Local Briefing

From staff reports

Cove Booster Club meets tonight

COVE — The Cove Booster Club will meet this evening at 7 p.m. at Cove High School. For more information, call 541-561-1602.

Trail Life offers Christian outdoor program for boys

ISLAND CITY — Trail Life USA is a Christian outdoor adventure program for boys from kindergarten through 12th grade that emphasizes and teaches biblical moral values. For those who have more questions and would like to participate, a Join the Trail Open House will be held at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 7 at the Faith Center, 10300 S. D St., Island City. Go to www.traillifeusa.com for more information.

City Landmarks Commission holds work session

LA GRANDE — The City of La Grande Landmarks Commission will meet for a work session at 6 p.m. Nov. 7 in Council Chambers of La Grande City Hall, 1000 Adams Ave. The purpose of a Landmarks work session is to provide the commission an opportunity to informally discuss topics of common concern and interest and to exchange ideas, not to make decisions or to direct the staff toward a specific action or conclusion. As no decisions are made, there will be no voting by the commission at the work session. In accordance with Oregon Public Meeting Law, commission work sessions are open to the public. Time may be designated for public comments at the conclusions of the discussions at the discretion of the commission.

Shop Hop offers chance to win $50 gift certificates

LA GRANDE — A "Downtown Shop Hop" is happening Nov. 8-9 on Adams Avenue in La Grande. Shoppers may stop in participating stores — Blue Mountain Outfitters, Community Merchants, Bella, Fitzgerald Flowers and Rosewood Cottage — to receive a stamp for a chance to win a $50 gift certificate from each store. Stop by the stores between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Friday, and between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday.

Volunteers welcome at emergency woodlot Saturday

LA GRANDE — A workday at the Neighbors Together emergency woodlot is planned for Nov. 9. Volunteers are needed to help cut and split firewood between 9 a.m. and noon at 3309 N. Umatilla St., La Grande. The wood will be distributed Nov. 16. For more information call 541-963-9126.

Get ready for holidays with clay ornaments workshop

LA GRANDE — All are invited to drop in and make clay ornaments between 10 a.m. and noon Nov. 9 at Underground Clay Studio, 1101 Washington Ave., La Grande. The workshop will repeat Dec. 7. The kiln-fired, glazed ornaments will be ready in time for Christmas. Cost is $10 for one, $17 for two, $25 for four, then $5 for each after that.

Oregon Club Volleyball open to area girls

BAKER CITY — Tryouts for the Oregon Club volleyball 2020 season, open to girls from fifth through 12th grades in Baker and Union counties, are planned for Nov. 9-10 in the main gym at Baker High School, 2500 E St., Baker City. The tryout schedule is as follows (girls are encouraged, but not required, to attend both sessions):

12U and 14U
- Saturday, Nov. 9, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 10, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

16U and 18U
- Saturday, Nov. 9, 10 a.m. to noon
- Sunday, Nov. 10, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

There is no fee to try out. Girls who are picked for a team and choose to play are required to pay dues. The season for the 16U and 18U levels starts in early February, and the 12U and 14U levels start in mid-February. More information is available by calling Stephanie at 541-518-9284.

American Legion celebrates Marine Corps birthday Sunday

LA GRANDE — Nov. 10 marks the 244th birthday of the United States Marine Corps. A local celebration will begin with a social hour at 5 p.m. at the American Legion Post #43 at 301 Fir St. in La Grande. There will be a message from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, a cutting of the cake ceremony and birthday cake for all, followed by sea stories. Marines and families of Marines are invited. Bring a finger food dish to share. For more information contact Lonnie Myers at 541-910-1061.

Smart Driver class open to all

ENTERPRISE — An AARP "Smart Driver" class will be offered Nov. 13 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Wallowa County Senior Center, 702 NW First St., Enterprise. The new and enhanced driving refresher course will be taught by Frances Buckles, a certified volunteer instructor. Course participants will learn valuable defensive driving skills, proven safety strategies, how to stay current with the latest driving technologies, the current rules of the road specific to their community, and how to manage and accommodate common age-related changes in vision, hearing and reaction time.

Participants may be eligible for a multi-year insurance discount after taking the course. There are no tests required. The class is open to drivers of all ages. Cost is $15 for AARP members (bring card) and $20 for non-members. To register call 541-426-3840.

Obituaries

Phillip A. Mendiguren

Formerly of La Grande
1950-2019

Phillip A. Mendiguren, 69, of Roseburg and formerly of La Grande, died Sept. 20 at his residence.

A Rosary and Mass of Christian Burial will begin at 2 p.m. Nov. 12 at Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church.

Known as Phil, he was born Jan. 25, 1950, in Ontario, to John and Serafina (Uberuaga) Mendiguren. He resided in Ontario; Boise, Idaho; Spokane, Washington; and La Grande and Roseburg. Phil graduated from Ontario High School in 1968 and the University of Oregon in 1972. He was drafted by the U.S. Army and was stationed in Germany from 1972 to 1974. In 1974, Phil married Delores Shelby. He graduated from Gonzaga University Law School in 1978.

Phil was an attorney with Gooding & Mendiguren Attorneys at Law and Carey, Joseph & Mendiguren Attorneys at Law, and he was a Circuit Court Judge for Union and Wallowa counties. He enjoyed golf, hunting, fishing, billiards and watching U of O sports. He belonged to the Optimists, Elks, American Legion, Knights of Columbus, Toastmasters, U of O Alumni Association and Delta Tau Delta.

Surviving relatives include his wife, Delores; children and their spouses, Shelby and Loren Shaw of Roseburg, Julia Mendiguren of Eugene, Nicholas and Amanda Mendiguren of La Grande, and Andrew and Sarah Mendiguren of Wenatchee, Washington; sister and brother-in-law, Faye and Don Sadowsky of Eugene; brothers and sisters-in-law, Jim and Theresa Mendiguren of Boise, Idaho, and Tom and Debi Mendiguren of Payette, Idaho; four grandchildren; aunt, Julia Uberuaga Coleman; and sister-in-law, Gloria Herd.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Serafina; brother, John Michael Mendiguren; and uncle, Joe P. Uberuaga.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the La Grande High School Mock Trial Team, 708 K Ave., La Grande 97850, or the Special Olympics Oregon, Attn: Tristin Ross, 8313 SW Cirrus Drive, Beaverton 97708.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.

UPCOMING FUNERALS AND VISITATIONS
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Nov. 8
Thomas Hiatt:
1-1:45 p.m. viewing, followed by 2 p.m. funeral, Loveland Funeral Chapel, La Grande.

Nov. 9
Wendy Cox Booth:
12:30-1:45 p.m. viewing, followed by 2 p.m. funeral, La Grande First Christian Church.

Thomas G. Steele

La Grande
1941-2019

Thomas Glenn Steele, 78, of La Grande, died Oct. 16 at his home. A family memorial gathering will be held in the spring/summer of 2020.

Known as Tom, he was born Sept. 4, 1941, in Alma, Missouri. Tom attended Riverside Elementary School in Elwell, Michigan, and graduated in 1959 from Alma High School in Alma, Michigan.

Tom met his future wife, Pauline "Ann" Gillikin, through friends. He and Ann were married on May 19, 1961, and together they had four children: Billy, David, Connie and Patti.

Tom served in the U.S. Navy from 1959 to 1963. He then went to work for Sears, Roebuck and Company in service repair and did so for 20-plus years. He also worked for Chuck Colvin Ford as an auto mechanic, and in Alaska he did repairs for John Deere and numerous others.

Tom was a member of the American Legion. He enjoyed repairing tractors, hunting, fishing and woodworking. Tom's philosophy in life was: "stay busy." He believed that taking care of his family was the top priority, as was always treating others right. Memorable times include his marriage, the births of his children, fishing on the Snake River and hunting up in the woods.

Surviving relatives include his wife, Ann; daughters, Connie Carter of Arnegard, North Dakota, and Patti Steele of Portland; sons, Billy Steele of Haines and David Steele of Kenai, Alaska; brother, Ronald Steele of Elwell, Michigan; and eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas and Violet; sister, Joyce; and grandsons, Adrian and Austin.

Memorial donations may be made to the La Grande American Legion or VFW in care of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway 97834.

Online condolences may be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Judy Keeling

North Powder

Judy Keeling, 71, of North Powder, died Oct. 4. An obituary is forthcoming. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services. Online condolences may be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.

Dorla V. Hodge

La Grande

Dorla V. Hodge, 89, of La Grande, passed away Nov. 5 at Grande Ronde Retirement Residence. An obituary is forthcoming. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory will be handling the arrangements.

Dog Attack brings Baker ordinance into question

By Chris Collins
EO Media Group

BAKER — A leisurely walk through south Baker City neighborhoods with her dog turned into a nightmare for Karen Spencer Sunday afternoon.

Gizmo, Spencer's 13-year-old schnauzer, was enjoying Sunday's sunshine as much as she was as the two strolled south on Foothill Drive about 2 p.m. A man was playing catch with his son while another was working on his car in the driveway.

The nightmare began a few moments later when a large pit bull ran out from the driveway and gripped Gizmo in his massive jaws.

"As soon as the dog saw us he attacked," Spencer said. "There was no stopping him."

And she had no opportunity to even try.

"The dog ripped the leash and my dog out of my hand," Spencer said.

The dog's owner, Branden Baltzell, 24, of Lakewood, Washington, and his friend did their best to separate the two dogs, she said. Baltzell was over the top of his dog trying to pull him off Gizmo, and his friend was pulling the dog's jaws apart to get him to loosen his grip on her dog.

The schnauzer had no chance to even try to fight if he'd have wanted to, Spencer said.

The larger dog bit through Gizmo's left shoulder, and then grabbed him by the throat, belly and neck.

"It was horrific," Spencer said. "I turned away when the dog grabbed Gizmo by the belly."

She said the dog owner's friend was bitten in the abdomen and on the arm in trying to wrestle the pit bull, which she estimated to weigh about 100 pounds, away from her 18-pound schnauzer.

Neighbors from across the street helped Spencer tend to her dog. She used the man's phone to dial 9-1-1 to summon police and the woman drove her home so she could get Gizmo to the veterinarian's office, she said.

Dr. Matt Kerns at the Baker Animal Clinic treated Gizmo Sunday afternoon to make him comfortable and then operated on him Monday morning. The dog was stitched up and was able to go home Monday night accompanied by prescriptions for pain medication and a two-week supply of antibiotics.

Officers who responded — Sgt. Mike Reagan and John Parsons — initially told Spencer that there was no enforcement action that could be taken against the dog's owner because he lives in Washington. Spencer could, however, consider filing a civil suit against the dog owner, they said.

Spencer couldn't believe that the responsibility for any resolution to the harm another's person's dog had done to her family pet fell solely to her.

"I was on a city street in the city limits with my dog on a leash and my dog was attacked," she said. "I think it is a public safety issue."

She took her concerns to Police Chief Ray Duman Monday morning and though he offered to do what he could, he didn't give her much more hope for a good resolution than she'd received from the officers.

She said Duman advised her to speak to the city council about developing a revised ordinance to address how to handle cases involving dogs that are brought into the community as visitors and then return to their homes even though complaints have been made about them.

Duman, who has been in the role of chief since July 1, said Tuesday that upon taking a second look at the ordinance he believes it can be used to address Spencer's concerns after all.

Public Safety Report

UNION COUNTY SHERIFF

Arrested: Jessey James Thomas O'Quinn, 23, unknown address, was arrested on a charge of criminal trespass.

Cited: Two Union County juveniles were cited on charges of unlawful possession of marijuana.

Arrested: Mark Casch II, 44, unknown address, was arrested by the Washington State Patrol on a Union County warrant charging failure to appear in court. The warrant was connected to original charges of possession of methamphetamine and driving under the influence of intoxicants.

Arrested: Trey Garret Rubin, 26, a Union County resident, was arrested on a Union County warrant charging failure to appear in court. The warrant was connected to original charges of second-degree burglary, second-degree theft and possession of a controlled substance, methamphetamine.

LA GRANDE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Arrested: Ryan Alan Nelson, 28, La Grande, was arrested on a parole and probation detainer and on a charge of possession of a controlled substance, methamphetamine.

Accident: Nobody was injured in a traffic accident on Fourth Street Tuesday. The accident was reported at 10:41 a.m.

Arrested: Angella Thamert, 42, Elgin, was arrested on a parole and probation detainer and on a charge of possession of a controlled substance.

LA GRANDE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firefighters responded to 11 calls for medical assistance on Monday and seven on Tuesday.

Week of Nov. 6 - 13
Mark your Calendar
• NOV 7TH AT 6 PM FAMILY BINGO NIGHT Central Elementary PTO
• NOV 8TH - 9TH DOWNTOWN SHOP HOP Annual Shop Hop with participating stores!
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