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Comedian/Psychologist Matt Bellace
September 12, 2019
La Grande High School Auditorium

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Doors open a: 5:30
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THE OBSERVER



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Good day to our valued subscriber Twyla Cornelius of La Grande

Search ongoing for missing plane

Observer staff

Union County Search and Rescue is continuing a search today for a plane believed to have crashed in the Starkey-Limber Jim Creek area. The plane left Kennewick, Washington, on Sunday and was bound for Ontario, said Capt. Craig Ward of the Union County Sheriff's Office. The plane was reported missing by the pilot's family on Tuesday. Ward said a medical condition or a weather event may have caused the accident.

Lt. Col. Mark Young of the Civil Air Patrol's National Radar Analysis Team said a radar track of the plane shows it went down about 10 a.m. on Sunday. Radar records indicate the plane fell 6,600 feet from the sky.

The Civil Air Patrol will be assisting Union County Search and Rescue with its search, Ward said. No other information was available at press time.

Public records advocate quits

By Claire Withycombe
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon's first-ever public records advocate is resigning from her post on Oct. 11.

Ginger McCall, appointed by Gov. Kate Brown in early 2018 to boost transparency and openness in state and local government, said she was stepping down after what she called "meaningful pressure" from the governor's office to represent its interests in her role on the state's public

See **McCall** / Page 5A

La Grande celebrates the TRAIL BLAZERS

■ NBA team hosts La Grande Rip City Rally on Adams Avenue on Tuesday

By Dick Mason
The Observer

The baritone voice of Kevin Calabro, the Portland Trail Blazers' television play-by-play announcer, which resonates even when he's speaking softly, was filled with a sense of wonderment Tuesday afternoon in La Grande.

Calabro was standing near the intersection of Adams Avenue and Fourth Street late Tuesday afternoon, watching the La Grande Rip City Rally, one of five community festivals the NBA team is conducting this week in small towns, including a stop in Baker City.

"Look at that, it is still raining and (the community members) are still here," said Calabro, one of the Portland Trail Blazer representatives at the event.

The festival site, rain or no rain, was a piece of heaven for Trail Blazer fans. The site was filled with Trail Blazer booths where fans could buy team memorabilia, see a life-size image of Damian Lillard's game-winning shot against Oklahoma City in Game 5 of this year's NBA playoffs, get photos taken with Blazer Dancers, participate in basketball skills competitions on a portable court, have Blazer slogans painted on their faces, see the Trail Blazers' 1977 NBA championship trophy and more.

Mother Nature rained on the rally Tuesday, but she could not wipe the smiles off the faces of the several hundred people who attended the event.

"The excitement was off the charts," said Todd Bosman, director of game operations and events for the Trail Blazers.

Lamar Hurd, the Blazers' TV analyst who announces games with Calabro, echoed this sentiment.

"The fact that it is raining and it is

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Sabrina Thompson/The Observer

Though the half court was closed due to rain, a basketball version of Connect 4 offered kids a chance to practice their shots during Tuesday's Rip City Rally on Adams Avenue. La Grande was one of five communities selected to host the Trail Blazers this week. The rally also made a stop in Baker City.



Sabrina Thompson/The Observer

Activities at the Rip City Rally included coloring, games and giveaways.



Sabrina Thompson/The Observer

The block between Third and Fourth streets on Adams Avenue was blocked off for the Rip City Rally Tuesday as members of the Portland Trail Blazers organization came to La Grande.

Council approves zoning change

■ Union vote will help company to expand operation

By Dick Mason
The Observer

The Union City Council approved a zoning ordinance change Monday that will help a local company expand.

The council voted 4-0 to have the zone of about one acre of land, owned by Lindley Construction at 925 S. Main St., switched from residential to heavy commercial use. The land is part of a 7.4 acre lot where Lindley Construction is based.

Previously half of Lindley's lot was zoned commercial and the other half was zoned residential. Union City Administrator Doug Wiggins said Lindley Construction wanted the change because it would give the business more room to expand its operation.

The ordinance also calls for the creation of a 60-foot

See **Zoning** / Page 5A

Strickler tabbed to lead ODOT

■ Head of highway division replaces Matt Garrett

By Claire Withycombe
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon's transportation commissioners have chosen Kris Strickler, head of the Oregon Department of Transportation's highway division, to be the agency's new leader.

The commissioners voted on the appointment Tuesday evening, chosen after a national search to replace longtime director Matt Garrett that took six months.

Before leading ODOT's highway division, Strickler was the Southwest Regional administrator at the Washington Department of Transportation. In an earlier role at ODOT, he led the Columbia River Crossing project for the

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Strickler

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight
43 LOW
A moonlit sky

Thursday
80/49
Mostly sunny

CONTACT US

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3 sections, 24 pages
La Grande, Oregon

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Call The Observer newsroom at 541-963-3161 or send an email to news@lagrandeobserver.com. More contact info on Page 4A.

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