

LOCAL BRIEFING

From staff reports

WC Commissioners announce hearings

ENTERPRISE — The Wallowa County Board of Commissioners will be conducting two hearings, the first at 10 a.m. May 28 and the second at 10 a.m. June 11. Both will be held in the Thornton Conference Room of the Wallowa County Courthouse in Enterprise. These hearings will be for amending the Wallowa County Or-

dinance Articles 1, 15, 9, 17, and 27 of the Zoning Ordinance Articles. The purpose is to reconcile differences between the Oregon Revised Statutes and Wallowa County Ordinance Articles with a focus on how those Articles affect resource zones. Some proposed changes also include discretionary language reflecting best practices for Oregon land use. Meetings and hearings are

open to the public. Those interested in attending are encouraged to do so. For questions, contact the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners office at 541-426-4543, ext. 130.

Learn a 'Positive Approach to Alzheimer's and Dementia Care'

LA GRANDE — On May 14, from 9 a.m. to noon, Oregon Care Partners will

host a free, instructor-led class in La Grande titled "Positive Approach to Alzheimer's and Dementia Care." The class is designed to help anyone who cares for an aging Oregonian learn more about how to support individuals with dementia and Alzheimer's and respond to behavioral challenges. A professional instructor will share real-world experience in an interactive

classroom environment. This class is free, thanks to funding by the State of Oregon.

Individuals who provide care for an aging family member or loved one, as well as those who work in professional caregiver settings, public safety or social work, are invited to attend this free class. The class will be held at the Blue Mountain Conference Center, 404 12th St.,

La Grande. Call 1-800-930-6851 or visit www.OregonCarePartners.com to register.

Pinochle Night offers food, prizes

ISLAND CITY — Delta Epsilon is hosting a Pinochle Night May 11 at Urban Vine, 10101 W. First St., Island City. Beginning at 6 p.m., the evening will include food and prizes. Buy-in is \$10.

BUDGET

Continued from Page 1A which may include a ramp. Councilor Nicole Howard brought this proposal to the discussion.

"This is a city service," she said of the art center. "But it's not available to people with disability issues.... I would like to make a motion tonight that we should support them."

While some members of the committee disagreed at first with the notion of allocating funds to a private entity, the final consensus was to "fence-in" general reserve money for the project. If the art center is not able to acquire its half of the matching funds before this fiscal year ends, the budget committee will have the opportunity to decide if it wants to continue to set aside funding.

The city also decided to pay off a sewer loan two years in advance, which will ultimately save an estimated \$86,000 in interest, according to the packet provided to the budget committee.

The beginning cash balance for the City of La Grande's general fund is just shy of \$5 million, but will end at \$3.7 million due to expenditures, 70% of which account for labor costs.

La Grande City Manager

Robert Strobe said the budget committee has taken steps to reduce this deficit as much as possible.

"We plan to address the shortfall by using the fund balance as recommended by the Fiscal Committee to avoid service cuts," Strobe wrote to the budget committee. "The resulting general fund ending balance will be \$3,755,072, which includes \$300,000 of contingency funds and \$1,200,000 reserved for future expenditures."

The URA decided to continue its Call for Projects program, which offers grants to improve infrastructure and underused properties in the Urban Renewal District with the goal of boosting economic development by offering more services and job opportunities to community members. New this year, CFP will have separate programs for the La Grande Business and Technology Park and the remainder of the URD.

"One of the things that came out of the agency's retreat was the challenge of trying to differentiate between a project at the business and technology park (and the rest of the district), so the agency wanted to look at splitting those out," Strobe said at Monday's budget hearing session. "The criteria is essentially the same. Both will be done as a part of the Call for Projects, but we'll be closing two separate pools of money."

The URA gets its funding from the difference in

property tax revenues from the original rate that was set in 1999 and what the property tax values are today. But because it under levies, or doesn't absorb the entire profit from these property taxes, some money goes back to the taxing jurisdictions, notably of which includes the City of La Grande, Union County and the La Grande School District.

The City of La Grande will receive an estimated \$376,550 from this under levying process — making it one source of additional revenue for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The other is related to the newly adopted Utility Licensing Ordinance.

Under this ordinance, utility providers must apply for a license to operate in right-of-way areas and will pay a 7% fee to the city based on gross revenue. Strobe said he anticipates the fee to bring in an additional \$200,000 to the city, and the raised fee will add 2 cents to the dollar on utility bills for customers of Avista, Oregon Trail Electric Co-op and the City Garbage Service.

Both the Urban Renewal Agency and the City of La Grande budget committees approved the proposed 2019-2020 budgets, which will be sent to the La Grande City Council for a vote at its regular session June 5. ■

Contact Amanda Weisbrod at 541-963-3161 or at aweisbrod@lagrandeobserver.com.

OBITUARIES

Araya R. Nelson

La Grande
2000-2019

Araya Renee Nelson, 18, of La Grande, died May 3 at Grande Ronde Hospital.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. May 11 at Loveland Funeral Chapel.

Araya was born Aug. 31, 2000, in La Grande, to Joseph Mason and Charlene Paul. She resided in Santa Cruz, California, and La Grande. Araya attended Delaveaga Elementary School and Union Elementary School, where she played volleyball. She then attended Union High School and graduated from La Grande High School in 2018.

Araya was a barista at Le Bebe Cakes Bakery. She loved doing makeup and nails. Music was a big part of her life, but art was the most important thing to her. She was very active with Art

Night with Theo Miller.

Surviving relatives include her parents, Charlene Paul and Joe Mason of La Grande; numerous cousins; uncles, Eugene Paul, Blake Mason and Nate Fertello; aunt, Cindi Fertello; aunt and uncle, Corey and Kim Jonas; grandmother, Marina Corrales Eckrich; grandfather, Jack Eckrich; grandfather, Al Mason; and grandmother, Beverly Mason.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Loveland Funeral Chapel to help with funeral expenses.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.

Shirley J. Steward

Joseph

Shirley Jean Steward, 92, of Alpine House in Joseph, died May 4. An obituary is forthcoming. Bollman Funeral Home is entrusted with the arrangements.

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Iva Mae Collins

January 1, 1932 - April 28, 2019

Cove resident, Iva Mae Collins, loving wife and best friend of husband Ben Collins, passed away Sunday, April 28, 2019 from a serious heart attack. She died after being life flighted to Sacred Heart hospital in Spokane in a valiant attempt to repair her badly damaged heart. She was 87.

This amazing and talented lady was born in Ranier, Oregon on January 1, 1932. She was the fifth child (out of 10) to be born to Lester Carlyle Sutton and Stella Mae Perkins. After arriving from New Mexico to Ranier, Oregon, Lester settled his family on a small, underdeveloped, sagebrush covered parcel of land near Stanfield, Oregon. After several years of back-breaking work clearing the land, developing an irrigation system, and building a house, he and Stella raised the rest of their children on the farm.

Iva was schooled in the small town of Stanfield and graduated from High School there. Shortly after graduation she married Zane Pierre Phoenix in 1950. To this union, three boys were born: Stephen, Rocky, and Monte. Iva worked waitressing while raising a family and taking classes (along with her husband) at the University of Oregon. Earning enough credits to qualify to teach in Idaho, she took her first teaching job in the small town of Bellevue, Idaho. She took her children with her and taught at the grade school there for 2 years. She then returned to Springfield, Oregon, completed her courses in education and graduated from the University of Oregon with a B.S. in Elementary Education in 1965. She went on to teach for another year in Springfield, taught in Billings, MT and eventually took a third grade teaching job in Winnemucca, NV. She divorced her husband, Zane, in 1970. Being a single mother with a family, she also worked as a waitress at Keith's Model T restaurant where she met her future husband to be, Ben Collins. In 1972 they "eloped" and were married in Virginia City, Nevada. Before she remarried, she purchased 40 acres just outside of town and began construction of an A-Framed house she planned to construct for her family as a permanent residence. She had the plans and was doing the construction primarily on her own. This "can do" attitude became a trademark which showed itself throughout the rest of her life. Ben was also a divorcee and had three children: Kirk, Craig, and Camille. Ben and Iva purchased a home in Winnemucca and



moved in with their now family of six.

Ben worked for BLM and soon was promoted as the Area Manager of the Bishop, CA Resource Area and, through subsequent promotions, ended up being the District Manager for BLM's La Vegas Office. Iva, along with her "can do" attitude, applied them to each house they lived in as Ben climbed the managerial ladder. She renovated the houses in Winnemucca, Bishop, Harper's Ferry, WV, Susanville, CA and, finally to their retirement home near

Buhl, ID in 1993. Back in Harper's Ferry she single handedly constructed a scaffold and laid brick for a new fireplace chimney that was 30ft. tall. Oh, I have to mention she bought a small restaurant in Las Vegas. She named it "Grandma's Little Kitchen". It prospered but sold it when Ben retired. She also took up waterfowl carving and carved dozens of ducks and other waterfowl. She was also an outstanding quilt maker and hand sewed all of the numerous ones she made. Her real love was gardening and landscaping. As one of her friends said, "she was happier than a gopher in soft dirt."

They spent the first 20 years of their retirement enjoying their spacious log home overlooking the Snake River and could be found on their porch "spitten" and whittlin" and enjoying the view of the Snake River canyon. Iva decided that the house and 17 acres was more than she could handle so they decided to re-retire in Cove, OR. One of her sisters live in La Grande and her youngest son, his wife and daughter and a great grandson live in Union. In Cove, along Lantz Lane she was known as the wheelbarrow lady by passerbyes and produced a beautiful flower garden in front of her fenced yard. She is survived by her husband of 47 years, six of her siblings, and all of her immediate and extended married family as well as 6 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

Her funeral will be held at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church on Friday, May 10, 2019 at 2pm. Viewing will be from 1:00 - 1:45pm. A light luncheon will be served before the funeral at noon in the parish hall. Burial at the Cove Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her honor can be made to the National Audubon Society at www.Audubon.org or any charity of your choice.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.

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