



SPORTS

Home opener spoiled

Inside
NE Oregon stays cool, 3A
Outlaws win Scamper, 7A



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MONDAY • September 16, 2019 • \$1.50 **Good day to our valued subscriber Wayne Waite of La Grande**

Friends come to family's aid

■ **GoFundMe account set up to help family who lost infant in crash**

By Jade McDowell
EO Media Group

Friends of the Eastern Oregon family whose infant died in a car accident last week are spreading the word about ways people can help.

Christy and Derrick Erickson of La Grande lost their 4-month-old baby Jordy Erickson on Wednesday, after a crash on Highway 82 in Wallowa County.

Jessica McCallister, Jordy's godmother, said the family is devastated. She started a GoFundMe campaign online to collect money to help with costs they will face, including funeral expenses, a new vehicle, time off work and medical

bills for their 2-year-old son who was seriously injured in the crash and came home from the hospital Friday.

"I just want them to be OK," she said. "I feel like this is the only thing I can do for Jordy and his parents."

McCallister, who grew up in Hermiston and Stanfield and now lives in Union, said she was thrilled when the Ericksons asked her to be Jordy's

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"I just want them to be OK. I feel like this is the only thing I can do for Jordy and his parents."

— **Jessica McCallister, godmother of Jordy Erickson, a 4-month-old baby killed in a crash Wednesday on Highway 82 in Wallowa County**

UNION COUNTY

Police release name of pilot

■ **Idaho man identified as pilot of downed plane**

By Dick Mason
The Observer

The name of the pilot who died in a Sept. 8 plane crash near La Grande has been released by the Union County Sheriff's Office.

The victim was David Emery Koeppen, 82, of Fruitland, Idaho, according to Union County Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen in a news release The Observer received late Friday morning. Koeppen was flying from Kennewick, Washington, to Ontario when he "apparently got off course," Capt. Craig Ward of the Union County Sheriff's Office told the Observer on Wednesday, and his plane crashed at Elk Willow Springs southwest of La Grande.

The UCSO's Search and Rescue unit was notified at 11:23 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 10, that Koeppen's plane was overdue and may have crashed. A search was launched at that time, one coordinated with the Air

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COOK MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Library lands new director

■ **Kip Roberson to begin new position in mid-October**

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer

Cook Memorial Public Library in La Grande announced its new director to be Kip Roberson. He will begin Oct. 14, moving from the MidCity West Regional Library in Seattle as its manager to leading La Grande's library.



Roberson

Roberson, 55, has been working in library sciences since graduating with a master's degree from Indiana University in 1989. His undergraduate degree in business left him with job opportunities he said were less than desirable, and when talking to a friend who was in library school he decided that was the direction he was interested in going in his career. He started working at libraries in Indiana and in Chicago, then moved on to small libraries in New England before coming to the West Coast.

"I like trivia and you get to deal with a lot of reference and research questions," Roberson said when asked what originally drew him to a career in library sciences.

At first, Roberson said, he

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LA GRANDE HIGH SCHOOL

Parents learn about supporting TEENAGERS



Sabrina Thompson/The Observer

Detective Richard Wistocki advised parents on monitoring their children's online usage, at home on the computer and on their phones. He was one of two speakers at Thursday night's presentation on teens.

By Sabrina Thompson, The Observer

The La Grande High School Auditorium welcomed two out-of-town experts to talk to parents about their teens' well-being and safety Thursday evening, with live streams to Elgin, Cove and North Powder.

Matt Bellace, a neuropsychologist and stand-up comedian, focused on how parents can best support their children on and off screens, and Richard Wistocki, a retired detective and high technology child crimes specialist with 30 years of experience in law enforcement, taught parents about monitoring their children online.

Earlier in the day, Bellace and Wistocki participated in a cyber-safety conference for Union County's seventh-graders at Eastern Oregon University. More than 340 students heard their advice at the annual conference coordinated by the Union County Safe Communities Coalition.

Matt Bellace

Bellace gave a comedic spin to his talk, "Supporting Teens in Making Healthy Choices," and provided a variety of scientific findings about the psychological, physical and emotional well-being of teenagers, drawing on personal experiences.

The first of his ideas was to encourage teens to lean on positive

support. Because teens are greatly influenced by their peers, it is important that they have friends who will lift them up. When parents provide positive support, they are teaching their children not to have fear.

"The opposite of fear is trust," Bellace said. "When you have a lot of fear, you're lacking trust in something in your life."

Bellace also advised parents to be aware that teens are more willing to take risks when in a peer group. That, he said, is why having friends who take positive risks, such as facing fears in a safe environment, is important.

Bellace also spoke about the negative effects of parents protecting their children from disappointment. He said it is key to go through pain, loss and failure and learn how to turn it into something powerful. He encouraged parents to get their kids involved in activities such as sports because it is a way to experience disappointment in a relatively safe place.

Bellace said that it is through

learning how to adapt and survive failures that teenagers build their resilience, and it is up to the parents to remind them of that.

"We forget to tell the young people the reason we are here is because generations before us adapted and survived," Bellace said. "The most beautiful waves come from the biggest storms."

Another piece of advice Bellace gave parents was to help their children see the benefits of what he called a "natural high." The author of "A Better High," Bellace explained that this is the high you experience doing things you love. The chemicals that are released in the brain when you do things you enjoy are similar to those released when doing recreational drugs, but they have no harmful side effects.

Bellace encouraged meditation, exercise and less screen time as ways to achieve a calmer, less stressful life.

In talking about screens, like those on phones, tablets and computers, Bellace showed the

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Rees speaks at Reunion Weekend

■ **Maj. Gen. Raymond Rees salutes Founding Fathers**

By Dick Mason
The Observer

Individuals immersed in debates on how big the United States' military budget should be need to give the U.S. Constitution a second look.

This was the message Maj. General Raymond Rees had Sunday during his keynote address at Reunion Weekend of La Grande's National Guard unit, the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment.

"The people who wrote our Constitution had it right," said Rees, who now lives in Helix and recently retired after a military career that extended back to 1966.

The retired general said

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Rees

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WEATHER

 Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight
48 Low
Mainly cloudy

Tuesday
66/46
A.p.m. t-storm

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