

COMMUNITY

Briefs

Fish for free this weekend

SALEM — Everyone can fish for free in Oregon on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 15-16. Although no licenses or tags are required, all other fishing regulations apply including closures, bag limits and size restrictions. All anglers are reminded to follow the ongoing COVID-19 precautions. See the Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations to find out more and remember to check for any in season regulation changes at <https://myodfw.com/recreation-report/fishing-report>. Check for access before you go. Many spots have reopened to public access but some may still be closed due to the pandemic and/or wildfire season.

Cove candidate applications due Aug. 21

COVE — The city of Cove is seeking candidates to file for the Nov. 3 general election. The city will elect a mayor (two-year term) and city councilors (four-year term). For filing information and forms contact Cove City Hall at 541-568-4566 or email cityadmin@cityofcove.org. Applications with signature pages will be accepted until noon Aug. 21.

Choir canceled but music will go on

LA GRANDE — Art Center East has decided to cancel Grande Ronde Community Choir this fall due to the ongoing pandemic. In lieu of practicing together as a choir, ACE and choir director Mike Frasier are looking at another way to explore music together. Those interested, both prospective and existing choir participants, are encouraged to add their perspective to the discussion by filling out a short survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/F5GHDXQ.

Upcoming local services



Aug. 15 — PAUL

WAGONER: 11 a.m. celebration of life, Indian Rock; casual dress preferred.

Aug. 15 — ALIDEAN McMASTER: 2 p.m. graveside service, Hillcrest Cemetery, La Grande; face coverings required for age 2 and older.

Aug. 22 — STAN CASE: 10 a.m. celebration of life, Case arena at 64066 Booth Lane, La Grande; face coverings and social distancing required; watch the livestream at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com (click on "Funeral Videos" near bottom of page).

Aug. 29 — MIKE MAY: 4 p.m. memorial service, Riverside Park Pavilion, La Grande; face coverings and social distancing required.

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

City names winners of summer Beautification Awards

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The residence of Kirk Borderding and Seren Kopetski was selected for the La Grande Community Landscape and Forestry's Summer Beautification Award. Borderding and Kopetski have transformed a former "juniper nightmare" at their home, 1610 Foley St., into a handsome landscape.

"What started out as a two-week vacation evolved into a six-month project involving 300 tons of rock, hundreds of plants and multiple trips to GrandeScapes Nursery for supplies and advice," said Kopetski. "We wanted to pack the front yard with lots of fodder for the pollinators so we would have fun watching the wildlife from the house's beautiful windows. The tricky part was finding the right plants that would not become deer food too."

The sloping front yard covered in juniper has been replaced with rock-lined terraces and paths



Submitted photo

Kirk Borderding and Seren Kopetski transformed a former "juniper nightmare" at their home, 1610 Foley St., into a handsome landscape and won a La Grande Community Landscape and Forestry's Summer Beautification Award.

ways that form the structure for a diverse planting of shrubs and perennials. In addition to creating a habitat for native pollinators, removing the juniper also makes the landscape more fire resistant. The Oregon Department of Forestry lists ornamental juniper as highly flammable and recommends removing juniper shrubs near homes.

Blue Summit Realty, 102 Greenwood St., was

selected for the commercial award. Owner Haley Hines worked with Garden Girl, LLC to add plantings of shrubs and perennials that complement the building. New lawn and sidewalks were installed and the gravel parking area was paved, eliminating dust and the need to spray weeds.

The purpose of the Beautification Awards Program is to recognize res-



Submitted photo

Blue Summit Realty, 102 Greenwood St., was selected for a La Grande Community Landscape and Forestry's Summer Beautification Award. Owner Haley Hines worked with Garden Girl, LLC, to add plantings of shrubs and perennials that complement the building.

idential and commercial properties that add to the beauty and diversity of La Grande's environment. Nominations for this award are made by members of the La Grande Landscape and Forestry Commission, city employees and community members. The awards are given seasonally, in spring, summer and fall.

The selection committee looks for landscaping that

integrates color, texture, seasonal diversity and appropriate use of hardscapes and space; landscaping that promotes resource conservation, wildlife habitat and/or food production; and owners who have overcome special circumstances. Nominations for the fall beautification award may be sent to trees@cityoflagrande.org, or call the Urban Forestry Division at 541-663-1952.

— PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT —

MONDAY, AUG. 10

7:39 a.m. — La Grande police responded to a report of a low hanging wire at 2100 Alder St. The utility service was notified.

8:59 a.m. — Oregon State Police were informed of a loose horse on Highway 82 near Courtney Lane in Imbler. An animal enforcement officer responded and the owner now has the horse in possession.

10:04 a.m. — La Grande police responded to a report of domestic disturbance on the 2900 block Cedar Street and resolved the situation.

10:34 a.m. — Union County Sheriff's deputies arrested one person in a domestic dispute on Highway 244 at milepost 41 in La Grande.

12:02 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office cited and released Kayla Marie Ruth Johnson, 28, on two Umatilla County warrants for failure to appear.

6:57 p.m. — La Grande police took a report of a hit and run on the 1500 block of Fifth Street.

TUESDAY, AUG. 11

5:47 a.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office assisted Union Fire on a fire call on Delta Street in Union.

10:25 a.m. — La Grande police responded to a report of a deer tangled in a cord on the 2700 block of Gekeler Lane but were unable to locate the deer.

4:36 p.m. — The Wallowa County Sheriff's Office cited Elizabeth Rose Johnson, 21, on a Union County warrant for failure to appear.

5:49 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office arrested Timothy Earl Branson, 51, on a charge of assault IV and harassment.

7:21 p.m. — La Grande police cited Jorge Alejandro Fuentes, 27, for theft of services.

10:18 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office arrested Joseph Dean Furgerson, 31, for criminal mischief I, manufacture and possession of a destructive device, unlawful entry into a motor vehicle and reckless burning.

MILESTONE

Allan & Eddie Claudson — 60th anniversary

Allan and Edytha "Eddie" Claudson were married Aug. 13, 1960, at the First Baptist Church in Lakeview. They met in college and graduated in 1960, after which they each found high school teaching jobs in Richland. After three years they moved to Ontario, where Allan taught math at the junior high, high school and community college. Their two children were born in Ontario, then the family moved to La Grande. From 1975 to 2000 Allan and Eddie operated a business that evolved into Claudson's Sew and Soak on Adams Avenue. Allan taught math at EOU all the while, retiring after 38 years as an educator. They will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary with memories of many wonderful trips and fun camping over the years.



Staff was close to inmates and without masks at SRCI

By Leslie Thompson

Argus Observer

ONTARIO — Oregon Department of Corrections on Friday denied a public records request filed by the Argus Observer for video footage from inside Snake River Correctional Institution pertaining to correctional officers not wearing face coverings while in close proximity to inmates. However, in that same letter, it was stated that in their own review of the 10 hours of video footage requested it was found that staff at the prison were not always in compliance.

According to Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, the Oregon Department of Corrections has the responsibility to ensure employees follow rules and policies.

ODOC's response was to a standing request sent on July 21 for video footage to see whether cor-



Photo contributed by Malheur Enterprise

The Oregon Department of Corrections stated that in a review of 10 hours of video footage it reviewed, the state found that staff at Snake River Correctional Institution in Ontario were not always in compliance with wearing face coverings while in close proximity to inmates.

rectional officers are following social distancing mandates. The request was sent after the newspaper received multiple complaints from family members of inmates, as well as inmates, themselves, that officers not wearing masks while less than 6-feet

away from inmates was an ongoing issue in spite of the pandemic.

On July 30, SRCI officials contacted the newspaper seeking further information about the request, and it was explained that the newspaper would like footage

from inside both the minimum and maximum facility in order to look through it and track how many times correctional officers were in frame without a mask in close proximity of inmates.

"At the outset, we acknowledge the public's interest in seeking information about staff compliance with wearing face masks when six feet of physical distancing is not possible during the current novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic," reads the letter sent to the newspaper on Friday. "We have taken this into consideration in reviewing your public records request. During our review of requested institution video footage, we acknowledge that there is video footage that depicts some instances in which correctional staff who were not able to main-

tain six feet of physical distancing are not wearing face masks as required by the Department's policy."

In the letter, DOC explained its decision was based on those records being exempt under ORS 192.335(5) and ORS 192.345(23) in order to maintain internal order and security, and the safety of staff and adults in custody that work or live in our correctional institutions."

As such, DOC determined in its review of the requested footage that "if disclosed, would allow adults in custody to avoid surveillance and permit identification of potential weaknesses in the department security measures."

The Argus Observer intends to appeal the ODOC decision to not release the video footage, and has reached out to legal counsel.

High-speed chase leads to one arrest; driver escapes on foot

The Observer

LA GRANDE — An early morning vehicle pursuit led to one La Grande individual being arrested and has La Grande police seeking a second person.

According to a press release from LGPD, officers attempted a traffic stop on Caleb Nelson, 27, of La Grande, on

Wednesday, Aug. 12, a little after 3 a.m. Nelson had committed several traffic violations, then led officers on a high-speed chase in the 2012 Jeep Patriot he was driving. He later stopped at the 2900 block of Misty Avenue and took off on foot.

LGPD and the Union County Sheriff's Office

were unable to locate Nelson, who had an active felony arrest warrant prior to the attempted stop. Officers found weapons and drugs during their investigation, and Nelson is facing additional weapons, drug and traffic crimes.

His passenger, 35-year-old Mykel Hansell of La Grande, stayed at

the vehicle and cooperated with law enforcement. Hansell was arrested for unlawful possession of methamphetamine, was cited and then released from custody.

LGPD asks individuals with information that could lead to the location of Nelson to call 541-963-1017.

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