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MONDAY • April 1, 2019 • \$1.50

Good day to our valued subscriber Larry Warburton of Union

State classroom screen usage limits may be on the way

■ Senate bill would require research into the effects of too much screen time for children

By Francisca Benitez
The Observer

A bill is currently in the Oregon Legislature's Senate Committee that would require the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Oregon Health Authority, to conduct research into what effects extensive time with electronic screens have on children, and to create limits on time with screens in the classroom based on the findings of the research.

The bill — SB 282 — is part of a trio of bills centered on technology in schools. SB 281 would require electronics to be clearly labeled with health risks, and SB 283 is focused on microwave radiation emitted by electronics.

SB 282 would allow parents the option to "give or deny consent for the parent's child to participate in curricula that involve extensive work with computers, mobile digital devices or electronic media." Schools would be required to provide alternative curricula that has less time with screens.

The bill would also require more physical activity outside the classroom for students and for information from the research to be distributed to parents.

Children are spending more time with screens than ever before, and the effect of screen time on children has become a common focus of research and debate.

In February, CNN reported in 2014 children younger than 2 years old watched screens an average of 3.05 hours every day, which is more than double the average time in 1997.

Healthline reported scientists have found a correlation between more screen time and lower thinking and language skills, but it's hard to tell if the lower scores are caused by the increased screen time or if children who struggle with those types of tasks are drawn to screens more than other children. The report referenced screen time guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics in 2016 that said not to allow children younger than 18 months any screen time, and only very limited and carefully curated

See **Screen Time** / Page 5A



Cherise Kaechele/The Observer

Oregon Congressman Greg Walden held a town hall at Eastern Oregon University on Friday to discuss the public's questions. He was asked about health care, the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line, and regulations concerning farmers.

Rep. Walden holds town hall meeting Friday at EOU

■ Health care and immigration discussed

By Cherise Kaechele
The Observer

Oregon Rep. Greg Walden appeared on the Eastern Oregon University campus for a town hall meeting Friday. The Hood River native spoke about health care, budgets and the Mueller investigation.

While the congressman generally holds roundtable discussions with specific groups, this meeting was open to the public and he welcomed questions in a lottery-type format.

Originally scheduled for earlier this year, Friday's gathering was Walden's 163rd town hall meeting, and his seventh in Union County since 2012, he said.

Cheryl Simpson, of La Grande, asked the first question of the congressman. She asked his opinion about the recent move to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Walden said he would rather look at what's working than what's not.

"We should look at how states can provide health care (for their own residents)," Walden said.

He said if a middle-class family doesn't have \$400 to put together in case of an emergency situation, how are they supposed to come up with thousands of dollars for medical bills?

"We've got to talk about how to get health care affordable for everyone," he said.

Another citizen asked about his stance on immigration. Walden said he voted for securing the southern border, and wants to get a solution for the 1.8 million DACA students. There's also the issue of how immigration affects agriculture in the U.S. Many farmers employ illegal immigrants, and these farmhands are the ones helping rural America.

"I didn't agree with (President Trump's) emergency declaration," Walden said. "It troubled me greatly that we negotiated a budget and he declares an emergency to get more money."

"We've got to talk about how to get health care affordable for everyone."
— Greg Walden, Oregon Representative

He said Trump's declaration was a bad thing for democracy because it took money from other budgets after negotiations had been completed.

Garren Dutto, a La Grande High School student, asked about Walden's stance on making the Mueller report public and how to stop future meddling in elections. Recently completed, this report is of the 2017-2019 Special Counsel investigation of the Russian government's efforts

See **Walden** / Page 5A

Former addict helps others to recover

By Casey Crowley
WesCom News Service

Danean Riley, 54, was a drug addict for 20 years.

Now after almost 23 years of sobriety, she wants to provide more help for those in addiction recovery. With help from the Baker City and Halfway communities, Riley is opening One Transition at a Time.

The nonprofit organization is housed at 2425 10th St. in Baker, and acts as an upcycle art gallery and goods shop as well as a women's sober living home.

Upcycle is in the process of taking materials that would normally be thrown away and finding a use for them. For Riley, that use is art.

"We have to change the way we think about what we throw away," Riley said.

The most common art Riley creates includes solid-color drawers, made to hang on walls, with broken, everyday items in them. Some of these drawers are currently on display at Hatch Labs.

In her time preparing to open the shop, Riley has made nearly 300 pieces of art to sell. In addition to selling the art at the shop, Riley plans to sell it through her website.

"People either like them or hate them," she said.

She also creates sock monkeys and other types of art. During Miners Jubilee this year, the business plans to have an upcycle art contest.

One Transition at a Time will also provide what Riley calls a sober home that will house up to six women. The only requirement is that they are clean and sober. There are three bedrooms, each with a bunk bed.

While Riley doesn't have anyone reserved to move in once the home opens, she plans to go

See **Recovery** / Page 5A

Future piece of military history

By Dick Mason
The Observer

Steven J. Daniels, a veteran from Oregon City, spent hundreds of days aboard a nuclear submarine in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans while serving in the U.S. Navy from 1966 to 1972.

That experience is serving Daniels well today as he travels throughout the state promoting an upcoming event that will be one of the most memorable in its military history — the commissioning of a nuclear submarine in Oregon's honor.

The submarine, the USS Oregon SSN 793, is being built in Groton, Connecticut, where it is set to be christened in the fall of 2019. It will be the first submarine and only the second naval vessel ever named for Oregon.

Daniels recently visited La Grande where he promoted the USS Oregon. He is a member of the vessel's Commissioning Committee that is raising funds to pay for the commissioning ceremony of the new submarine.

The naval veteran said his experience serving on a nuclear submarine helps him connect with people as he tells them about the USS Oregon.



Photo Courtesy of Steve Daniels

The building of the USS Oregon SSN 793, a nuclear-powered submarine, is now being completed in Groton, Connecticut.

"Everybody wants to know what it is like on a submarine," said Daniels, who served on a nuclear submarine, the USS Nathan Hale SSBN 623.

Daniels said people often ask what can be seen outside windows in a submarine. They

are surprised to learn submarines have no windows. He said windows would serve little purpose because conditions are so dark deep below the surface of the sea.

The veteran said life aboard a Navy

See **Submarine** / Page 5A

INDEX

Briefs.....2A Dear Abby.....8B Opinion.....4A
Classified.....4B Home.....1B Sports.....6A
Comics.....3B Lottery.....2A
Crossword.....5B Obituaries.....3A

WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight 41 LOW A touch of rain
Tuesday 54/42 A shower

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541-963-3161
Issue 39
2 sections, 16 pages
La Grande, Oregon

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