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Good day to our valued subscriber Robert Page of La Grande

UNION

Church status remains in doubt

■ Union United Methodist Church complex faces uncertain future

By Dick Mason
The Observer

The future use of the Union United Methodist Church building complex, which dates back to 1905, is in doubt.

All that is known for certain is the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, which oversees all Methodist churches in Oregon and Southern Idaho, will have the final say in what happens.

The Conference assumed ownership of the Union United Methodist Church building and its fellowship hall and parsonage in July after the Union United Methodist Church closed in June due to declining membership. Until July, the Union United Methodist Church complex had been owned by its congregation. Ownership, however, automatically reverted to the Conference after the church closed.

The Union United Methodist Church's fellowship hall remains in use today as a community center where senior meals are served.

The church building is now no longer in use, but it did serve as the site of services for a Lutheran Church group through mid-September. The Lutheran Church group had rented the Union United Methodist Church building for about a year, according to LaVon Hall, a member of a local committee the Oregon-Idaho Conference which helps run the Union Methodist Church buildings.

The Oregon-Idaho Conference is considering a number of options including selling the church complex buildings or renting them, according to Rev. Dan Wilson-Fey, the Conference's treasurer, who spoke during an open house at the Union church Friday.

A number of people, including Geneva Williams of

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Honoring the legacy of a SKI PATROL LEGEND

■ Mike Gooderham, who passed away last month, fixture in the community

By Dick Mason, The Observer

Mike Gooderham knew that his trip to Chiemsee, Germany, in June of 1992 with his wife, Patty, would be unforgettable.

After all it was the couple's first trip to Europe.

What Mike, who passed away Sept. 24 at age 78, did not know as he prepared for the trip was that he and Patty were on the cusp of making National Ski Patrol history.

The couple went to Chiemsee to attend a meeting of the National Ski Patrol, which has divisions in the United States and portions of Europe. There the Gooderhams received news more exhilarating than a perfect jaunt down Anthony Lakes' Rock Garden run — Mike was named outstanding alpine patroller and Patty received the outstanding auxiliary patroller award for 1992.

It marked the first and only time in the National Ski Patrol's 82-year history that a husband and wife team received the prestigious awards the same year.

The announcement elevated Mike and Patty to emotional highs.

"When you get married and have kids ... it's that kind of feeling," Mike told The Observer in 1992. "The only thing more rewarding would be saving a life. That would be the top of the pinnacle."

Mike would go on to reach that pinnacle later in a

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Photo courtesy of Heather Gooderham

Mike Gooderham and his wife Patty are shown their youngest granddaughter, Kara, during a La Grande soccer match in 2018.



Observer file photo

Mike Gooderham, left, takes the blood pressure of Gene Paul of La Grande at an American Red Cross clinic about 10 years ago. Gooderham was on the Union County Red Cross Board for more than 50 years.

New nonprofit kicks off with dinner for vets

■ Conrad Skinner Veterans Memorial Program wants to help veterans, families in three-county area

By Jade McDowell
EO Media Group

HERMISTON — As Sue Long-Hosek watched veterans bond with each other after a golf fundraiser last year, she knew she wanted to create more opportunities like the one

unfolding before her eyes.

Long-Hosek's first husband was a Vietnam veteran who struggled with severe post-traumatic stress disorder from the time he returned home up to when he took his own life in 2014. Afterward, she tried to do what she

could to help veterans like him by hosting golf tournament fundraisers to benefit national veterans organizations and the local American Legion.

"That's why this is a passion of mine," she said. "That's why I want to help in any way I can."

She and her current husband, Ron Hosek, have started the Conrad Skinner Veterans Memorial Program, with the goal of acting as a "stopgap" for veterans and their families in Umatilla, Morrow and Union counties if they have needs that aren't being met by other organizations.

Their mission statement says they plan to provide "opportunities and support for Veterans and their families in time of crisis or need."

"This is not in conjunction with the VA, it is not to take the place of the VA, but it is kind of a supplement for things that the VA might not be able to address on an immediate basis," Long-Hosek said.

They will announce specific services they have in mind at a Veterans Appreciation Dinner cosponsored by the new nonprofit, American Legion Post No. 37, Greater Hermiston Area Chamber of Commerce and

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight 46 LOW Showers around
Tuesday 52/30 A shower

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