

ART

Continued from Page 1A
website, "Portrait Connection serves children who have a medical condition that is considered progressive, degenerative, or malignant and are within two years of their most recent treatment. The child must be between the ages of 1 and 18 years old at the time of application."

Portrait Connection receives funding through organizations and private donations. The artists are paid for their work, though Eisenbraun wishes she could give them more. Her hope is that with the growth of the organization, it will gain more funding and be able to bring joy to more children and their families, and also support participating artists more substantially.

Portrait Connection assigns a child to an artist, sending photos for reference. These artists live all over the nation, so they don't often meet the children in person, according to Eisenbraun. However, during Friday's event, one artist was able to finally meet his subject.

Rodd Ambrosion, of Joseph, painted a portrait, and had the opportunity to meet his subject, Dwayne Jaden

McClendon, a 2-year-old who was born addicted to drugs after his mother, an addict, used during her pregnancy. According to DJ's grandmother, Andrea Rust, he was in the hospital the first two months of his life as he went through withdrawals. Today DJ has behavioral and bladder issues. Rust said she was happy with the way the portrait came out, and that looking at it made her think of hope, future and love.

"It made me feel good to tell (the artist) 'thank you' in person," Rust said.

The portraits were presented as a surprise to each family with a sheet being withdrawn to reveal the images. Artists were allowed creative liberty, which made each painting as unique as the child it portrayed. Many of the parents said the artists did an excellent job with capturing their child's personality.

"It is just a bright spot in our life and a happy memory of a time he was celebrated," Karla Macy, from Baker City, mother of Gus Macy, a 3-year-old with spina bifida, said of the painting of her son. "It just looks like his personality."

When shown his portrait, Gus said, "It's very cute."



Sabrina Thompson/The Observer

Araya Edmonston, center, is shown with her family as she receives her portrait. Her portrait, and all the others, will be available for viewing at ACE until October free of charge, before the photos return to the families.

SYSTEM

Continued from Page 1A
dramatically.

Now, some of those gains are being called into question by a measure allowing undocumented residents and other people who lack the documents needed to prove U.S. citizenship to get driver's licenses.

Under the new law, Oregonians will be offered two types of licenses in 2021.

They can opt for a so-called Real ID that meets new federal standards and will allow holders to fly commercially and enter U.S. government installations. Or they can obtain a license that shows they are qualified to drive but won't show whether they are in the country legally or not. Democratic lawmakers argued the new law would improve road safety and help undocumented residents get to work and take their kids to school.

Lindback said he is concerned many citizens in Oregon won't opt for the Real ID license. That's because they are expected to cost more. Plus, many people can't or don't want to dig up the documentation — such as a birth certificate — showing they are a citizen.

As a result, the number of people swept into the automatic voter registration

system could steadily decline.

On top of that, legislators also cut \$75,000 out of the secretary of state's budget to provide prepaid postage for newly registered voters who want to opt out register with a political party.

That move has drawn the ire of activists who helped push for the creation of automatic voter registration.

"Basically, it will create a barrier to participation," said Samantha Gladu, executive director of Portland-based Next Up. The group, formerly known as the Bus Project, seeks to involve young people in liberal political causes.

Gladu said the lack of prepaid postage makes it more cumbersome for voters to register in one of the major political parties. That's necessary if they want to participate in partisan primary elections.

There are already several efforts to restore the \$75,000 in funding, including pressure from Gov. Kate Brown, according to her staff. Gladu said she also plans to push legislators to put the money back in.

Steve Trout, the current Oregon elections director, said he's seen no indication so far that the lack of prepaid postage is reducing the percentage of new registrants who opt out or sign up for a party.

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HISTORY

Continued from Page 1A
minutes each with the hand crank clipper while an assistant turned the crank. The sheep appeared comfortable throughout the process. Sheehy said sheep feel best when they are gently moved during the shearing and their hips are kept off the ground.

Artist blacksmith Peter Clark, of Summerville, also gave demonstrations, using a coal fire to show how he creates objects from wrought iron or steel by forging the metal, using tools to hammer, bend and cut. Clark, who co-owns Northwest Skillet Company of Summerville with his wife Sue Miller, specializes in making cooking ware.

He said blacksmiths today work with primarily the same tools they did more than a century ago, which include anvils, tongs, hammers and vices. There was a time long ago when blacksmiths were counted on to make all of a community's nails, hinges, hardware for carriages and much more.

"A blacksmith was the heart of the town," Clark said. "You couldn't have a town without a blacksmith."

Clark said this was the case until about the 1930s when industry production of metal items reached the point that the need for blacksmiths in communities fell. The blacksmiths Clark was referring to are different than farrier blacksmiths who specialize in making horseshoes.

The Summerville blacksmith said that metal products of long ago were better in many cases because they were handcrafted rather than mass produced.

"They were functional and had an intrinsic beauty," Clark said.

Certain innate skills go a long way toward helping one become a good blacksmith, he added.

"You need to have good hand-eye coordination and a sense of proportion," Clark said.

He has worked as a blacksmith for decades and describes it as a labor of love.

"It gets in your blood," Clark said. "I get antsy if I go a couple of weeks without working. It is very satisfying."

David Schmidt, of Union, who operated an old-time carpentry station at Pioneer Day, demonstrated or



Dick Mason/The Observer

Peter Clark of Summerville, an artist blacksmith, demonstrates his craft Saturday at the Union County Museum.



Dick Mason/The Observer

David Schmidt of Union shows how old time carpentry work is done.

explained how furniture, wagon wheels and tools like mallets were made in the 1800s and earlier with only wood and knives. He said the process was much more time consuming than it is today with tools like electric drills available.

"It takes a lot more sweat. You have to muscle everything together," Schmidt said.

A good example are the holes that must be dug into the heads of mallets so that wooden handles can be fitted into them. Schmidt said that in the time it takes him to create one hole with a knife, he could make many more with an electric drill.

Schmidt makes his furniture and

tools without using nails, in the same way legendary furniture makers like George Nakashima did.

People attending Pioneer Day also had an opportunity to learn about beaver trapping in the Northwest at a station run by Lee Sancoy and his wife, Cherie Austin of La Grande. The demand for beaver fur was intense because so many men in Europe wanted to wear hats made of beaver fur from the 1600s to the mid-1850s.

Austin said beaver trappers flocked to the Northwest beginning in the late 1700s, after the Hudson Bay Company discovered the Northwest's rich beaver resources.

Austin said many young men came here from the East to work two or three years trapping beaver so they could earn enough to return home and buy their own farm or start a business.

Around 1840, the demand for beaver fur declined dramatically when silk hats became more popular in Europe. Many young trappers found themselves in limbo when this happened, sadly discovering that their beaver furs were worth much less than they anticipated.

"Imagine how someone felt after learning that furs they thought were worth \$2 now were only worth 10 cents," Austin said.

The Pioneer Day celebration also included candlemaking and Dutch oven cooking stations and live music provided by local groups including the BlueMountaineers.

BOND

Continued from Page 1A

- Improvements to the district gymnasium and athletic complex

Improvement to the district's S.E. Miller and J.F. Hutchinson grade school buildings to accommodate students in kindergarten through sixth grade.

The ballot title's summary states the estimated average tax rate would be \$1.10 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. This means that the owner of a \$100,000 house in the school district would pay about \$110 more a year in property taxes. The bond would be paid for over a period not to exceed 21 years, according to the summary.

The upgrades the bond would cover are needed primarily because of the age of the Union School District's buildings. The high school was built in 1912 and the Hutchinson building in the

late 1920s or early 1930s. In the 1950s, the S.E. Miller building and the high school gym were constructed.

Union School District Superintendent Carter Wells said many people in the community understand the need for improvements.

"There is a lot of excitement about (the bond)," Wells said.

The superintendent said this was apparent during an open house last week at which he talked to many parents about the bond.

The bond levy, if approved, would provide the school district a two for the price of

one opportunity. The school district was recently awarded a grant from the Oregon School Capital Improvement matching program that will provide a dollar for dollar match of up to \$4 million for the Union School District bond, should voters approve it. This means if voters pass the \$4 million bond levy, the school district will receive a total of \$8 million for construction. The catch is that the offer of the matching grant is good only through the November election.

Should the bond be rejected by voters, Wells said, the matching grant would no lon-

ger be available to the Union School District although it could reapply for it.

Wells said anyone interested in helping the school district get the word out in the community about the bond election should attend Wednesday's meeting of the Union School Board. At the end of the meeting, the board will begin organizing a group, which will include community members, that informs people about the bond levy.

Wednesday's school board meeting will start at 6 p.m. at the high school athletic complex.

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