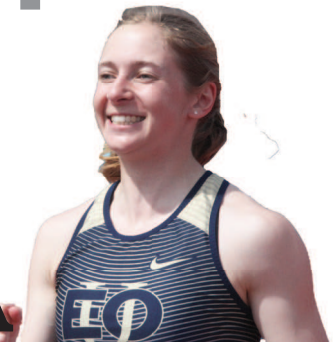


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Emergency smartphone app boosts Imbler school security

■ Anyone with the app can alert teachers and staff about emergency situations

By Dick Mason
The Observer

Imbler teachers have a new security tool that enables them to send a detailed message about an on-campus emergency to fellow school district educators faster than one can say 9-1-1.



Lakey-Campbell

All Imbler School District staff received a smartphone-based emergency alert system as an app for their cellphones about two weeks ago. Anyone with the app who sees a fire, medical emergency or threatening intruder on Imbler's campus can press one of three "panic" buttons on their phone and all teachers and staff on campus will immediately receive a message telling them about the situation. The message will indicate the nature of the emergency, where the emergency alert came from and whose phone it was sent from.

"If there is a shooter or intruder, this will help us get messages out that will protect our kids," said Imbler School District Superintendent Angie Lakey-Campbell.

Once fully operational, the app will also instantly connect the person sending the alert to the emergency dispatch center in La Grande. Dispatchers there alert fire department and law enforcement service agencies in Union County of emergencies.

The Imbler School District's new app was purchased by the school district for \$3,000 from Rave Mobile Safety of Framingham, Massachusetts.

Lakey-Campbell said she became interested in acquiring the app after attending a school safety program in Boardman in April

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CLOTHING = CONSENT

Amanda Weisbrod and Francisca Benitez/The Observer

By Amanda Weisbrod
The Observer

Wear jeans to work Wednesday to bring awareness to sexual assault and show support for survivors.

Dubbed "Denim Day," April 24 is the chance for professional men and women to express solidarity with victims and even spark conversation about the issue of sexual violence by wearing jeans to the office.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the international event, which is hosted by Peace Over Violence, a non-profit based in Los Angeles working to build communities free from sexual, domestic and interpersonal violence.

Shelter From the Storm, a Union County organization providing support for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, is spearheading the movement locally as part of a larger, month-long campaign during April, which is

"Denim Day helps people realize just because a person is wearing a style of clothing it doesn't give (someone else) the right to (their) body."

— Krista Evans, Shelter From the Storm crisis response advocate

sexual assault awareness month. Other local Denim Day participants include Eastern Oregon University and the Union County District Attorney's Office.

"Having people in a professional field wearing jeans to work is a conversation starter," said Kelsie McDaniel, who in 2014 was the first woman elected to serve as district attorney in Union County since the position was established in 1925.

So, how did such a commonplace fashion staple become an international symbol of protest against sexual violence?

The Denim Day website, denim-dayinfo.org, gives the backstory: In 1992 in Italy, an 18-year-old girl was raped by her 43-year-old driving instructor, who was then convicted and sentenced to jail. But years later, the Italian Supreme Court overruled this decision and he walked free based on the argument that because the girl was wearing tight jeans the day of the assault, she must have helped him take them off, implying consent.

Following the verdict, women in the Italian Parliament wore jeans and stood on the steps of the Supreme Court in protest. The first Denim Day, launched by Peace Over Violence in LA, was held in 1999 and has

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Scholarship helps STEM students pay for college

By Francisca Benitez
The Observer

The Advancing Science and Technology in Eastern Oregon scholarship is a scholarship program created to benefit students who are academically talented and want to pursue a career in a STEM field — science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It's more than just a monetary boost, though. ASTEO scholars are also offered unique opportunities to network and participate in an internship in their field.

ASTEO is funded by the National Science Foundation.

"It's designed specifically to provide scholarships for students who are academically talented and financially limited," said Anna Cavinato, EOU professor of chemistry and principal investigator of the program, which was introduced in 2016.

A group of five students in the program and Cavinato presented to the EOU Board of Trustees at the regular meeting on April 11 to show the board how successful the program has been.

Cavinato said according to assessments comparing students in the ASTEO program with students who are not and who have the same degrees and similar SAT or ACT scores, ASTEO scholars are performing better.



Francisca Benitez/The Observer

From left to right, Korie Klein, Harrison Smith, Anna Cavinato, Darin Hauner and Daniel Holloway pose inside a science lab at EOU.

They are less likely to drop out before completing their degrees, and take more credits at a time, allowing them to graduate faster. Their grade point averages are also higher.

"These results are encouraging because they indicate we are fulfilling project goals including recruiting, retaining and graduating academically talented and financially disadvantaged students in STEM disciplines," Cavinato said.

The program provides up to \$7,500 per year for tuition. It also requires students to take a year-long seminar class that introduces them to research methods, connects them with professors in STEM and sets up an internship in their field.

"We encourage the students to do

things that a scientist would be doing, like research and working with professionals. Then they can get a sense of what it takes to be a practicing scientist in their field," Cavinato said.

Darin Hauner is an ASTEO scholar and an EOU senior. He is double majoring in computer science and chemistry with a math minor. He said the program was instrumental in helping him achieve his goals.

"Obviously the financial support has been wonderful (and) has allowed me to take on all these majors and minors. But I think the more impactful side is the culture and the companionship of being around all the other ASTEO scholars and having

See **ASTEO** / Page 5A

Making health a priority

■ Community health fest teaches families, children about preventive care through leading healthy lives

By Trish Yerges
The Observer

The fourth-annual teen community health fair, hosted by Building Healthy Families, will be held on April 23 and April 30 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the clinic buildings next to the hospital at 603 Medical Parkway in Enterprise.

The 2019 Health Fest is funded by a grant from Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization (EOCCO) and supported by in-kind donations from community providers.

"The two events are open to any kids grades five through 12 regardless of school or homeschool," said Maria Weer, executive director of Building Healthy Families.

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EOU students host weekly community music class

By Francisca Benitez
The Observer

A group of students from EOU has been leading a community music class for residents at La Grande's Tamarack Court Apartments on Wednesdays. Tamarack is housing for elderly and disabled residents run by the Oregon Housing Authority.

The class consists of the students playing instruments for the residents, leading them in singing songs of their request, and musical activities using instruments like tambourines and shakers.

April 17 was the third class led by the students. About 15 residents attended and six students led the class. The event is part of a class at EOU that is required for music majors. EOU students brought guitars, an upright bass and a trombone, which the residents were especially impressed with. They sang songs including John Lennon's "Imagine," and the Johnny Cash classic "Ring of Fire."

Kate Gekeler, resident services coordinator, said the class has been a big hit with the residents.

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

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