



# Union County Farm Crawl

Inside  
**Uncertainty for HB 2020, 2A**  
**Eastern Oregon adds**  
**two new coaches, 6A**

# THE OBSERVER

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Good day to our valued subscriber Fred Cook of La Grande

## Missing La Grande youth found in Portland

Ronald Bond  
 The Observer

A La Grande 11-year-old who went missing from his home Sunday evening was located Tuesday afternoon in Portland, and his mother is in police custody, ac-



Jackson Cox

cording to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Jackson Cox was found in a Portland hotel with his mother, 51-year-old Wendy

Cox, who does not have lawful custody, roughly 42 hours after he was reported missing Sunday.

The sheriff's office received a tip from a citizen at about 1:30 p.m. Tuesday on the whereabouts of the youth. UCSO contacted the Port-

land Police Bureau, which quickly located Wendy and Jackson.

"Once we got the information, we had her in custody within (about) half an hour," Union County Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen told The Observer Tuesday.

Rasmussen said a citizen from the Portland area called in the tip, but said he wanted to keep the person's identity confidential. He added Oregon State Police provided a major assist in helping to

See Cox / Page 5A

## Lee's plea hearing moved to July

Observer staff

It will be at least another month before Ronald D. Lee enters a plea.

Lee, 71, who has been charged with murder in the November 2018 death of Loretta Williams, will now enter a plea on July

29 after Defense Attorney Dean Gushwa, Lee's court-appointed representation, requested a motion for continuance to move the hearing.

Gushwa's request was based on new potential evidence, he told Judge Thomas Powers during a Tuesday hearing at the Union County Courthouse in La Grande.

Union County District Attorney Kelsie McDaniel did not object to a new hearing date.

Lee has been lodged in the Union County Jail without bail since his arrest Feb. 21. He is facing charges of murder and conspiracy to commit murder in the death of Williams, whom he was married to until July 2018, according to court records.

The Observer previously reported Williams called 911 at approximately 1:40 a.m. Nov. 17, 2018, to report a man in the backyard of her Cove home. The dispatchers heard her confront the person and then heard a loud noise. Deputies and troopers arrived within minutes and found Williams dead of one or more apparent gunshot wounds.



Courtesy photo

Work is done by Fijians on a water project in Savarua Settlement with materials provided by LDS Charities.

## MEETING NEEDS

By Dick Mason  
 The Observer

Fresh fruit such as papaya, orange, coconut and pineapple is easy to find everywhere on the islands of Fiji.

Fresh water? That is another story — one for which a promising new chapter is being written with the help of Russell and Wendy Perry of La Grande.

The husband and wife team recently returned from an 18-month stay in Fiji where they worked as volunteers for LDS Charities, an arm of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that provides humanitarian services throughout the world.

The Perrys, making their first trip to Fiji, helped LDS Charities address a shortage of fresh water in areas near the coastlines of Fiji's islands, including a site known as Savarua Settlement.

The couple, serving as administrators for LDS

Charities, arranged for freshwater wells to be drilled in Savarua Settlement and for a network of pipe-filled trenches to be dug. The well system is now operating, providing many Fijians with fresh and safe drinking water, and it is hoped that similar systems can be built in other parts of Fiji.

The Perrys also helped many of Fiji's schools get fresh drinking water by arranging for them to receive equipment for rainwater collection, storage and purification systems. The rainwater is later cleansed with filters that are needed because water can be contaminated while being stored and running through pipes.

"We helped them with rain harvest," Russell Perry said.

Prior to the installation of these systems, the Fijians assisted by LDS Charities often got much of their drinking water from



Courtesy photo

Russell and Wendy Perry administered work done by LDS Charities during their 18-month stay in Fiji.

mud puddles and other less than sanitary sites. These sources are sometimes contaminated with human waste, leading to outbreaks of typhoid fever, including one which occurred while the Perrys were in Fiji.

Russell Perry said the looks on the faces of Fijians after their drinking water

systems begin operating is priceless.

"They were so grateful," he said. "To them it is like a miracle."

A miracle of their own making. Equipment and materials for the wells and the creation of the rain harvest systems were

See Fiji / Page 5A

## Visible numbers can help response times

Ronald Bond  
 The Observer

Minutes — and even seconds — often matter in an emergency response situation, which is why something seemingly as small as keeping address numbers easily visible can make a big difference.

"Certainly as you're responding, whether to a medical (call), a fire, (or with) law enforcement, the first thing you have to worry about is getting to the right place," Union County Emergency Manager JB Brock said.

Both Brock and La Grande Police Chief Brian Harvey stressed the importance for residents to make sure the address numbers on their homes are visible to help first responders.

"I know we've had times before when it's been a challenge to locate a specific address, and in an emergency response, obviously time is critical," Harvey said.

Oftentimes when this is a concern, it is because the address numbers are either too small to be seen from the road by somebody driving by, do not stand out on the building they are on, or are covered by overgrowth from a bush, grass or a tree.

Or, there may not be an address number posted at all.

"Take a simple drive around town and look at how many places don't have addresses. Businesses are not exempt, either," Harvey said.

The police chief said knowing whether a location is on an odd- or even-numbered side of the road, or the block

See Addresses / Page 5A

## Fowl play? Union may allow ducks as pets

By Dick Mason  
 The Observer

People living within the city limits of Union may soon be able to keep ducks as pets.

The Union City Council took a step toward making this possible at a work session Monday night. The council asked City Administrator Doug Wiggins to draft an amendment to the city's animal ordinance that would allow residents to keep

ducks and many other fowl as pets.

Presently the only fowl residents within the city limits may have are chickens. The proposed amendment would allow residents to keep all fowl as pets except peacocks, guinea fowl and geese.

Wiggins said that peacocks and guinea fowl would be excluded because of the annoying noises they make, and geese due to their cantankerous nature.

"Geese are mean. They will bite (people)," Wiggins said.

The city began looking into allowing fowl in addition to chickens to be kept as pets after it received at least one call from someone asking if they could keep ducks as pets.

The proposed ordinance amendment would limit people to a ratio of 24 fowl per 10,000 square feet of open land. For example, someone with 5,000 square feet would be

limited to 12 fowl.

Only open space would count as square footage. The ground that someone's house and garage sit on would not be considered open space.

The 24 fowl per 10,000 square feet limit is the same one now in place for chickens. Birds that recently hatched would probably immediately count as an additional animal, Wiggins said.

See Union / Page 5A

### INDEX

Business.....1B Horoscope.....5B Record.....3A  
 Classified.....4B Letters.....4A Sports.....6A  
 Comics.....3B Lottery.....2A Sudoku.....3B  
 Crossword.....5B Obituaries.....3A Wonderword...3B  
 Dear Abby....8B Opinion.....4A

### WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section  
 Tonight 48 LOW Shower or t-storm  
 Thursday 65/43 A thunderstorm

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 Issue 75  
 3 sections, 24 pages  
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