

COMMUNITY

Meetings

• UNION — The Union School Board will convene Wednesday, May 13, at 6 p.m. for its monthly meeting. For information on the location of the meeting call the Union School District at 541-562-6115.

• UNION — The Union Rural Fire Protection District is having a budget committee meeting Tuesday, May 19, at 7 pm at the fire hall. For more information, contact Kim George, Union RFPD clerk, at 541-910-3114.

Briefs

Meals on Wheels drivers needed

LA GRANDE — Community Connection is in urgent need of volunteers to be Meals on Wheels drivers. For more information, call Sydney Gleeson at 541-963-7532, ext. 1104, or stop by 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande.

Attention: mushroomers

NORTHEAST OREGON — To help slow the spread of COVID-19, Forest supervisors on the Malheur, Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests have postponed the issuance of commercial mushroom permits until 2021. According to a press release from the Forest Service, many commercial operations involve large crews that travel and camp together, which presents a social distancing challenge during the pandemic.

Personal-use mushroom picking is free and does not require a permit or payment under the legal limits, which authorizes an individual to harvest, possess or transport less than 1 gallon in Oregon and less 5 five gallons in Washington. These free mushrooms are available only for personal consumption and cannot be sold, bartered or given away. Those seeking to pick more than the personal-use limits are considered commercial gatherers. While many forest roads, trails and areas remain open to the public, national forest officials urge visitors to practice social distancing. Mushroom picking is not permitted in any botanical area, research area or in other areas closed by the Forest Service, including developed recreation sites. It is the responsibility of the picker to properly identify a mushroom and determine whether it is edible. Contact your local ranger district office for up-to-date information on road conditions and current closures.

Bernadine 'Bernie' (Sharp) Curry

Cove • 1930-2020

Bernadine "Bernie" Curry, 90, of Cove, died May 2 at her residence. At her request, there will not be a service.



Known as Bernie, she was born April 27, 1930, in Logan, Utah, to Clark and Ruby (Fulp) Sharp.

She resided in Haines, La Grande and Cove. She attended Cove grade schools and graduated from La Grande High School.

Bernie married Tom Dunbar in April 1948, and they were married until his passing in June 1972. She then married Gene Curry in May 1976, and they were married for 37 years until his passing.

Bernie was employed with General Telephone Company. She enjoyed sewing, knitting, crocheting, painting and traveling.

Surviving relatives include her children and their spouses, Jeanne and Mike Stitzel of Cove, Wes and Maureen Dunbar of Union, and Cindy Shanks

OBITUARIES

of La Grande; seven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Gene Curry; first husband, Tom Dunbar; daughter, Gail Hart; and parents, Clark and Ruby Sharp.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneral-chapel.com.

Victor Abbott

Summerville

Victor Abbott, 83, of Summerville, died May 8. Arrangements are by Dan-

iels-Knopp Funeral, Cremation & Life Celebration Center.

Glennis J. Phillips

Union

Glennis Jean Phillips, 71, of Union, died May 8 at Grande Ronde Hospital. Arrangements are by Daniels-Knopp Funeral, Cremation & Life Celebration Center.

Alfred E. Johnson

La Grande

Alfred E. Johnson, 105, of La Grande, died May 8 at his home. Arrangements are by Daniels-Knopp Funeral,

Upcoming local services are pending due to efforts to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Cremation & Life Celebration Center.

Procession celebrates the life of Doug Trice



Staff photo by Dick Mason

Locals pay their respects Sunday afternoon in a vehicle procession to Kiley Trice and her three children at their home in La Grande. Kiley Trice is the daughter of Doug Trice, an award-winning Special Olympics coach and a hall of fame athlete who died last week of natural causes at the age of 68. Around 40 vehicles traveled by Kiley Trice's home to celebrate the life of her father and beloved La Grande volunteer.

JOBLESS

Continued from Page 1A

bringing the seven-week total to 644. That means nearly half of the 1,310 people employed in the industry have been laid off in the last two months.

Accommodation and food services saw another 28 layoffs last week and 52 in the last two, bringing that industry's total to 307. Health care and social assistance had 35 more claims in the last two weeks and saw 20 of those in the last week, bringing it to 189.

The three industries combine to account for 70% of the county's layoffs in the last seven weeks. Retail trade has seen 151 claims filed, and construction layoffs have put 90 people on the unemployment roll.

Baker and Umatilla counties both saw increases of about 26% in new claims over the last two weeks. Baker County added 139 claims to move its seven-week total to 674, while Umatilla County is up 736 to 3,503.

Wallowa County is up nearly 29% to 254, an

increase of 57 claims the last two weeks.

Statewide, there were about 19,600 first-time in the last claims to bring the total since March 15 to almost 382,000. The weekly total is down from nearly 100,000 during the second week of the pandemic-related closures. About 83%, or 312,710, of the claims had been processed through Thursday.

Nationwide there were an additional 3.2 million claims, which raises the number of jobs lost due to coronavirus-related mandates to about 33 million.

THURSDAY

11:04 p.m. — La Grande police arrested Tiera Catherine Prince, 27, of La Grande, for possession or methamphetamine, possession of heroin, delivery of heroin, delivery of meth within 1,000 feet of a school, all felonies, and for giving false information to police, violating probation and on a warrant.

FRIDAY

10:36 a.m. — A caller reported a cow in the road on Highway 82 at Elgin. The animal enforcement officer contacted the owner of the livestock to retrieve the cow.

2:07 p.m. — The La Grande Fire Department responded to a report of a fire on the 1400 block of Cherry Street.

2:16 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office received a report of animal abuse or neglect on the 800 block of West Arch Street, Union.

3:58 p.m. — A La Grande resident reported being the victim of identity theft. Police took a report.

4:24 p.m. — La Grande police and fire responded to a vehicle crash with injuries on the 2500 block of Adams Avenue.

5:01 p.m. — A Cove resident complained about telephonic harassment. A Union County sheriff's deputy responded and issued a warning for the harassment.

8:16 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 2300 block of Q Avenue for juveniles causing a disturbance.

SATURDAY

12:15 a.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1700 block of Y Avenue for com-

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

plaints about a loud party. An officer told the subjects to keep down the noise.

7:36 a.m. — An Elgin caller reported a person as missing. A Union County sheriff's deputy made contact, and the missing person returned home.

2:49 p.m. — A Union County sheriff's deputy responded to a report of a vehicle in a ditch at Myers and Summerville roads, Summerville. The deputy arrived and found people working on removing the vehicle.

9:52 p.m. — A caller complained about noise at East Chestnut and North Main streets, Union.

SUNDAY

10:16 a.m. — La Grande police received a request to check on the welfare of a resident. Officers responded, the person reported being OK and had someone with them.

2:03 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 2700 block of Cove Avenue on a report of a domestic disturbance. Officers determined the situation did not rise to the level of a crime.

4:20 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office received a report from Union about a sex crime.

8:26 p.m. — A Union resident reported fireworks in the area of the 800 block of North Second Street. A Union County sheriff's deputy checked the area but found no one setting off fireworks.

11:55 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1200 block of Hall Street for a group of disorderly juveniles. Officers gave the group a verbal warning.

Opinion: Marijuana use is linked to abnormal brain development

Around the country, marijuana use is becoming a norm, and in our community it is controversial.

From mid-2018 to early 2019, I collected surveys from



MARCE MARTIN UCSCC

Union County adults to get a view of adult perception of youth marijuana use. Do adults perceive it to be harmful to youth? The surveys collected were from community events such as the Union County Fair, Celebrate La Grande and school open houses. The local medical dispensary and Desires LLC, which is a supporter of the Union County Safe Communities Coalition "Lock it Up" campaign, also participated by hosting the survey in their businesses.

The survey asked demographic questions to ensure that respondents were all adults and lived in Union County. Some central questions included if they perceived marijuana to have a physical risk of harm and psychological risk of harm to youth. Fifty-seven percent viewed it to have a significant risk of harm. Of all 395 respondents, 18.5% reported having marijuana in their homes, and 62.5% of those respondents who have marijuana in the home said that they lock it up

or secure it. About half of respondents who answered yes to having marijuana in the home also reported to

have no children living in the home. One limitation that I felt the

survey had is distinguishing use of THC from CBD, the two major chemical compounds of hundreds that are found in cannabis. The respondents of the survey also echoed this concern in the open statements at the end of the survey.

Cannabidiol, or CBD, is non-intoxicating, and its medicinal purposes have been studied. The Food and Drug Administration recently approved a CBD prescription for major epilepsy disorders. The other main compound found in cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol — THC — is intoxicating and has psychoactive effects on perception, cognition, and behavior. THC binds to the neuron receptors that natural endocannabinoids use. Blocking these receptors can interrupt the brain's ability to grow new neural connections, and the risks are highest in developing brains. These interruptions affect communication, learning and emotions in the brain, which potentially can lead to long-term impairments into adulthood.

The younger a person is the higher the risks.

Brain development continues into the mid 20s. The brain cells, known as neurons, are shedding what they do not need and reshaping at an enormous rate in adolescence. The prefrontal cortex that sits behind the forehead is experiencing the most growth during this time. It is responsible for planning, decision-making, social behavior, and all the higher-executive functioning like deciding to do the right thing when our emotions are telling us it is hard. The pre-

frontal cortex is the section of the brain that separates humans from animals. It is critical for adults to understand that THC can interrupt these processes and be informed about these risks.

While THC potency has risen, another significant risk is marijuana-induced psychosis. Marijuana, unlike other drugs, takes many different pathways in the brain instead of a direct route. THC can cause hallucinations and paranoid delusions that will subside after a person stops using it, but in some rare cases, it does

not. These effects vary and are person-specific based on the chemistry, genetics and life experiences. Individuals with a family history of mental illnesses are at the highest risk. If a teen uses marijuana to cope with stressors it should be understood that risks for psychosis are higher if they struggle mentally or emotionally. Any substance used to handle life stressors disassociates a person from problems when the real need is treatment and healing. Practicing healthy behaviors as an adolescent is essential

for overall personal growth.

Does it matter what communities reinforce by the policies they adopts Marijuana risks are highest for youth. The question I have for our community is do we want to continue to normalize cannabis use? Or should we take an informed stand?

About the author
Marce Martin is a Union County Safe Communities Coalition assistant and a senior at Eastern Oregon University studying sciences of health and wellness and psychology.

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