



In Home & Living

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THE OBSERVER

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TUESDAY • June 9, 2020 • \$1.50 Good day to our valued subscriber Patricia Cowgill of La Grande

Eastern's preliminary budget cuts \$1.5 million

■ Tuition and fees increase in wake of COVID-19 recovery

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer
LA GRANDE — Eastern Oregon University anticipates cutting \$1.5 million in fiscal year

2020-21 from its education and general budget to offset coming cuts to state funding. And students are going to pay a little more to attend the La Grande-based college.

The university's board of trustees met June 4 via Zoom to approve a preliminary budget for the upcoming school year, according to a university press release. Along with

the hefty cut, the board approved increases to tuition and enrollment fees.

Lara Moore, vice president for finance and administration, presented two tuition and fee proposals for 2020-21, according to the press release, and after extended discussion, the board selected the lower increases.

Under the plan,

on-campus resident tuition will increase by 4.2% per student credit hour, a difference of \$7 per credit, the press release stated. Mandatory enrollment fees for on-campus resident students will go up by 5.5%, and overall cost of attendance, which is based on a student taking 45 credits and living on campus with a medium meal plan, increases by 3.8%.

EOU's tuition and fees have been steadily increasing in recent years, with the 2019-2020 fiscal year seeing a 4.9% increase in on-campus tuition. Students paid approximately \$22,664 to attend EOU as a local full-time student during the 2018-2019 school year. According to the EOU

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"We're using every lever in our toolbox to soften the impact of COVID-19."

Lara Moore, vice president for finance and administration at EOU



Staff photo by Ronald Bond

North Powder Charter School seniors ride on a police and fire crew-escorted flatbed trailer Saturday through the streets of North Powder in a parade after receiving their diplomas at the high school.

Distance and a diploma at UHS

■ Union High seniors get to walk the stage — one family at a time

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer

UNION — Seniors from Union High School's class of 2020 walked across the stage Saturday morning to receive their diplomas in a socially distanced ceremony, followed by a video presentation at the La Grande Drive-in later that night. EO AliveTV put together footage from the ceremony and pre-recorded speeches to play for the seniors and their supporters.

"We all get to get together and watch it at the drive-in, and it is something we will all have for the rest of our lives," graduate Ashlyn Baxter said about her favorite part of the celebration.

Saturday morning, 33 of 34 graduates strolled through a set of doors to the gymnasium. Family members and supporters entered through the doors on the opposite side of the gym to watch their graduates cross the stage. Once a graduate made it across and back to their family, the group left the gym and the next student and group came in. Carter Wells, the district's superintendent and the high school principal, said this allowed for proper social distancing.

"These seniors have been denied so many things because of COVID — their spring quarter, their senior year," Wells

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Seniors remember the good

■ North Powder graduation focuses on positives during students' school years

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

NORTH POWDER — North Powder Superintendent Lance Dixon had a simple message during the charter school's graduation commencement speech Saturday as it related to the class of 2020 and the last three months of their high school careers: Remember the good.

"Being remembered for bad reasons dissipates the memory over time, but the good reasons stay with people forever," he said in a recorded commencement speech shown Friday night at La Grande Drive-in. "Tonight I want to focus on the good, and by good I mean the things you as a class have taught us and are remembered for."

The commencement, among the unique celebrations this spring, is not

likely to be forgotten. The two-day event included the video speeches and a slideshow at the drive-in Friday night, then Saturday the seniors received their diplomas before a parade weaving through the streets of the town.

While the coronavirus pandemic that brought the end to the school year for Oregon students in mid-March was touched on, each participant giving commencement speeches instead looked back at the positive accomplishments of the 16 seniors in the class of 2020, and in some instances, what the instructors themselves learned from the students.

"A teacher never stops learning, and you, class of 2020, were some of my best teachers," said elementary school teacher Dana Marlia, who was a fifth-



Staff photo by Ronald Bond

North Powder valedictorian Michelle Williams, one of 16 graduating seniors from the charter school, receives her diploma Saturday from school board President Tyson Orr in the high school gym while Superintendent Lance Dixon (center) looks on.

grade teacher for those in the 2020 group. "Many of the teaching principles I stand by today are because of you, my teachers, seven years ago... It is your turn now to go out into the

world and continue to be the teachers you are destined to be."

Salutatorian Roper Bingham carried this theme in his speech, noting he learned a valuable life

lesson from his 15 classmates before listing off some of what each had taught him: from having the boldness to speak up

See, **Positives**/Page 5A

Protest draws a crowd in Enterprise

■ About 200 turn out for Black Lives Matter event

By Ellen Morris Bishop
EO Media Group

ENTERPRISE — Neither rain nor hail nor lightning bolts nor thunder claps deterred around 200 people of all ages from joining in the nationwide

Black Lives Matter protests Friday evening at the Wallowa County Courthouse grounds.

The peaceful protest began at 6 p.m. Protesters were undeterred when, at 7 p.m., threatening black clouds pelted the protesters with half-inch hail followed by a hard rain. Many of the demonstrators remained until after 8 p.m.

"About 98% of the

people were from Wallowa County," said protest organizer Gianna Espinoza, who lives in Enterprise. "There were a couple of tourists who stopped by and joined us, plus two people from La Grande and probably some summer residents, but it was pretty much all locals."

Along with Espinoza,

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Photo by Hannah Comstock/for EO Media Group

A hailstorm Friday afternoon does not deter Black Lives Matter protesters in Enterprise, though some convert their signs into head protection gear.

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

	Tonight 46 LOW Partly cloudy		Wednesday 74/50 Warmer
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