

CHURCH

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Union, expressed fondness for the Union Methodist Church building and said they wanted it preserved.

"Like many people, I have such a passion for the church," Williams said.

Patsy Lang, in a statement submitted to The Observer, also said she has great memories of attending services at the church. She noted that its fellowship hall provides a gathering place for seniors to have a weekly lunch, which is provided by volunteers.

"Services like these are priceless to those who would otherwise be left with few options for socialization. It would be a shame to see this beautiful old church sold into the hands of parties not interested in maintaining these valuable community services," wrote Lang, a Union resident.

Senior meals were provided by the Union United Methodist Church in the church's fellowship hall for years. When the church stopped operating, the Cove-Union-Powder Health Association took over the weekly meals. CUP has a verbal



Dick Mason/The Observer

The altar of the Union United Methodist Church. The church was built in 1895.

agreement with the Oregon-Idaho Conference for renting the fellowship hall and the church, an agreement CUP hopes to soon have finalized in writing.

CUP Treasurer Marty McKeon said that CUP is investigating the possibility of eventually using the fellowship hall for volunteer health clinics, such as those

providing services such as blood pressure checks and toenail clipping. CUP is also interested in leasing the parsonage. McKeon said the parsonage could be used as a place for visiting health professionals to stay while putting on clinics.

McKeon also noted that CUP would like to be able to rent the church building

to religious organizations in the community.

Wilson-Fey said the Oregon-Idaho Conference will give serious consideration to the wishes of the Union community members before making any decisions.

"We want what is in the best interest of the values of the community," Wilson-Fey said.

GOODERHAM

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remarkable life that was celebrated Saturday during a memorial service at the Lighthouse Pentecostal Church in Island City, one attended by 300 people.

Those who spoke at the service included Dave Campbell of La Grande, a member of the Anthony Lakes Ski Patrol. Campbell said Gooderham was revered at the Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort because of his skills and dedication.

"It was very comforting when you saw Mike there. You knew everything was going to be okay. Mike could do anything," Campbell said.

Gooderham worked for Boise Cascade for three decades before retiring in 1999. He was the supervisor of BC's roads crew his last 20 years with the company. After retiring, he did not step to the sideline, but instead stepped on the accelerator. He was at Anthony Lakes as a patroller almost every day it was open for skiing. He was always the first one there each day and the last to leave.

"The only way you could beat him (in the morning to the Anthony Lakes ski area) is if you slept there," said Campbell, who is the head of the Southern Idaho Division of the National Ski Patrol, which includes Anthony Lakes.

He credits Gooderham with doing a remarkable job of providing instruction about first aid and more to fellow ski patrollers.

"Teaching and mentoring were his passions," Campbell said.

Gooderham was such a good educator that it elevated the reputation of the Anthony Lakes Ski Patrol. He said that when people in the ski world find out a patroller is from Anthony Lakes, they automatically assume the individual "knows their stuff" because of the quality of instruction Gooderham provided.

In addition to volunteering on the ski patrol, Gooderham worked for many years as a volunteer firefighter for the La Grande Fire Department. Firefighters he worked with included Emmitt Cornford, now the LGPD's interim fire chief. Cornford said Gooderham was a great person with remarkable energy and commitment.

"He was 110% all the time. He was always in fourth gear," Cornford said.

The fire chief said Gooderham was often at the scene of calls before engines from the LGFD arrived. If Gooderham was not there, Cornford said he sometimes wondered if he was at the right place. The fire chief said Gooderham's impact on the LGFD will be a lasting one.

"Our department is better and all of Union County is better because Mike and Patty decided to live here," he said.

Patty said her husband had a way of making people comfortable in emergency situations because of his optimism and confidence.

"I always felt safe when I was with Mike," she said.



Observer file photo

Mike and Patty Gooderham retired as members of the Anthony Lakes Ski Patrol in 2014.

Eastern Oregon University President Tom Insko, who worked with Gooderham at Boise Cascade, agreed. He said Gooderham had a type of confidence that gave him an endearing quality, one that did not overshadow others.

"He was confident but never in a way that made others feel unimportant," Insko said.

Insko said Gooderham had a way of making people feel good about themselves.

"I always felt better after I talked to Mike," he said.

Mike and Patty, who celebrated their 59th anniversary in August, first met as second-grade students at Greenwood Elementary School. Patty said they did not begin dating until after high school, but there a hint of things to come as early as grade school. Patty said that at Greenwood boys played a king of the mountain type game that Mike often won. It involved a race up small hills made of cinders from coal. The boy who won would select a girl to join him on top as queen.

"Mike always picked me to be his queen," Patty said.

The Gooderhams have a son, Eric, of La Grande, and a daughter, Gretchen, of New Meadows, Idaho, as well as three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. In a letter from Gretchen that was read at Saturday's service, she said her father always strove to be a part of the lives of

his children and grandchildren.

"My father's will to be part of our lives was as strong as his will to live," she wrote.

This was apparent at La Grande High School and Eastern Oregon University soccer games when the Gooderhams' granddaughter, Kara, was playing for the teams the past five years. Mike and Patty have attended almost all of her team's home games over this span.

"Mom and Dad have always been part of the team's cheering section," Gretchen said.

Gooderham was saluted at EOU's home game on Friday when the portable chair he always sat in as a spectator was set up there, holding flowers and a photo of him with his family.

Gooderham won a number of awards for his work as a first aid instructor and emergency medical technician, including Purple Merit Star award he received from the National Ski Patrol about a decade ago for saving a life of skier at Anthony Lakes. The award saluted Gooderham for the emergency medical care he provided for the skier, who suffered a serious leg fracture.

Patty said Mike was highly respected by medical professionals.

"A number have told me that if they got hurt on the hill, they would want Mike to be the first person to show up," she said.

PROGRAM

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reflect on and honor those they have lost. There is an option to purchase a memorial plaque to be placed on the wooden panels that surround the garden. Torrico hopes that someday all of the panels will be covered with memorials.

Next Step PRC was established in La Grande in 1992, and has gone through various name changes since then, including Birthright and Next Step Pregnancy and Information Center. When it began, the center was a place for new and expectant mothers to receive guidance during their pregnancy journey, with information on adoption, abortion and parenting. The center does not facilitate adoption or abortion, but shares information about it. While Next Step PRC still has information on those services, they have increased their topics to include establishing healthy relationships. All of the funding for this service comes from local and private donations.

Next Step PRC will host an event Oct. 15 to participate in the Wave of Light, a national event honoring the babies who have died before and after being born. Torrico

If you go

What: Wave of Light
When: 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., Oct. 15
Where: Next Step Pregnancy and Relationship Center, 902 D Ave., La Grande
Of note: Wave of Light is a national event honoring the babies who have died before and after being born. Next Step PRC asks that parents not bring young children as it can be disruptive or painful for newly bereaved individuals.

said the death of infants and miscarriages aren't often talked about and she hopes this event will help those who may feel like they are alone. During the event, people will light candles at 7 p.m. in whatever time zone they are in. This will create a wave of light across the nation. The event starts at 6:30 p.m. and there will be finger foods served, until 8 p.m. with candle lighting in the memorial garden at 7 p.m.

"We want to show people they are not alone," Torrico said. "It is a family that no one wants to be a part of, but there is so much support (if) you are there."

VETERANS

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Hermiston parks and recreation department.

The dinner is on Sunday, Oct. 20 at 3 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395. It is free for all veterans and their immediate family, and community members who wish to attend and show their appreciation for veterans are asked to make a donation in an amount of their choosing. Everyone planning to attend is asked to RSVP to Hermiston Parks and Recreation, 541-667-5018 or gwicks@hermiston.or.us.

The Conrad Skinner Veterans Memorial Program is run by a board of 11 people, most of which are veterans or their spouses. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that accepts tax-deductible contributions.

Conrad Skinner grew up in Hermiston and served in the United States Marine

Corps before taking his own life in April 2014 at age 23. ron Hosek said two of Skinner's relatives sit on the nonprofit's board, and he and his wife met with Skinner's parents and grandparents to get their blessing before dedicating the project to his memory.

"We are losing 20 to 22 veterans a day to PTSD and suicide," Hosek said.

He said he and Long-Hosek and other members of the board want to reduce those numbers locally, and also support family members who may be at a loss to know how to deal with their love one's struggles. Hosek said they already have books they can loan out to help children understand that "mom or dad are not angry at them, it's an illness."

Long-Hosek said she is open to suggestions for what needs are not being met elsewhere, and how they can best help veterans with their limited resources.