

UNION COUNTY

FFA joins efforts to combat food insecurity locally

Observer staff

CORVALLIS — Oregon FFA, Les Schwab Tire Centers, Wilco, and Grange Co-op stores across Oregon participated during October in the Drive Away Hunger initiative.

Since 2015, Oregon FFA members — including the North Powder FFA — and their advisers, volunteers and partnering stores and newspapers across Oregon have worked together to grow the impact of the initiative.

“Members organize a wide range of local events to collect cash and nonperishable food during the month-long drive,” said Shawn Dooley, CEO of the Oregon FFA, in a press release. “In the process they learn about food insecurity in their own communities and the importance of volunteering and philanthropy.”

According to Feeding America, 510,080 Oregonians are food insecure. That’s about one in every eight individuals.

The North Powder FFA chapter organized a food drive with the elementary school. Food donations were collected daily by FFA members, and the winning

elementary classes were awarded a party put on by FFA members with activities such as face painting, mummy wrap, apple cider pressing, cake walk and musical chairs. The food and money raised was presented to the local food bank in North Powder during the first week of November.

The efforts of North Powder FFA contributed to the #DriveAwayHunger initiative, raising more food and dollars to help those in need than any year prior. In total, 580,084 pounds of food were collected. That equals 435,171 meals to help those in need this holiday season.

In addition to local chapter efforts, community members were encouraged to drop food off at a local Les Schwab, Wilco or Grange Co-op stores, and collection bags were distributed by the Capital Press and EO Media.

The Oregon FFA is part of the National FFA Organization, formerly known as the Future Farmers of America, a national youth organization of 700,170 student members — all preparing for leadership and careers in the science, business and technology of agriculture.

Library programs, services for all ages

New services offered at Cook Memorial Library include collaboration with the OverDrive app. Patrons who sign up for OverDrive Advantage membership earn shorter waiting times for popular e-book and audiobook titles. Families also may sign up for Library Elf to corral multiple library cards in one place. Choose Cook Memorial Library from the list at www.libraryelf.com to combine library cards and receive renewal and hold notifications.

The Food for Fines drive continues until Dec. 27. Up to \$10 in late fees per card may be waived, one dollar for each non-perishable item. Unexpired, labeled items will be accepted. Ready-to-eat items are preferred.

Wi-Fi Hotspots are back. Available for a one-week checkout, Hotspots are small devices that connect patrons to the internet wherever Sprint 3G or 4G LTE is available.

Children’s programming in December includes LEGO Play on Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m. and Storytime on Fridays at 1:30 p.m. Baby Tot Bop, for those 3 years old and younger, is Thursday mornings at 10:15 a.m. Toddler Time is Mondays at 10:20 a.m. for ages 14 months to 4 years. Check out our GO-STEM kits, part of the “Greater Oregon Science, Technology, and Math” regional partnership with EOU. “Blocks Rock!” STEM kits are



OFF THE SHELF
ROSE PEACOCK

also now available.

Children up to 5 years can be signed up online or at the library for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Participants receive a free book in the mail each month through their fifth birthday. Ready2Learn library cards are also available for children age 5 and younger.

Teen Book Clubs, one for middle schoolers and one for high schoolers, will be held Dec. 5. The middle school club meets at 3:30 p.m. and the high school club at 4:30 p.m. Contact Celine for details. Writing Circle for teens begins at 4 p.m. Dec. 12. Decorate snowman cookies at the 4 p.m. iCraft on Dec. 20. All teen events are open to those in middle and high school.

For adults, Ballet Basics continues on Tuesdays from 12:10 p.m. to 1 p.m. This free drop-in class for beginners explores the fundamentals of ballet to build grace, strength and flexibility in a low-key environment.

Guided meditation sessions are held from 4:15-6 p.m. Wednesdays. Led by Kitia Chambers, these sessions explore a variety of meditation and relaxation techniques. No experience or registra-

tion is necessary. The final session of this round of classes is Dec. 18 and will continue in the spring.

The Foreign Film Friday screening begins at 4 p.m. Dec. 13. This month’s movie will be a German comedy, “Schultze Gets the Blues” in which a German musician’s life is transformed after he hears zydeco music on the radio and braves a trip to Louisiana. Foreign films may not be suitable for all audiences.

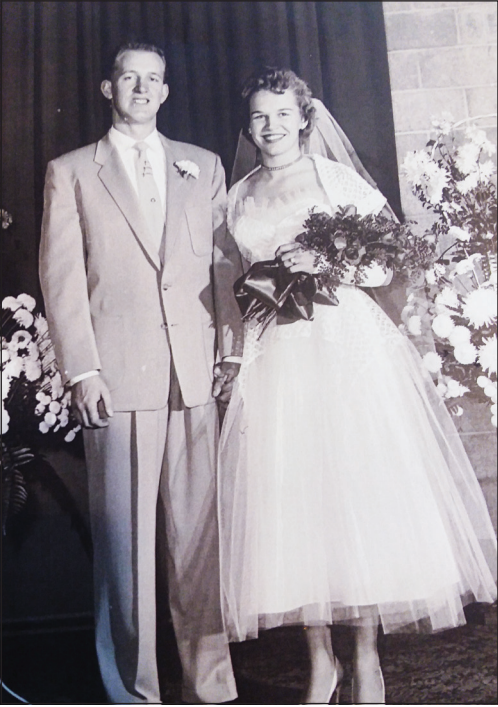
The Page Turners book club for adults will not meet in December. The next club gathering will be held at 1 p.m. Jan. 14 to discuss Alice Hoffman’s “The World That We Knew.” New members are welcome.

Library hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday, noon to 6 p.m. on Fridays, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays. During the holidays, the library will be closing at 3 p.m. on Dec. 24 and will be closed Dec. 25 and Jan. 1.

Visit us at 2006 Fourth St., La Grande. Call us at 541-962-1339. Find out more on our website at cookmemoriallibrary.org and our search “Cook Memorial Library-La Grande” to find us on Facebook.

Rose Peacock is a library technician at Cook Memorial Library.

David & Shirley Lester — 65th anniversary



David and Shirley Lester, of La Grande, will celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary Dec. 4. They were married in 1954 at the First Christian Church in La Grande. They have two children: Rebecca and Mike. David retired as a sergeant major from the National Guard, and Shirley worked many years at Wayne’s Market. There will not be a planned celebration, but cards, visits and phone calls are encouraged.

Courtesy photo

BIRTHS

GRANDE RONDE HOSPITAL

BARAJAS: To Autumn Daisy Barajas and Baudelio Barajas Romero, of North Powder, a son, Carlos Barajas, 8 pounds 14 ounces, Oct. 31 at 8:07 a.m. Grandmother is Juanita Hallett.

CLEMONS: To Cari Eckstein and Billy Clemons, of La Grande, a son, Abel Clemons, 6 pounds 14 ounces, Oct. 19 at 7:09 a.m.

HENRY: To Kara Johnson and Earl Henry Jr., of La Grande, a daughter, River Henry, 8 pounds, Nov. 6 at 8:07 a.m. Grandparents are Jody and Alyn Domschot, Erik and Nicole Johnson, Butch and Wanda Henry, and Becky Jones.

JOHNSON: To Khirenda Kai Johnson and Stanley James Johnson, of La Grande, a son, Khyren Jonah-Sean Johnson, 9 pounds 2 ounces, Nov. 6 at 3:39 p.m. Grandparents are Corey and Kenna Collins, Stan and Lisa Johnson, Jesse and Barbara Kennedy, Gordon Johnson, Sherry Shownwald, and Tom and Jeannie Collins.

LITTLE: To Renee Little and Curtis Little, of Elgin a daughter, Georgia Jo Marie Little, 8 pounds 1 ounce, Oct. 24 at 7:57 a.m. Grandparents are Tracy and Chris Christopher and Denise and Martine Mills.

McBRIDE: To Monica Thomas and Steven McBride, of La Grande, a son, Kashten McBride, 7 pounds 12 ounces, Nov. 6 at 9:11 p.m. Grandparents are James and Jodi Thomas and Don and Debbie McBride.

McILMOIL: To Tara McIlmoil and Stephen McIlmoil, a daughter, Isla

Annabeth McIlmoil, 7 pounds 3 ounces, Oct. 23 at 2:09 p.m.

NICE: To Mary Kate Nice and Zachary Lee Nice, of Island City, a daughter, Blaire Emelia Nice, 6 pounds 5 ounces, Oct. 24 at 7:09 p.m.

ROGERS: To Ana Maria Curtiss and Brian Eloy Rogers, of La Grande, a son, Javier Henry Rogers, 9 pounds 12 ounces, Oct. 25 at 2:46 p.m. Grandparents are Irma Rogers, Richard Rogers, Melvin Collier, Javier Cruz and Annette Curtiss.

WARREN: To Stephanie Marie Warren, of La Grande, a son, Asher Matthew Warren, 5 pounds 13 ounces, Oct. 21 at 12:30 a.m. Grandparents are Regena Warren and Chris Clark.

WILLIAMS: To Jenni Marie Williams and Jordan Keith Williams, of La Grande, a daughter, Allie Elizabeth Williams, 6 pounds 11 ounces, Nov. 4 at 5:25 p.m. Grandparents are Keith and Stephanie Williams and David and Judy Browning.

WALLOWA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

CLARK: To Emily Clark and Abe Clark, of Lostine, a son, Hudson Albion Clark, 9 pounds, Nov. 1 at 8:11 a.m.

MILLS: To Ashley Renae Dove and Kevin Aubrey Mills, of Enterprise, a daughter, Daphne Emerald Mills, 7 pounds 3 ounces, Oct. 28 at 1:23 a.m.

YATES: To Sara Yates and Jeremy Yates, of Wallowa, a daughter, Millie Rose Yates, 5 pounds 14.2 ounces, Oct. 30 at 7:37 p.m.

First snowfall



Sabrina Thompson/The Observer

La Grande’s first snowfall of November started Monday morning. The National Weather Service calls for a chance of snow most of the week.

'Tis the season ... to prevent impaired driving

November usually kicks off what most of us think of as the “Holiday Season.” From holiday parties to feasts with friends and family, now is the time to be thankful for your loved ones and good health, and to look toward a new year.

However, this time of year can be very difficult and bring up tragic memories for many families in the United States. Why? The season between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day is what the National Association of Drug Court Professionals describes as “one of the deadliest and most dangerous times on America’s roadways due to an increase in impaired driving.” Many of these crashes involve minors. This year alone, hundreds of parents will mourn the death of their kids due to impairment. In fact, car crashes are the No. 1 cause of death among minors, 60% of which involve drinking and driving.

Since 1981, every president of the United States has demonstrated the commitment to preventing impaired driving by proclaiming December as National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month (also known as 3D Month) or, more recently, National Impaired Driving Prevention Month.

While talking to your children about the risks of underage drinking and other drug use is important, one of the best ways to send a positive message to your kids (even if they are too young to have a discussion

about drinking and other substance use) is to remember that actions speak louder than words. Rarely does a holiday party not include adults drinking openly with their children watching nearby. Being a positive role model to your children and other children around you is one of the best gifts you can give.

Even if you consistently model responsible use of alcohol, you might consider having some family gatherings where alcohol isn’t present at all, because even if they are not considering drinking themselves, or are too young to really understand the risks involved, children can start to associate alcohol with family gatherings, parties and good times. Enjoy each other’s company by playing board games, watching movies or cooking together. Challenge yourself this season to leave the alcohol for the adult-only parties and avoid consuming alcohol in front of children.

The following list includes a few simple tips for celebrating and driving safety this holiday season:

Designate a non-drinking driver ahead of time.

If drinking alcohol at a party or other celebration, allow at least one hour between drinks. It takes one hour to get rid of one drink from your body (one drink is equal to a 12-ounce beer, 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5-ounce shot of liquor).

Set limits beforehand of the number of drinks to have and stick with it.

Eat food, and alternate drinking

alcoholic beverages with soda, juice or water.

Don’t mix alcohol with other drugs, including over-the-counter and prescription medications.

Don’t ride with someone who is impaired. Use other means of transportation such as a taxi, public transportation or a driver who is sober.

If you are hosting a party, here are some steps to take to help your guests drive safely:

Plan ahead and designate a sober driver.

Collect each guest’s keys upon arrival and store in a designated basket.

Serve foods along with alcohol-free beverages such as soda, juice or water.

If making an alcoholic punch, use fruit juice instead of a carbonated drink. Alcohol absorbs faster into the bloodstream when mixed with carbonated drinks.

Stop serving alcohol one to two hours before the party actually ends.

If you take a medication that makes you drowsy, do not drive. Have someone drive you.

Join the national movement and Union County Safe Communities Coalition in supporting National Impaired Driving Prevention Month: Plan for a sober ride home if you have been drinking, make sure your family and friends get home safe, and talk to your children about underage drinking and your expectations for them and their safety.

Billie Jo Deal is a member of the Union County Safe Communities Coalition.



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