

COMMUNITY

Briefs

Not too late to sign up for Drug Free Run

LA GRANDE — The annual Drug Free Run is the main fundraiser for the Union Counties Safe Communities Coalition, a community organization that exists to increase community awareness of youth substance abuse and promote prevention in Union County. Due to COVID-19 and current restrictions, this year's Drug Free Run will be virtual, meaning participants can run or walk anywhere they choose anytime in August. To register, go to <https://drugfreerun.itsyourrace.com> and choose your race: 1 mile, 5K or 10K. After registering, download the app and track your race. The fee, which supports the efforts of the Safe Communities Coalition, is \$10 per person, or \$25 for families of three or more. T-shirts are included in the registration fee and are produced locally. The shirts may be picked up at Community Merchants, 1210 Adams Ave., La Grande, any time after you register. For more information, email ucsafecomunities@gmail.com or call 541-963-1034.

Cook Memorial Library introduces Library @Your Door Delivery Service

LA GRANDE — In partnership with local business Rob's Speedy Delivery, Cook Memorial Library now offers Library @Your Door, a free delivery service to La Grande residents who cannot come to the library due to long- or short-term health concerns or physical challenges. Deliveries will be made on Fridays beginning Aug. 28. Rob's Speedy Delivery drivers will deliver any book, audio book, magazine or DVD you want from the library to your home or care facility and retrieve it when they are due or when you are ready to return them. When we deliver your new items, we will pick up your old ones. There is no fee: Rob's Speedy Delivery is offering this service as a way to give back to their local community.

For more information or to arrange delivery, contact the library at 541-962-1339 or complete the form at www.cookmemoriallibrary.org/Pages/Index/182199/library-your-door-delivery-service.

New child care and early education guidelines released

SALEM — Parents and guardians who want to know more about how ODE is working to protect their children at child care and school during the pandemic may consult the Oregon Department of Education's Early Learning Division's recently released "Health and Safety Guidelines for Child Care and Early Education Operating in COVID-19" at <https://oregonearlylearning.com/COVID-19-Resources/ForProviders>. The updated guidelines, which take effect Sept. 1, are posted on the web page in English and Spanish.

Menus

Union County Senior Center takeout lunches

Pickup 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande. For delivery, call 541-963-7532 before 10 a.m. Age 60+, \$3 suggested donation; all others, \$5.

AUG. 24-28
Monday: meatloaf, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetable casserole, rolls, fruit.
Tuesday: Reuben sandwiches, potato salad, fruit garnish, light dessert.
Wednesday: Swiss-bacon-spinach tarts, salad greens, fresh fruit, dill bread, lemon sorbet.
Thursday: shrimp croissant sandwiches or roast beef sandwiches, Greek salad, chips, fresh fruit, zucchini-chocolate chip bars.
Friday: beef stroganoff, rice, layered salad, rolls, fresh fruit, dessert.

Strope earns high marks from city council

LG city manager receives an average of 4.48 out of 5 on annual assessment

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Robert Strope has received a raving review from the La Grande City Council.



Strope

"Robert serves the community with professionalism and integrity. His evaluations by councilors and directors reflect these qualities," La Grande Mayor Steve Clements said.

During a work session Wednesday, Aug. 19, the La Grande city manager earned high marks across the board in a performance review, one that included praise for a budget that kept La Grande in a strong place financially even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I think probably his top score was his financial, his budgetary knowledge," said Councilor Mary Ann Miesner. "He's very knowledgeable about the budget, and we feel confident about his ability to put the budget together."

Miesner added the city ends a year with more money available than it budgeted for because of Strope's approach.

That has proven key



Observer File

La Grande City Hall is shown in this Observer file photo. City Manager Robert Strope in a Wednesday, Aug. 19, work session received high marks for his work in the city, including his handling of the city budget.

during the pandemic, as the city was able to put together an emergency loan program for local small businesses that doled out more than 20 loans, Strope said. The city also has been able to set aside \$250,000 from the current budget to help with future coronavirus-related issues should they arise.

"He's always had us have a little bit of a safety net," Councilor Corrine Dutto said. "That was really helpful with COVID, because we were able to offer some small business loans that we were able to deliver much quicker than the state or the federal grants or loans. We were

able to help our businesses quickly."

Strope's assessment had an average score of 4.48 out of 5 on the eight metrics he was scored on, and in 44 of the metrics, his score was either a 4 or 5.

"One of the things that I think is really important is you don't get a good review as a city manager without a great team of folks that work with you," Strope said. "Much like being a coach of a football team, you're graded on a large part how the team is performing. They do a nice job of making me look good, and more important they do a great job with the city

of La Grande, which is gratifying."

Keeping the city in solid financial positioning has been a high priority for Strope.

"The council talked about the importance of being in good financial shape. That is something I take a lot of pride in. It goes back to the team," he said. "They do a great job managing the budget. They are conservative in what they ask for."

Miesner also spoke highly of Strope's integrity as a straight shooter who won't tell one councilor a different answer to a question than another.

Ceremony to honor servicemen 75 years after their death

The Observer

LA GRANDE — A pair of La Grande residents are looking to pay tribute to 15 World War II servicemen who died after the war on the 75th anniversary of the crash that took their lives.

The men were onboard a B-24 Liberator returning home to the Northwest on Aug. 25, 1945, just days after Japan's surrender when their aircraft crashed in the Blue Mountains near Spout Springs, killing all the men in a fiery explosion. There is no wreckage to mark the location of the crash.

The local men organizing the ceremony, Lyle Schwarz and Armen Woosley, coordinated an event three years ago to honor the crew of a B-17 Flying Fortress crash a little closer to La Grande that also took the lives of all onboard. According to a letter from Schwarz, there have been several other military crashes in the Blues, and there were more than



U.S. Air Force photo

This Consolidated B-24D Liberator is on display at the National Museum of the United States Air Force at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. A B-24 Liberator with 15 servicemen aboard crashed 75 years ago just after the end of World War II near Spout Springs. There were no survivors. Two local men are organizing a memorial event Tuesday to honor the servicemen.

52,000 aircraft accidents in the U.S. during World War II.

An honor guard from the Oregon National Guard, a playing of taps, a reading of names and an invocation and prayer by Rev. Roger Cochran of La Grande are part of the ceremony.

The ceremony will take place Tuesday, Aug. 25, at 1 p.m. For those inter-

ested in attending, travel 17.7 miles out of downtown Elgin on Highway 204, then turn right on Balloon Tree Forest Road. From there, drive 1.9 miles, turn left, and drive half a mile to the crash site, which is near the road. Arrows and flags will help mark key intersections. Anyone attending should allow extra time to travel forest roads.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 19
6:57 a.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office received a report of a restraining order violation in Elgin.
10:09 a.m. — An Island City resident on the 10800 block of Walton Road reported a burglary. A deputy responded and took a report.
2:12 p.m. — Denny's, 2604 Island Ave., La Grande, reported receiving a fake \$50 bill. Law enforcement responded and cited Alexander William Dooley, 21, for forgery.
4:49 p.m. — A caller asked La Grande police to conduct a welfare check on someone. An officer contacted the caller and

referred them to the Oregon Department of Human Services Adult Protective Services.
6:17 p.m. — A caller reported people were camping by the Grande Ronde River in the area of the 3200 block of Walnut Street, La Grande.
THURSDAY, AUG. 20
9:37 a.m. — A La Grande resident on the 2000 block of Fir Street asked to speak to an officer about an ongoing issue of dogs barking.
10:55 a.m. — La Grande police responded to Max Square at the intersection of Adams Avenue and Fourth Street for a disturbance. Police warned one person for disorderly conduct.

12:26 p.m. — A caller reported a burglary on the 66100 block of Dark Canyon Road, La Grande. A Union County sheriff's deputy responded and took a report.
2:51 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1500 block of Fifth Street on a call about a domestic disturbance. Officers arrived and turned the situation over to the Center for Human Development Inc., which handles mental health and other issues.
10:03 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 2400 block of Adams Avenue for a domestic disturbance and took a report for a restraining order violation.

Upcoming local services



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. 22 — JUSTIN PARKER: 2 p.m. funeral, Lighthouse Pentecostal Church, Island City.
Aug. 28 — JOYCE STEVENS: 11 a.m. outdoor funeral, Cove Baptist Church; 1 p.m. graveside service, Grandview Cemetery, La Grande; bring your own chair, face coverings and social distancing required.
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*

BIRTHS

GRANDE RONDE HOSPITAL

BARTRAM: To Hannah Dawn Clark and Kyle Taylor Bartram, of La Grande, a daughter, Charlie Ann Bartram, Aug. 12 at 1 a.m.
BLAIR: To Hannah Marissa Blair and Tevin K. Blair, of La Grande, a daughter, Violet Wednesday Blair, Aug. 6 at 4:55 p.m. Grandparents are Kathy Sargent and Spring and Darwin Roberts.
FIORITO: To Deven Renee Fiorito and Samuel Russell Fiorito, of La Grande, a son, Calvary Roy Fiorito, Aug. 10 at 8:06 a.m. Grandparents are TedRoy McBride, Kim McBride, Dan Fiorito and Meg Fiorito. Great-grandparents are Patricia Thomas, Roy McBride and Marilyn McBride.

Thank you for the prayers, cards, flowers and food you have so kindly given during our time of loss.

The Family of Doug Trice

50th Happy Anniversary

Bob & Delorris Goss
(August 20, 1970)
Love ~ Lisa, Cheryl & Family

FAMILY OWNED

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20 DAYS to CELEBRATE 20 YEARS

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August 5 - 25 thePottersHouseGallery.com

The POTTER'S HOUSE Gallery

1601 6th Street, La Grande corner of 6th and Penn