

## COMMUNITY

## Meetings

• **UNION** — The Union School Board will meet Wednesday at 6 p.m. at the high school athletic complex. The board will vote on the hiring of a general contractor for work to be funded with bond money.

• **LA GRANDE** — The National Association of Retired Veterans Railway Employees meets Wednesday at 9 a.m., at Denny's in La Grande.

## Events

## Boosting immune system more important than ever

**LA GRANDE** — Nature's Pantry, 1907 Fourth St., La Grande, is hosting a free discussion Thursday on strengthening your natural defenses with naturopath John Winters. With the coronavirus in Oregon, the topic is more important than ever. The class includes immune booster juice. Registration is required. Stop by the store between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. or call 541-963-7955.

## ACE hosts free monthly journaling gathering

**LA GRANDE** — Art Center East, 1006 Penn Ave., La Grande, is offering Journal Journey, a free monthly gathering open to all on the second Thursday of each month. Facilitator Laura Hudson will offer prompts to guide and inspire you to stay awake to your life's most important moments, whether you write, draw or collage. Bring your own journaling materials. This month's gathering happens March 12.

## Bingo Night benefits Alzheimer's awareness

**LA GRANDE** — Back by popular demand, Grande Ronde Retirement Residence invites the community to a fundraising night of bingo Friday. The evening will include cash prizes and begins at 6 p.m. at 1809 Gekeler Lane, La Grande. Cost is \$10 per person per set of cards (10 games). Call 541-963-4700 to reserve your spot.

## RSVP for next Cove senior meal

**COVE** — The next senior meal in Cove will be March 17 in Founder's Hall at the Ascension Camp and Conference Center, 1104 Church St. Coffee and tea are available at noon, and the lunch follows at 12:15 p.m. There is a \$5 charge per meal. RSVP by calling Imie Bristow at 541-568-4545 or Betsy Anson at 541-568-4902 by March 11.

## UPCOMING FUNERALS AND VISITATIONS

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## March 14 Deborah Rudd:

11 a.m. memorial service, Island City Faith Center.

## Patricia Tusten:

2 p.m. funeral, La Grande Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Stake Center.

**Robert Wolfe:** 3-5 p.m. celebration of life with potluck taco bar, La Grande Mavericks clubhouse.

## NEWS BRIEFS

## State funds La Grande housing project

**LA GRANDE** — Oregon Housing and Community Services announced the state awarded funding to 10 housing developments, including the Veterans Village Union County housing project in La Grande.

The project will receive almost \$1.5 million according to the news release from Oregon Housing and Community Services.

Veterans Village will be a fully accessible tiny homes neighborhood with 10 cottages, a community space, a dog park and shared green space at 1612 Russell Ave. Veterans Village developer Gust Tsiatsos in the news release stated the project "will provide safe and permanent housing for those who have sacrificed for our freedom."

The total funding for the 10 developments statewide is just shy of \$16 million to build 435 affordable rental homes.

Funding in these developments include state and federal resources, a combination of Low Income Housing Tax Credits, General Housing Account Program, Oregon Affordable Housing Tax Credits and Oregon Multifamily Energy Program funds.

## Highway 204 to close this week

**ELGIN** — The Oregon Department of Transportation plans to close much of Highway 204 from 6 p.m. Thursday through 6 a.m. Friday to allow for a culvert repair.

The closure will run from milepost 37, about 4 miles northwest of Elgin, to Weston, a distance of about 35 miles. Highway 204 also is known as the Tollgate Highway.

Additional information is available at Tripcheck.com.

## PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

## SATURDAY

La Grande police at 12:17 p.m. received a report of a possible cougar sighting

La Grande police at 3:07 p.m. received a request to check on a person at Spruce Street and Monroe Avenue. An officer found a person was taking a nap.

La Grande police at about 5:35 p.m. responded to Albany Street and Island Avenue to deal with an intoxicated male. Officers resolved the situation.

A caller at 7:55 p.m. reported seeing smoke in the area of the 500 block of 20th Street. Police checked it out and did not see any flames.

La Grande police at 11:14 p.m. received a complaint about a loud party on the 2100 block of Third Street. An officer checked out the scene and did not find any loud party.

A caller at 11:35 p.m. reported a possible leak behind a commercial building on the 64900 block of Highway 203, Union. A Union County sheriff's deputy responded and reported "situation resolved."

## SUNDAY

La Grande police at about 1:55 p.m. responded to a traffic crash without injuries on the 2300 block of Q Avenue.

A caller at 2:25 p.m. reported a sign obstructed the line of sight on the corner of Walnut Street and N Avenue, La Grande. An officer checked it out, and the homeowner agreed to move the sign. La Grande police at 3:19 p.m. responded to the 2400 block of O Avenue for a sheriff's election sign blocking the line of sight, but an officer was not able to contact anyone about the problem sign.

La Grande police at 6:47 p.m. received a report of people riding an all-terrain vehicle in the area of the 200th block of 16th Street. Police stopped the ATV, gave one warning and took a report for the recovery of stolen property.

The Union County Sheriff's Office arrested Craig William Dooley, 47, of Elgin, for violating probation and for first-degree assault.

And La Grande firefighters responded to 5 calls Sunday, 3 calls Saturday and 8 calls Friday.

## OBITUARIES

## Justin Chocholak

Formerly of Cove  
1980-2020

Justin Chocholak, 39, formerly of Cove, died Feb. 22 at his home in Portland.



A celebration of his life will be held March 21 from 2-4 p.m. at the Cove Sportsman

Club.

Justin was born April 16, 1980, in Cove, to Michael and Kathy. He grew up loving his skateboard and climbing trees with his siblings. After graduating Justin moved to Eugene and finally to Portland, where he found his forever home, with Kelly Koopman and their cats, Frankie and Ru.

Justin was a kind and gentle soul and had a twinkle in his eye. He had the best sense of humor and could always make you smile. Justin was a loyal friend who loved with his whole heart. He had a passion for collecting and shared a love of James Bond with his siblings.

Survivors include his partner, Kelly Koopman of Portland; parents, Kathy Tibbs and Michael Chocholak and Misha Nogha; brothers, Aaron Chocholak and wife, Elena, and Brandon Hall; sisters, Adrienne Chocholak and Shannon Tibbs; nephews, Jaxon and Maximus; nieces, Elly, Misha, Dasha and Hazel; grandma, Lavon Hall; and many aunts, uncles and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his big brother, Thane Chocholak.

## Beverly Kirkwood

La Grande

Beverly Kirkwood, 91, of La Grande, died March 8 at her home. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory will be handling the arrangements.

## Roxanne L. Clark

Wallowa  
1961-2020

Roxanne Lorraine Clark, 58, of Wallowa, died Feb. 22. A celebration of her life will



be held March 14 at 3 p.m. at the Wallowa Community Center.

Roxanne was born Sept. 18, 1961, in Astoria, to William "Bill" and Julie Clark. She resided in Astoria and in Genesee, Idaho, until settling in Wallowa, where she raised her children, Sarah and Tyson.

Roxanne attended school in both Genesee and Wallowa. Her education paved the way for her to become a caregiver at Pioneer Guest Home in Enterprise.

Roxanne loved being outside, soaking up the sun rays of Wallowa County. She enjoyed planting and maintaining her small garden and flower bed. She had an expansive love for all animals and would have fostered a million animals if she had the chance.

Hoots and hollers could be heard if Roxanne's football team happened to be playing. She loved listening to, singing, and dancing along to music of all genres, letting the beats and rhythm move her.

Surviving relatives include her son, Tyson Clark of Wallowa and Seattle; daughter and son-in-law, Sarah and Zane Francke of Wallowa; five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren; and niece and nephew, Drew

## LHS gets new principal

By Dick Mason

The Observer

**LA GRANDE** — Eric Freeman, dean of students at Fremont Middle School in Roseburg, is set to become La Grande High School's next assistant principal.

La Grande School District Superintendent George Mendoza recommended Freeman for the position. The La Grande School Board will vote on Freeman's hiring when it meets Wednesday starting at 7 p.m. in the conference room at Willow School.

Merle Comfort, chair of the La Grande School Board, said the hiring of Freeman will be a formality for the school board.

"Theoretically, he is already hired," Comfort said.

Freeman will succeed Brett Smith at La Grande High. Smith, who is completing his second year as the school's assistant principal, became the next principal of Island City Elementary School. He will start his new job July 1, succeeding John Tolan, who is retiring after serving as Island City's principal for close to two decades.

Freeman taught sixth and seventh grade math and science at Fremont Middle School for 14 years before taking his position as the school's dean of students and an instructional coach in 2017. The transition was a smooth one for Freeman. He said he has enjoyed the op-

portunity the job has given him to work with so many more students and parents

La Grande High principal Brett Baxter said he is confident that Freeman will be a good fit.

"Mr. Freeman will make a great addition to La Grande High School. His focus on building relationships with students and staff as well as his personal commitment to education makes him an outstanding hire for the District," Baxter said in a news release.

Freeman grew up in Montana and is a graduate of Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, and the University of Portland, where he has a masters degree.

Freeman in the Roseburg School District also coached boys high school basketball for eight years. He has been a head junior varsity coach and an assistant varsity high school coach.

The educator is a fitness advocate and enjoys many outdoor activities.

Freeman said he was compelled to apply for LHS opening in part because he is impressed with the La Grande support of education. He said this was most evidence when its voters approved a \$31.5 million bond for capital construction and maintenance in 2014.

"The community is very committed to its schools," Freeman said.

and Michelle Clark.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Julie Clark; father, Bill Clark; and brother, Douglas Clark.

## Lois Henderson

La Grande

Lois Henderson, 92, of La Grande, died March 7 at home. A graveside service will be held March 13 at 1 p.m. at the Summerville Cemetery. A reception will immediately follow the

service at the Imbler Christian Church. Arrangements are under the direction of Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Halfway.

## Alva 'Wayne' Stephens

Cove

Alva "Wayne" Stephens, 80, of Cove, died March 7 at Grande Ronde Hospital. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory will be handling the arrangements.

## James Travis

December 30, 1938 - February 25, 2020



James Travis was born in Salem, Oregon to Guy and Marie Travis on December 30, 1938. He attended school and college in the Willamette Valley. In 1963-1964 Jim was the youngest Exalted Ruler of the Independence BPOE. In 1970 Jim moved his young family to Valsetz, Oregon to become the Superintendent of the mill for Boise Cascade. He went on to work for Boise Cascade for almost 45 years. He loved the community of Valsetz and always had wonderful memories of the now "ghost" town that was home. In 1978, Jim took the opportunity to become the Plywood Plant Manager in Elgin. Jim loved supporting the local sports programs and the Elgin Stampede. He was honored as the Grand Marshall of the Elgin Stampede in 2018. During his years in Elgin, he loved watching his kids play sports and refereeing. In 2000, Jim left the County for Brazil, where he built a plywood mill from the plans up. It was great fun for Jim, as he loved to travel. After leaving Brazil, Jim retired to LaGrande, Oregon to be close to his son Kirk and his family. He loved watching his grandchildren Emma and Brett play sports. He was definitely their biggest fan!! Most recently, he moved to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, to be close to his daughter Tanya's family. He died peacefully at home on February 25th, with his daughter holding his hand.

Jim is predeceased by his Father, Guy Eldred Travis, his Mother, Marie Emma Travis, his brother John Travis, (Beth Amen) and his grandson, Kody Beardsley.

Jim is survived by his children Kirk Travis, (Deana) Mark Travis, (Cheri), Tanya Jensen, (Preben) and Laisa Olivieria. Also, his very good friend Marcia Olivieria. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Kyle Fancher, Brett Travis and Emma Travis.

Jim will be missed by all who knew him.

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