Jayce Burnette, Brendan Colwell, Erin Coston, Will Coston, Kendra Counsell, JW Dippold, Jack Fisher, Blake Frost, Anika McDonald, Wade McDonald, Caysie McGinness,

Ryan Patterson, Dallin Rasmussen, Sadie Royes, Abigail Saffell, Dania Sather, Grant Slater, Aspen Smith, Gracey Smith, Allison Stirewalt, Karrington Troyer, Austyn Turner, Ben Wagner

3.60-3.88

Kylie Barry, Wyatt Burns, Devin Colwell, Harvest Coston, Avonlea Crook, Parker Deal, Justin Frost, Madeline Hale, Gracie Howel, Stein Long, Jeremiah Martin, Jared McKaig, Eli Mola, Aidan Patton, Charlotte Rieke, Blake Schwabauer, Hutch Wagoner, Wyatt Whitaker, Kenna Whitmore, Myer Whitmore,

Brandon Wyland, Madison Young

3.40-3.57

Hedda Andersen, Nicholas Arnoldus, Isaac Bingaman, Gwynn Corcoran, Carter Crook, Millie Fisher, Wyatt Frost, Shay Goodman, Isaac Herron, Charlie Monger, Sarah Nolten, Alex Patton, Henry Royes, Luke Sather, Caleb Sieders, Bryce Sullivan, Clinton Tarvin, Joelle Treat, Sydney Treat

3.25-3.30

Alyssa Jennings, Kaden Lee, Robbie Monger, Lilly Nolten, Wyatt Rankin, Trevor Treat, Gracie Turley

Cook Memorial Library reminds community to 'Read Together'

The La Grande Literacy Alliance, composed of the La Grande School District, Mountain Valleys Reading Council, OTEC and Imagination Library, IMESD and the Cook Memorial Library, is challenging everyone in the community to read for 20 minutes a day.

The goal of the city-wide reading challenge, "Read Together La Grande," is to reach a shared goal of one million minutes of reading. Go to cityoflagrande.beanstack.org to sign up or download the Beanstack Tracker app for Android



OFF THE SHELF
ROSE PEACOCK

or iOS.

Cook Memorial Library also supports children's development with a weekly Toddler Time, Mondays at 10:20 a.m. Ages 14 months to 4 years and their caregivers are invited to sing, dance and play.

Children's clubs for ages 5-12 are now offered on Tuesdays from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. Yoga Club is the first Tuesday of each month, LEGO Club the second and

fourth Tuesdays, and Art Club the third Tuesday. Children's Storytime and craft is held Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Baby Tot Bop, for those 3 years old and younger, is Fridays at 10:30 a.m. All children's events are in the Community Room.

Children ages newborn to 5 years may be signed up for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library online or at the library. Participants receive a free book in the mail each month through their fifth birthday. Ready2Learn library cards are available for children age five and younger. Every

month the card is used, the child is automatically entered into a prize drawing.

This month, Teen Writing Circle meets from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. on the 14th and 28th. Teens are invited to make stress relievers at iCraft on March 15 at 4 p.m. 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.

Gentle Yoga for adults, led by Kitia Chambers,

meets Wednesdays (except the second Wednesday of the month) from noon to 1 p.m. Participants should wear comfortable clothing. Some mats and chairs are provided. Beginners are welcome and there is no charge.

Also for adults, Page Turners book club meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 1 p.m. in the Archives Room. The book for the March 12 meeting is a memoir, "All You Can Ever Know" by Nicole Chung. Recounting her struggles of identity as an Asian American and as a

writer, Chung explores the meaning of family, culture and belonging.

The Literacy Center at the library offers free tutoring to all ages. The center is open from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Drop-ins are welcome.

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 the library at 2006 Fourth St., La Grande, call 541-962-1339, or go to cityoflagrande.org/library.



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