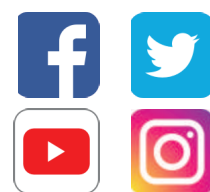




# THE OBSERVER

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Good day to our valued subscriber Terrel Croghan of Elgin

## Cove City Council meeting draws large crowd and heated debate

Discussion focused on solving a zoning issue, and establishing a new, lower speed limit

By Francisca Benitez  
The Observer

Cove City Councillors and citizens alike stayed late into the night during the monthly city council meeting Tuesday.

Last month, only two citizens showed up to make a public comment, but there were at least 25 people at this meeting. Councilwoman Nate Conrad told The Observer there is hardly ever such a big audience at city council meetings. It was standing room only in the small Cove City Hall, with at least three people watching through an open window.

The meeting included a spirited discussion of a building that was previously an auto garage for 30 years. The business closed last year and was sold to Craig Mahlar and Shaina Craft, who plan to turn the building into a coffee shop and breakfast location.

When they filed to get a conditional use permit with the city, Mahlar and Craft found out the auto shop wasn't in a commercial zone, nor did the original owner have a conditional use permit, which meant it was illegal to put any business there. Because the building is located in the middle of a residential zone, zoning is legally difficult. Citizens were very passionate about the issue.

"We were told we would be allowed to get a conditional use permit for the building, and then we were told we would need to get a complete zone change in order to use the building at all," Craft said.

Cove resident Dan Landa said he had managed the

See **Cove** / Page 5A



Courtesy photos

TOP: Amanda Welch poses with one of her hand-sewn art pieces, which will be on display at the exhibit. BOTTOM LEFT: Alexandra Tsiatsos' photos explore humanity's connection with technology. BOTTOM RIGHT: Mary Edwards portrays the energy that bonds all living things through 2-D media.

## Conveying synergy and combined experience

EOU seniors explore relationships and connections through artwork

By Amanda Weisbrod  
The Observer

The unseen scars of the relationship between a woman and her role as a mother; the communal thread weaving energy, life and all of nature together; the consumptive addiction binding humans to modern technology — these deep and obscure topics are the focus of the year's first of two Eastern Oregon University senior capstone exhibits.

The exhibit, titled "Synergy," opens at EOU's Nightingale Gallery on April 5 and features artwork from undergraduate students Amanda Welch, Mary Edwards and Alexandra Tsiatsos.

All three artists said they decided on the title "Synergy" because it accurately depicts the core of the message each sought to convey through her art pieces.

"We were really drawn to 'synergy' because all of our work has underlying themes of connections," said Welch, who suggested the name.

Welch, a mother of four, enrolled at Eastern in 2016 to earn her bachelor's degree after earning her first degree, an associate's, in 2005. She said she embraced her role as a mother in her artwork over the duration of the three-term capstone program because it has been such an integral part of her life over the past 16 years, and there's "no way to separate my life as a mom from my work."

For her part in the "Synergy" exhibit, Welch focused on portraying the unspoken and hidden facets of being a mom through her textile and fiber-based works of art, which she mostly sewed by hand. Often times, she said, people choose to ignore the ugly underbelly of motherhood by focusing only on its bright side. But Welch

See **Synergy** / Page 5A

## Turning a page

LMS team to compete in state Battle of the Books tourney on Saturday

By Dick Mason  
The Observer

Hundreds of hours of reading, many games of Jeopardy! and Monopoly plus a taste for donuts are paying off for five La Grande Middle School students.

The students, sixth-grader Alexis Burgess, seventh-grader Alsea Morton and eighth-graders Kaylee Carpenter, Brendan Lundell and Teagan Null, are members of LMS's Oregon Battle of the Books team, which is set to compete at the state Oregon Battle of the Books Tournament on Saturday in Salem in the grade 6-8 division after winning the regional OBOB title in Baker City in March.

"They are great readers," said LMS's librarian, Keri Myer, who annually helps run her school's OBOB competition.

Each of the students has

read all or nearly all of the 16 books on the Oregon Battle of the Books reading list for the grade 6-8 division. Teams will field questions about these books at the state tournament, just as they did at the regional competition.

The books from which questions will be drawn are almost all fictional works and include "Ghost" by Jason Reynolds, "Avenging the Owl" by Melissa Hart and "Restart" by Gordon Korman. Teams at all Oregon Battle of the Books events have 15 seconds to answer each question during which time they will huddle and agree upon a response. The 15 seconds pass quickly or slowly, depending on one's knowledge base, Myer said.

"The time passes fast if you do not know the answer," said Myer, who has helped put on the Battle of



Dick Mason/The Observer

La Grande Middle School students, from left, Brendan Lundell, Alexis Burgess, Alsea Morton and Kaylee Carpenter, all members of its Oregon Battle of the Books team, discuss their preparation for the OBOB state tournament in Salem on Saturday. Not shown is team member Teagan Null.

the Books competition for several years.

Glenn Null, one of the team's three coaches, stresses the importance of speaking in a manner that is easy to understand and conveys confidence when announcing answers to judges.

"Make sure you speak clearly and confidently," Null tells the LMS students.

He said several years ago a student gave an answer at a tournament that was basically correct except for a technicality. Null believes that because the student did not pre-

sent the answer with confidence, his team did not get the number of points it deserved.

Though students are encouraged to speak with volume when announcing their answers, they are advised to keep their voices

See **Books** / Page 5A

### INDEX

Business.....1B Crossword.....5B Opinion.....4A  
Briefs.....3A Dear Abby...10B Record.....3A  
Classified.....4B Lottery.....2A Sports.....6A  
Comics.....3B Obituaries.....3A

### WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section



Tonight  
40 LOW  
Mostly cloudy



Thursday  
57/42  
Couple of showers

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La Grande, Oregon

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