

## COMMUNITY

## Briefs

**Work begins Monday to improve North Powder Pond access road**

LA GRANDE — A grant from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Restoration and Enhancement program will provide funds to repair the access road to North Powder Pond.

ODFW in a news release announced the work will be last approximately from Monday through March 30.

The pond is a popular fishing location off of Highway 30 southwest of North Powder. But during the project, vehicle access to the pond will not be possible.

"Due to irrigation water that collects along the access road, a fairly deep depression has developed in the road that fills with water making access difficult in the spring to all but high-clearance vehicles," according to the department. "The grant funding will allow ODFW crews to repair the depression by rebuilding the road prism with various sizes of rock material."

Fish and Wildlife suggested anglers wishing to get out and do some early spring fishing should visit other ponds in the area, including Highway 203 Pond and Haines Pond.

Aside from weather related delays, the road work should wrap up in time for the stocking of rainbow trout mid-April.

**Northeast Oregon forests seek members for committee**

PENDLETON — The Northeast Oregon Forests Resource Advisory Committee is seeking nominees for new members to serve on the Secure Rural Schools Resource Act Advisory Committee

The committee has the task of recommending projects to improve forest health, watersheds, roads and facilities around Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests.

The projects vary in scope, ranging from fish passage restoration to constructing new trails. Projects have also reply on youth crews, which provide young people with unique opportunities to develop a love of the outdoors while gaining valuable hands-on work experience.

The federal Secretary of Agriculture officially appoints resource advisory committee members for a term of two years. Although members are volunteers and do not receive compensation for their work, they can receive reimbursements for travel expenses to, during and from meetings.

To ensure the group can accomplish its goals, members are expected to participate in two full-day meetings each year. The Northeast Oregon Forests Resource Advisory Committee also particularly encouraged residents of Baker, Crook, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Union, Wallowa, and Wheeler counties to submit applications although others may apply.

The U.S. Forest service will accept nominations until Sept. 30. More information about the committee and applications instructions are available at the SRS RAC website, [www.fs.usda.gov/main/pts/specialprojects/racs](http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/pts/specialprojects/racs).

**Murder trial reset for November**

LA GRANDE — The trial for Ronald Dwight Lee has been moved to November 2020 following a case management hearing March 9. Lee suffered a stroke in February and has been in the hospital recovering. The new twelve-person jury trial begins Nov. 2 and is allotted one month to take place.

Lee is on trial for the murder of his soon-to-be ex-wife Loretta Williams in November 2018.

— Observer staff

**Mary 'Marie' (Sisco) Payne**

1924-2020

Mary "Marie" Payne, 95, of La Grande, died March 7 at a local care facility. A



celebration of her life will be held March 18 at 2 p.m. at Daniels-Knopp Funeral Cremation & Life

Celebration Center.

Known as Marie, she was born Sept. 1, 1924, in Millersville, Tennessee, to James and Emma (Smith) Sisco. She married Buner Odis Ellis, and they had three children before his death in 1951: Odis, Bennie and Roselle. Marie lived in Nashville before moving her family to La Grande, where she married Norman Payne in 1952. They had one son, Otto.

Marie was very proud of receiving her GED at the age of 40. She worked for many years as a cook for Willow School and as the dietician for the La Grande School District. It was her mission to be sure no child went home hungry.

Maire and Norman enjoyed square dancing with the Star Promenaders. She also enjoyed cooking and caring for her family.

Surviving relatives include her husband, Norman of La Grande; children, Odis Ellis of

Woodburn, Bennie Ellis of La Grande and Rose Morton of Hartsville, Tennessee; sister, Jane Lassiter of Pleasantville, Tennessee; seven grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

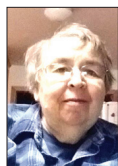
She was preceded in death by her first husband; parents; son, Otto Payne in 1999; and nine siblings.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Union County Friday Backpack Program, P.O. Box 537, La Grande 97850.

**Beverly J. (Pointer) DeLashmutt**

1948-2020

Beverly Jean DeLashmutt, 72, of La Grande, died March 11 at a local care facility. Services will be announced later.



Beverly was born Jan. 14, 1948, to Robert and Wanda (Sanderson) Pointer. She grew up with her brothers on a small farm in Summerville. Beverly graduated from La Grande High School in 1966. In December 1967, she married Dan DeLashmutt in Winnemucca, Nevada, and they raised two daughters together in La Grande.

Beverly was very close to her mom. She loved

baking, playing card games and camping with the family. Beverly was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Her hobbies included sewing, cooking and gardening.

Surviving relatives include her husband, Dan DeLashmutt of La Grande; daughters, Jennifer DeLashmutt of La Grande and Brenda Allen of Alaska; brother, Chuck Anderson of Elgin; and three grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a grandson and two brothers, Melvin Pointer and Adrian Pointer.

**Sherlyn L. Arnoldus-Harter**

Sherlyn L. Arnoldus-Harter, 67, of Union, died March 11 at a care facility in Vale. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory will be handling the arrangements.

**Georgia R. Shank**

Georgia R. Shank, 79, of La Grande, died March 12 at Grande Ronde Hospital. Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory will be handling the arrangements.

**Justin Chocholak**

The March 21 celebration of life for Justin Chocholak, 39, formerly of Cove, has been postponed in an effort to curb the spread of the coronavirus. The family will announce a rescheduled date at a later time.

**UPCOMING FUNERALS AND VISITATIONS**

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**March 13 BEVERLY KIRKWOOD:**

11 a.m. graveside service, Hillcrest Cemetery, La Grande.

**LOIS HENDERSON:**

1 p.m. graveside service, Summerville Cemetery; reception immediately follows at Imbler Christian Church.

**March 14****ALVA "RED" STEPHENS:**

10 a.m. celebration of life, La Grande Nazarene Church.

**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.

**ROXANNE CLARK:**

3 p.m. celebration of

life, Wallowa Community Center.

**ROBERT WOLFE:**

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

**March 18****MARIE PAYNE:**

2 p.m. celebration of life, Daniels-Knopp Funeral Cremation & Life Celebration Center, La Grande.

**March 23****DONNA DICKENSON:**

10 a.m. memorial service, Lostine Presbyterian Church; followed by lunch at Enterprise VFW Hall.

**April 3****LOREN FIHN:**

5 p.m. burial of remains, Island City Cemetery; followed by reception dinner.

**April 18****LINDA JOHNSTON:**

1 p.m. celebration of life potluck, Elgin Community Center.

**June 4****ANDI BENSON:**

11 a.m. celebration of life and potluck, Riverside Park, La Grande.

# Local student wins \$40,000 scholarship

By Sabrina Thompson

The Observer

LA GRANDE — La Grande High School senior Lara Insko received the Oregon State University Presidential Scholarship on Thursday afternoon. She was one of 124 Oregon residents to receive \$40,000 for their college education.

"It was a complete surprise," Insko said. "It feels amazing to have my hard work recognized, and to have those who helped me get this here to support me."

Insko found out about the award at a surprise meeting in the the high school's library. Insko's mother and father, Emily and Tom Insko, and several school faculty members were present when Colleen Conniff, OSU director of scholarships, presented the award.

More than 700 Oregon students meet the basic qualifications for the scholarship, which include having at least a 3.85 unweighted GPA and at least 1360 on the SAT. Additional considerations are given to those with rig-



Staff photo by Sabrina Thompson  
**Lara Insko, left, with her mother and father, Emily and Tom, found out Thursday afternoon at La Grande High School that she won a \$40,000 Oregon State University Presidential Scholarship. Colleen Conniff, OSU scholarships director, presents Insko with a box of Oregon State gear and told her about the award.**

orous academic coursework and answers to six short-answer questions on their college application.

"We want to see stu-

dents who are doing well in school and like challenging themselves," Conniff said.

Lara Insko said she challenges herself by taking AP

classes and being involved in multiple extracurricular activities, including Future Business Leaders of America and sports, and by

relying on a good support system.

"I surrounded myself with driven people, passionate people," she said. "School has always been my strong suit, so that is what I have been the most focused on."

Insko said she plans to study kinesiology or human physiology in college. Oregon State in Corvallis is among the top schools she is considering, and the scholarship will definitely be a factor in her decision. Insko's sister, Malia, is a student at the university.

"I've always seen myself as college-bound," Insko said. "This scholarship just makes things a little bit easier."

Conniff explained OSU awards this scholarship to create a culture of academic achievement and involvement.

"For many this scholarship means the student may not have to work while in school," Conniff said. "They can focus on studies and getting involved in the campus community."

## PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

**WEDNESDAY**

A Union caller at 8:56 a.m. asked law enforcement to check on the welfare of a neighbor. A Union County sheriff's deputy did and determined the person was OK.

The Union County sheriff's deputy at 11:27 a.m. responded to a complaint about a domestic disturbance on the 200 block of North 10th Avenue, Elgin. The deputy handled the situation and separated the parties.

La Grande police and medic at about 12:20 p.m. responded to a vehicle crash on the 1500 block of Albany Street.

A caller at 12:58 p.m. reported vandalism to a vehicle on the 800 block of Crook Avenue, La Grande. An officer responded and

took a report.

The Union County Sheriff's Office at 9:34 p.m. received a report of a possible arson fire in Elgin.

**THURSDAY**

A caller at 6:42 a.m. complained about two large dogs running in the area of Adams Avenue and Depot Street, La Grande. The animal enforcement officer responded and found the owner had the dogs.

The Union County Sheriff's Office at 9:38 a.m. received a report of a burglary on the 10200 block of South McAlister Road, Island City.

A caller at 9:58 a.m. asked to speak to an officer about stray cats on the 2000 block of Y Avenue, La Grande.

Law enforcement offi-

cers shortly after 2 p.m. responded to a harassment report at 15th Street and Gekeler Lane, La Grande, that resulted in a citation.

A La Grande caller at 2:48 p.m. on the 1200 block of Monroe Avenue reported an assault.

Oregon State Police arrested Richard Eugene Choppe, 34, of Springfield, Missouri, for reckless driving and driving under the influence of intoxicants.

A caller at 7:56 p.m. reported seeing a stolen vehicle at N Avenue and Fourth Street, La Grande. Police recovered the vehicle for Umatilla County.

La Grande police at about 9:10 p.m. responded to the 200 block of Depot Street for a possible fight. No one was there when police arrived.

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