



SPORTS

Union tops TigerScots

Inside
Second death on Oregon related to vaping, 2A

The Observer Weekend

FRIDAY-SUNDAY • September 27-29, 2019 • \$1.50 Good day to our valued subscribe Ed Spaulding of La Grande

Forced landing?



Ben Lonergan/EO Media Group

Lynn Tompkins looks in on an enclosure at Blue Mountain Wildlife on Tuesday morning near Pendleton. Tompkins said the state is preventing Blue Mountain Wildlife from rehabilitating birds that were found in Washington could be an existential threat to the nonprofit, but state officials maintain that nothing has changed from the previous way they did business.

■ Blue Mountain Wildlife faces uncertain future because state has regulated center's ability to import birds from out of state

By Antonio Sierra
EO Media Group

PENDLETON — The latest edition of the Blue Mountain Wildlife newsletter included a section called "Now the Unsettling News."

Blue Mountain Wildlife Director Lynn Tompkins gave a brief history of how the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Oregon Department of Agriculture have regulated the wildlife rehabilitation center's ability to import birds from out of state before cutting to the chase.

"Recently, the ODFW State Veterinarian has determined that the risk of importing diseased birds into Oregon is too great to allow rehabilitators to import migratory birds," she wrote. "Initially, I was hopeful that we could address ODFW's concerns of disease transmission across state lines, and maintain the integrity of BMW's wildlife rehab program. I am not sure that is going to be the case."

In an interview, Tompkins said the state preventing Blue Mountain Wildlife from rehabilitating birds that were found in Washington could be an existential threat to the nonprofit, but state officials maintain that nothing has changed from the previous way they did business.

Founded by Tompkins and her husband in 1990, Blue Mountain



Ben Lonergan/EO Media Group

A great gray owl with only one eye swoops across an enclosure at Blue Mountain Wildlife on Tuesday morning.

Wildlife specializes in rehabbing birds of prey like eagles, hawks, and owls.

When raptors get sick, injured or hurt, often from direct or indirect contact with humans and manmade objects, Blue Mountain Wildlife usually gets the call.

The organization received its first migratory bird from Washington in 2001, and Tompkins now estimates more than half the birds Blue Mountain Wildlife receives are from the Evergreen State as

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Suspect faces four counts of arson

By Sabrina Thompson and Dick Mason
The Observer

Union County Sheriff's Office has arrested an Imbler resident in connection to four fires that were started in the last month in the Imbler and Summer-



Knight

ville area.

Kael C. Knight, 19, was arrested Wednesday evening by UCSO and has been charged with four counts of arson II and one count of tampering with physical evidence, according to a press release from UCSO. Knight was arraigned at Union County Superior Court Thursday.

According to court documents and Imbler Fire Chief Mike Barry, the first fire was on Sept. 4 on Hull Road in Imbler and destroyed a barn and a haystack; a second fire at 67214 Brooks Road in Imbler

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Fire officials tackling shortage of firefighters

By Dick Mason
The Observer

The La Grande Fire Department is facing a manpower shortage.

The good news is that the shortage is not impacting the level of service provided and that the department is gaining momentum in its effort to address the issue.

"Our staff is doing an incredible job. We are covering all of our calls," said Interim La Grande Fire Department

Chief Emmitt Cornford.

The LGFD is maintaining its level of service even though on some days the department, which is down to 10 full-time firefighters, receives enough calls to keep a much larger staff busy. For example, on Sept. 12 the fire department responded to 21 calls for medical assistance.

When fully staffed, the fire

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GRH honored for use of technology in patient care

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer

Grande Ronde Hospital was awarded the Most Wired award by the College of Healthcare Information Management Executives for 2019 for the integration of technology into its systems. GRH is a level 7, which means it uses technology to help analyze patient trends in addition to creating more effective and efficient care for patients.

In 2018, the hospital changed its operating system to become more

digitized with a patient-centered focus. This shift allowed for a person's records to be viewable from any department in the hospital and included a new patient portal called MyChart. The Most Wired award is evidence of the success of the new system.

According to GRH's chief information officer, Parhez Sattar, not every hospital uses technology, and health care is one of the slowest types of services to adopt it, as it is more focused on human interaction.

"However, information technology helps you (deliver health care) more effectively and efficiently because you have information at your fingertips rather than having to chase it down," Sattar said.

One area CHIME looked at in GRH's integration of technology is how the organization protects patient data from breaches while sharing the information within the hospital.

"It's really the patient's data. We are merely the custodians of it,"

Sattar said. "They gave us the honor to take care of their health and information so that we can be more informed in the process of taking care of them."

According to Sattar, the hospital has many layers of protection and firewall in place to prevent a data breach, and to this date, he said, it has never had one. He said that while providers may find it difficult at times to go through the extensive protective measures, they understand the

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

**Friday**
36 LOW
A shower early

**Saturday**
48/33
A shower

**Sunday**
45/30
Rain and snow

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