

The magic, impact of a positive relationship

By Stu Spence
For The Observer

Do out-of-school programs like the arts, sports, Parks & Recreation camps, classes and events really help reduce youth use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs? Not only do they, but

research shows that when we build developmental assets in our relationships with youth, they are less likely to have problems with alcohol, illicit drugs, violence and sexual activity. What's a developmental asset? These are research-based tools we can use to support youth as they grow up to make healthy decisions. These assets aim to protect youth from high-risk behaviors, which will help them become healthy, productive and responsible adults. Some examples include positive adult relationships, family support, caring neighborhoods and schools, setting high expectations, positive peer influences and adult role models.

Turns out that out-of-school programs are some of the strongest asset builders for youth. Sports, for example, provide a support system of positive peer and adult relationships through

team-building activities on and off the field. The relationships that grow from being a part of a team give youth lifelong tools to succeed. Through the arts and other camps, classes and events, youth can also build important assets. Getting kids together with similar interests and learning skills naturally builds positive relationships among peers.

Although these types of programs help build developmental assets, families and influential adults continue to play the most important role in determining how youth handle the lure of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. That's why as a parent it's so important to talk to your children about these issues and set high expectations for them not to engage in these behaviors. It's why at the Parks & Recreation Department we strive to train all staff to build positive relationships with all of our youth participants whether it be through sports, the arts or summer camp.

When I was fresh out of college, I had the opportunity to co-coordinate a summer camp for older elementary school and early middle school youth. It was stressed to us as staff members to build a relationship

with them every day, to take an interest in their life every day. We instilled a sense of belonging by including everyone, gave them influence in decision making by giving them ownership in planning activities, and a sense of competence by teaching them life skills. Being a positive influence involved setting a good example, but it was also as simple as asking about their day or how they were doing. Building these assets wasn't hard after all — it just involved the magic of building a sincere relationship and simply taking an interest in them.

In our small town, we have the best opportunity to help our youth succeed. By caring, setting high expectations and providing opportunities for youth to participate in programs, we can all reduce youth use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. This is the very reason I joined the Union County Safe Communities Coalition when I moved here, and I would encourage you to do the same. We are working together for a safe, healthy and drug-free community. It takes a village.

Stu Spence is the City of La Grande Parks and Recreation director and coalition chair for the Union County Safe Communities Coalition.

A dairy experience never to be forgotten



Oregon Connections Academy photo

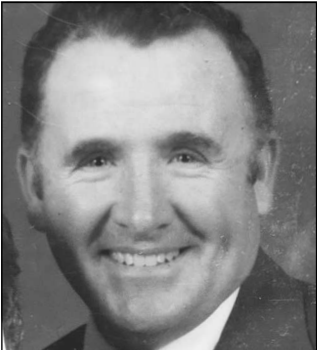
Myia Hutchison of Union County, a second-grader with Oregon Connections Academy, hugs a baby goat during a field trip ORCA students made recently to Grande Ronde Goat Dairy in Union. Oregon Connections Academy is the state's longest running online public charter school. About 30 ORCA students, parents and teachers from Union and Umatilla counties went on the field trip. It was one of close to 200 field trips ORCA conducts across the state each year.

Milestones

Henry 'Hank' Simonis — 90th birthday

Henry Simonis, of La Grande, celebrated his 90th birthday May 26. Known as Hank, he married Ruby Bailey on July 27, 1949. They have three children, Ron and Rick, both of La Grande, and Karen, who lives in Wash-

ington. Hank and Ruby have nine grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren. Hank, who has lived in La Grande all his life, raised cattle and farmed. He has been a hunter for many years. He has hunted in Alaska and Canada a few times and now just hunts for his comfortable chair.



Courtesy photo

Monte Reed — retirement

A retirement celebration

for Monte Reed, who has served the community for 44 years in the auto parts busi-

ness, will be held from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. June 2 at the La Grande Country Club.

UC sheriff deputy graduates from Basic Police Class

Observer staff

Deputy Sheriff Morris Capers of the Union County Sheriff's Office graduated with the 387th Basic Police Class of the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training in Salem on May 10.

Capers successfully completed DPSS's 16-week Basic Police Class, which covers dozens of training

areas such as survival skills, firearms, emergency vehicle operations, ethics, cultural diversity, problem solving, community policing, elder abuse and drug recognition.

The Department of Public Safety Standards and Training operates the Oregon Public Safety Academy, which spans more than 235 acres in Salem. The academy is

nationally recognized for its innovative training programs and active stakeholder involvement. The department trains and certifies city, tribal, county and state law enforcement officers, corrections officers, parole and probation officers, fire service personnel, telecommunicators, emergency medical dispatchers and private security providers.

Local students recognized

Observer staff

Sandy Hattan, a graduate of La Grande High School, participated in commencement proceedings at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington, on May 19. Hattan graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in biology. Founded in 1882, Whitman College is a highly selective private, independent, co-educational, non-sectarian residential liberal arts and sciences undergraduate college.

Auslin McDaniel-Perrin, of La Grande, was recognized as an Impact Athlete in the soccer program at Olds College in Alberta, Canada. The local student was one of two international student-athletes who took top billing at the Olds College Broncos Awards Night.

Madison Plew, of Wallowa, earned a place

on the spring 2019 dean's list at University of Jamestown, North Dakota. To be named to the list, students must maintain a semester GPA of 3.50 or better.

Cody Singer, of La Grande, was elected as an officer for the Eastern Oregon University chapter of The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. Singer, online enrollment adviser at EOU, was elected to the position of vice president for the 2019-2021 term.

Karmin Maher-Hasse, of La Grande, was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi at Boise State University. Maher-Hasse is among approximately 30,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year.

BIRTHS

GRANDE RONDE HOSPITAL

BROWN: To Jessica Lyn Brown and Travis Kelly Brown of Union, a daughter, Miley Paige Brown, 6 pounds, May 1 at 10:13 a.m.
GILLIHAN: To Cheyenne Marie Gillihan and Justin Allen Gillihan of La Grande, a son, Eli Barrett Gillihan, 7 pounds 11 ounces, April 30 at 1:14 a.m. Grandparents are Sherry and Denny Molt and Anna and Kenny Gillihan.

KALEIKINI: To Ammanda Rose Donison and Jayson Edward Kaiminaniokekaihohonu Tyson Pakele Kaleikini of La Grande, a son, Roman O'Neal Kaiminaniokekaihohonu Kaleikini, 7 pounds 15 ounces, May 3 at 8:36 p.m. Grandparents are Brent and Maria Moulton, Jennifer Kaleikini and Robert Allan Musick.

KOHFIELD: To Emalie Opal Gulden and Brandon Arthur Kohfield of La Grande, a daughter, Bralrie Ann Kohfield, 5 pounds 4 ounces, May 9 at 6:11

a.m. Grandparents are Pat and Steph Picard and Pam Kohfield.

LOWE: To Casey Michelle Lowe and Clayton Joaquin Lowe of La Grande, a daughter, Piper Anne Lowe, 7 pounds 9 ounces, April 26 at 7:54 a.m. Grandparents are Ed and Julie Gomes, Mayah Lowe and Quirt Lowe.

MAINE: To Kiko Kabua and Aldon Maine of La Grande, a son, Malakhi Asher, 5 pounds 12 ounces, April 27 at 1:37 p.m.

MANWELL: To Breanna Rose Harvey and Jacob Edward Manwell of La Grande, a son, Mason Johnathan Manwell, 9 pounds 4 ounces, May 1 at 7:55 p.m. Grandparents are Jacquelyn Harvey and William Harvey.

MATA MYERS: To Mercedes Elizabeth Mata and Branden Phillip Myers of La Grande, a daughter, Amara Lynn Mata Myers, 8 pounds, May 1 at 1:07 p.m. Grandparents are Mark and Mary Mata, Wynonia Schaffer and Phillip Myers Jr.

OJEDA-LEHR: To Alyssa Maegan Lehr and Carlos

Manuel Ojeda of La Grande, a son, Enderan Dante Ojeda-Lehr, 4 pounds 8 ounces, April 25 at 5:34 a.m. Grandparent is LeAnn Murray.

SIMON: To Alyssa Simon and Loren Simon of North Powder, a daughter, Mia Simon, 8 pounds 8 ounces, May 17 at 8:07 a.m.

WILSON: To Stacy Joanna Wilson and Jeremy Dee Allen Wilson of La Grande, a daughter, Skylia Mae Wilson, 5 pounds 10 ounces, May 10 at 4:38 p.m. Grandparent is Khris Wilson.

WALLOWA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

DAWSON: To Chelsea Dawson and Joseph Dawson of Joseph, a daughter, Nikki Jo Dawson, 8 pounds 4.6 ounces, April 29 at 8:06 a.m. Grandparents are Angie and Joe Peden and Denise and the late James Dawson.

ERICKSON: To Christy Erickson and Derrick Erickson of La Grande, a son, Jordy James-Ty Erickson, 7 pounds 1 ounce, May 22 at 4:07 a.m. Grandparents are Jeri and Nathaniel Bolivar and lleanna and Ernest Erickson.

HILLOCK: To Sarah Peterson and Andrew Hillock of Enterprise, a daughter, Ginger Georgine Hillock, 6 pounds 15.5 ounces, May 7 at 2:54 a.m. Grandparents are Sina and Bruce Stewart and Gail and John Hillock.

MICKA: To Miranda Micka and Jacob Micka of Enterprise, a son, Jaydon Jacob Micka, 6 pounds 8 ounces, May 16 at 10:43 a.m. Grandparents are Sherry and Kent Robbins, Brenda and Jeff Micka and Sherry and Friend McFarland.

OUT OF TOWN

LEAR: To Amber Lynn Lear and Wyatt Wynn Lear of Currie, Nevada, a daughter, Cassie Mae Lear, 5 pounds 9 ounces, May 8 at 1:45 a.m. Grandparents are Travis and Nola Bullard of Union and Kay and Kathy Lear of Currie, Nevada.

ROSS: To Katelin Ross and Tyler Ross of Boise, Idaho, a son, Monroe La Grande Ross, 7 pounds, April 26 at 6:54 a.m. Grandparents are Becky and Jeff Weaver of La Grande, Tom and Suzy Ross of Yoncalla and Karla Ross of

Portland.

WITHERSPOON: To Whitney Brooke Witherspoon and Kelby Sean Witherspoon of

Baker City, a son, Landen Rhett Witherspoon, 6 pounds 13 ounces, May 10 at 12:07 p.m.

HAPPY 50th BIRTHDAY

Happy Birthday Jerry!

From your Friends at
Loveland Funeral Chapel &
Loveland's Safe Ride Program

Nicole Cathey

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