

NEWS BRIEFS

Panhandle Rodeo and Fair canceled

HALFWAY — Melody Huff tried to remain optimistic that not even a pandemic could stop an event that’s been a Baker County summer tradition for almost a century.

The Baker County Fair and Panhandle Rodeo at Halfway was set to celebrate its 99th year during the Labor Day weekend.

(The event is separate from the Baker County Fair in Baker City, scheduled for the first week of August.)

“We were excited,” said Huff, who’s in her second year as president of the Pine Valley Fair Association.

But as the number of COVID-19 cases began to rise in Oregon, and Gov. Kate Brown set a limit of 10 people attending indoor social gatherings, Huff’s optimism confronted reality.

Last week the Fair Association’s board of directors and members, about 20 people in all, met in Halfway to discuss the situation.

Huff said the consensus was clear. The association voted to cancel the fair and rodeo.

The youth live-stock show and sale will happen on Sept. 6, probably as a virtual event in which children will record videos of the animals they have raised, and bidding done online.

Krischele Whitnah, the livestock superintendent, said she is working on the details of that event.

Huff said the impediments to putting on the fair and rodeo were insurmountable. She said she had talked with organizers of the Haines Stampede Rodeo, which took place July 3 and 4. She said the changes made in Haines due to the pandemic, including sanitizing the bleachers, would not have been possible in Halfway.

The reason, she said, is that many volunteers are older than 60, in the higher-risk group for severe complications from the virus.

The obstacle for the fair is the limit on the number of people who can attend an indoor event, Huff said.

With just 10 people allowed in the exhibit hall the event just isn’t practical, she said.

“It’s just not going to work,” Huff said.

In addition to the specific challenges with the rodeo and fair, Huff said an overriding concern was the possibility that a child could become infected while participating in the fair.

Hydropower topic of Brown Bag

ENTERPRISE — A virtual Brown Bag Lunch Tuesday, July 28, will feature Matt King, Renewable Energy Program manager at Wallowa Resources Community Solutions Inc.

King will address the fast-growing, small, hydroelectric-generation programs happening now in Wallowa County.

Rich Wandschneider, library director at the Joseph Center for Arts and Culture, Joseph, announced the center is going back to holding two Brown Bags each month, and for now they will all be Zoom.

To participate in the July 28 presentation, join the Zoom meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5208664824>, with Meeting ID: 520 866 4824.

— EO Media Group

Jack R. Hackney

1942-2020 • Elgin

Jack Raymond Hackney, 77, of Elgin, died July 17 of heart failure. No service is planned at this time.



Jack was born Aug. 25, 1942, in Pasco, Washington, to Albert and Rose (DeRan-leau) Hackney. In 1961, he graduated from Grandview High School, where he played football.

Jack joined the U.S. Air Force in 1962 and retired as a veteran of the Vietnam War. He served three tours in Vietnam and was awarded multiple medals, including the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Jack spent his retirement traveling on his motorcycle, visiting campsites

Upcoming local services



July 25 — DAVE MURRILL: 11 a.m. graveside service, Enterprise Cemetery.

— *Calendar courtesy of Loveland Funeral Chapel, La Grande*

across the U.S. and Canada, including Nova Scotia. He loved to go on the annual Motorcycle Christmas Toy Run and participated in the Memorial Day Run for the Wall motorcycle ride to the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.

OBITUARIES

Jack never met a stranger. He was a giving person and was always willing to lend a hand. In 1991, when a F5 tornado hit the Wichita, Kansas, area, he helped 19 of his neighbors repair their roofs before repairing his own.

He passed peacefully with his first and last love, Sue Baird, nearby.

Survivors include his daughter, Jeanne Beckman of Wichita, Kansas; son, Johnny Hackney of Justin, Texas; stepson, Thai Tran of Arlington, Texas; seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild; sisters, Judy Oberding of Pasco, Washington, and Kathy Roberts of Vancouver, Washington; brother, Gary Hackney of Burbank, Washington; and former brother-in-law, Rick Roberts of Richland, Washington.

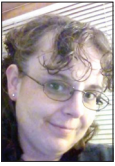
Online condolences

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

Natasha ‘Tasha’ G. Roba

1985-2020 • Elgin

Natasha “Tasha” Gail Roba, 35, of Elgin, died July 20 at her residence. At her sons’ request, there will not be a service.



Known as Tasha, she was born July 8, 1985, in John Day, to Edward and Shawna (Huggins)

Roba.

Tasha loved crafting and enjoyed spending time outdoors. She would say her greatest accomplishment was giving this world two wonderful sons, whom she loved very much.

Tasha always gave 110% and always put others first. She had kind words for

everyone she met.

Survivors include her sons, Bailey Allen and Leonydis Andrew of Elgin; partner of eight years, Mart Van Dine; mother, Shawna Roba of Elgin; honorary dad, Glenn Moodenbaugh; brother, Jimm Roba of John Day; sister, Jeannie Little of Hillsboro; grandparents, Jim and Bettie Currie of Prineville; and many aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

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

Terry D. Mentgen

Elgin

Terry D. Mentgen, 66, of Elgin, died July 22 at Providence St. Mary Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

TUESDAY

6:17 a.m. — Emergency medical services and the Union County Sheriff’s Office responded to the 72400 block of Palmer Junction Road, Elgin, for a traffic crash.

10:06 a.m. — A La Grande resident reported an ex-boyfriend continued to make unwanted contact.

3:09 p.m. — A caller reported animal cruelty on the 2200 block of Island Avenue, La Grande. The animal enforcement officer arrived, found the animals in question were not in distress and talked to their owners.

7:02 p.m. — La Grande police received a report of a possible sex crime.

8:41 p.m. — A resident of the 800 block of West Arch Street, Union, reported dogs that have killed chickens were in the yard.

9:35 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 3200 block of Union Street on a complaint about vandalism. Police took a report.

10:19 p.m. — A Union County sheriff’s deputy responded to the 63400 block of Gekeler Lane, La Grande, to assist firefighters with a possible flare up of a site that was on fire that morning.

WEDNESDAY

12:38 a.m. — A male yelling outside on the 1200 block of Eighth Street, La Grande, prompted a call to police. Officers responded and found the person, who agreed to be quiet.

10:21 a.m. — A caller complained about a code violation on the 2300 block of Jefferson Avenue, La Grande.

10:24 a.m. — The Union County Sheriff’s Office received a call about animal neglect at Cedar Street and Fifth Avenue, Elgin.

1:01 p.m. — Union County sheriff’s deputies responded to the 2400 block of Riddle

Road, La Grande, on a report of a domestic disturbance. Deputies arrived and separated the parties.

1:34 p.m. — La Grande police received a report of possible child abuse.

8:56 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff’s Office responded to a report of domestic violence on the 300 block of North 10th Street, Elgin. The sheriff’s office arrested Robert Leon Trump, 52, of Elgin, on accusations of fourth-degree assault and strangulation.

THURSDAY

6:31 a.m. — A caller reported a possible transient camp at Pioneer Park, La Grande. Police planned to provide extra patrols for the park.

1:48 p.m. — And the Union County Sheriff’s Office received a report of a transient camp in the Umatilla National Forest off Summit Road, La Grande. A deputy will follow up.

3:44 p.m. — A caller in Elgin reported possible sex abuse. A Union County sheriff’s deputy will follow up.

5:57 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff’s Office received a report of a domestic disturbance on the 70 block of North Eighth Avenue, Elgin. A deputy responded and explained options.

7:48 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1100 block of Jefferson Avenue for a possible drunk driver. Officers arrested Gerald Orlan Dudek, 77, of North Powder, on accusations of driving under the influence of intoxicants, felony driving while suspended and hit-and-run.

9:29 p.m. — A caller reported a mentally ill person was wandering around La Grande in the area of Albany Street and R Avenue.

Cook Memorial Library offers outdoor browsing

The Observer

LA GRANDE — Browsing the stacks at the Cook Memorial Library is coming back — in a fashion.

“While we continue to ready our building for the day we can finally welcome you back inside, we decided we needed to find a way to allow you to be able to browse for books, audiobooks, and movies,” Library director Kip Roberson said in a press release.

The La Grande public library is introducing Library Take-Out(side) on Tuesday, July 28 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. to coincide with La Grande Farmers Market hours. The “library” will be set up on the sidewalk just outside the main entrance at Fourth Street and Adams Avenue. Browsing will be available every Tuesday afternoon, weather permitting.

Outdoor events are safer than indoor events when it comes to contracting the coronavirus. Roberson in the press release said being outdoors,

coupled with mask and physical distancing requirements, makes Library Take-Out(side) a lower risk event.

If you don’t have a mask, the library will provide one, and library staff will limit the number of browsers at one time.

To avoid having to disinfect and quarantine the browsing collection, visitors will need to slip on a pair of food handler gloves before they start browsing, which will be available along with hand sanitizer.

For those who prefer to place holds online or to call and request items, Library Take-Out(side) remains an option. Go online at www.cookmemoriallibrary.org to place holds on items you want or call 541-962-1339 and tell us what you want. Once your order has been confirmed, you can pick up your items Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to noon or 4-6 p.m.

For more information about library resources, go to cookmemoriallibrary.org.

Outdoor labyrinth available to public

By Phil Wright

The Observer

LA GRANDE — Lisa Hill recounted when she and a local group created the walking labyrinth a few blocks from downtown La Grande.

“We went around and found donated bricks from people,” she said.

That was around 2004, she said, and the bricks outline the walking path in the grassy lot at the corner of Fifth Street and Spring Avenue and lead to a center featuring wooden seating under a young tree.

She said she has three regulars who walk the path. Given the stress people are feeling because of the coronavirus pandemic, Hill said she wanted to remind locals the small park is a place that can relieve stress and bring a sense of tranquility.

Hill also said she works to maintain the labyrinth, such as clearing grass and whatnot from the bricks, which are starting to show their age. She said she would welcome any help with that work, and she welcomes anyone to take a moment, walk the path and have a rest in the labyrinth’s center.



Staff photo by Phil Wright

Lisa Hill says the outdoor labyrinth she helped create at Fifth Street and Spring Avenue, La Grande, remains a place the public can use to relieve some stress.

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