



Matt Henneke drives his carriage-for-hire through La Grande's Riverside Park Thursday, May 27, 2021.

Alex Wittwer/The Observer

RIDING: 'It made me feel like a princess'

Continued from Page 1A

driver for the rides, which are pulled by Jill, a black Morgan and quarter horse mix, and Annie, a brown quarter horse. Jill has 15 years of experience as a carriage horse and Annie was trained over the year.

"Annie follows Jill," Matt Henneke said. "Jill is a little bossier. She likes to be the leader."

Veronica Henneke agrees with her husband's assessment.

"Jill thinks she is in charge," she said.

Matt Henneke directs the horses with reins and verbal cues. He says "gee" to have them turn right, "ha" to turn left, "easy" to slow down, "whoa" to stop and "step up" to start. His instructions are always given in a quiet, reassuring tone.

"They feel comfortable receiving instructions from somebody they already know," his wife said.

Henneke said his horses normally work about two hours at a time. They get excited when they are fitted with harnesses for their carriage rides.

"They expect to work,"

he said.

Annie and Jill are both about the same size, something Henneke said is important because it makes it easier to drive them as a pair. If one horse was significantly larger than the other, it would be more difficult since the imbalance would cause the stronger horse to be overworked at the expense of the weaker one, he explained.

He receives a lot of surprised looks from motorists when he is driving his carriage down a road. They sometimes stop to take photos, which makes him nervous when they seem more concerned with the carriage than traffic.

"I want to tell them, 'Hey, keep your eyes on the road,'" he said.

Kathryn Kunkel, of La Grande, a recent passenger, said the rides are something special.

"It made me feel like a princess. It was so regal and nostalgic," she said.

Henneke said the best part of providing carriage rides is the response he receives from passengers.

"It is fun to see the joy they bring people," he said.



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

A family on Saturday, May 29, 2021, pets Annie, one of the horses owned by Matt and Veronica Henneke that are used to pull their antique carriage down the country roads of Union County.

GRANT

Continued from Page 1A

were prioritized to support communities "disproportionately impacted by the multiple crises in Oregon, including Black, indigenous and Latina/o/x communities, people of color and rural communities."

Information specifically on the Josephy's funding from OCF said the money would be used to help build the audience "through rebuilding and restructuring programs to address and focus on (diversity, equity and inclusivity) priorities and issues in a rural, largely white community."

"It was asking about ultimate success, and what our ultimate vision of success for these programs is we're helping nudge the culture of Wallowa County in the direction of inclusivity and understanding," Sheehy said.

Sheehy, who handles grant writing for the center, said it has received funding from the foundation in the past, and that it applied for a grant from the foundation because the values of the two align.

"It does have to do with that lean toward maybe becoming leaders in the community as far as introducing diversity, equity and inclusion," she said. "It's

part of what the Josephy board is integrating into its plan."

She added that many of the groups that give grant money, like OCF, want to see programs run by organizations like the Josephy continue their offerings.

"It's because a lot of the granters too, they want to see programs started back. They want to support the organizations that are doing that, just to restart and get everyone connected again," Sheehy said. "Then adding our diversity, equity and inclusion and extending our reach, those are all things to do with our growth."

She added improvements in the Americans with Dis-

abilities Act's accessibility and audio guidelines in the center also could be included in "inclusivity," and how the center continues to present its teaching about the Nez Perce.

"We're retelling their story, but what does it mean? Maybe it's a drum circle outside," that could be used as a teaching mechanism for visitors, or for a tool to help tribe members feel more welcome, she said. "I tell people all the time, (Wallowa County is) diverse in our own way. We got ranchers and farmers, but there are other ways that we can share that type of information with kids and help them learn about it."



Alex Wittwer/The Observer, File

La Grande High School's class of 2021 has been offered a combined total of \$830,000 in college scholarships, according to information provided by La Grande High School.

SCHOOL

Continued from Page 1A

in being transparent," he said.

Patterson added that board members make a point of consulting state officials to make sure the board is following state rules when it is hiring and determining the appropriate way to follow processes.

McDonald, when citing examples of what he said was lack of transparency, noted that one of the finalists rejected an initial offer. He believes the public should have been told about this.

"We should have had an open meeting at that point to make our next move public," he said.

McDonald also said that he was upset he was denied the opportunity to interview Hislop. He said the interview was conducted by the district's hiring committee.

"I feel that at a bare minimum we owe an interview process to the school and community we serve," he said.

McDonald also said he

believed there was a conflict of interest issue since the hiring committee, which recommended Hislop to the school board, is composed of people who are employed by the Imbler School District.

"It is my belief there is a direct conflict of interest that exists within the hiring committee as it relates to the person being recommended to the board," said McDonald prior to the board's vote.

McDonald said he was thus recommending all voting members of the next hiring committee not be current employees of the school district. He said this would prevent conflicts of interest and possible division among the district's staff. McDonald said it would be OK for employees to be on the hiring committee in an advisory capacity only.

Hislop is a lifelong school teacher and administrator. He was a teacher and principal in the La Grande School District for 33 years before serving as the superintendent of the Imbler School District starting in 2004.

AWARDS

Continued from Page 1A

students received scholarship offers from multiple universities and will have to decline ones from those they will not be attending.

Rohan credits the school's students with persevering through the application process, which she said has been more challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic. The public health crisis, for example, has made it more difficult for students to meet with counselors in person to get tips for filling out applications.

She said students benefited when LHS was opened to in-person instruction earlier this year after almost a year of only online instruction. The move made it easier for counselors to get information about available scholarships to students.

Rohan added some students can be overwhelmed

by all the information they receive by email, making it easy to overlook scholarship applications emailed to them by the school's counselors. Paper applications handed to students, Rohan said, are more likely to get their attention.

The counselor also noted it is easier for students to get answers to questions by talking to someone at school rather than relying on email correspondence.

"It is faster for students," she said.

She also said that it is sometimes faster for students to talk to a counselor than to have to go online to find scholarship application information.

"They do not want to have to click around on a website for an hour," she said.

Rohan is proud of the effort students put in while applying for scholarships.

"They did a stellar job," she said.



Follow us on Facebook!

VISIT US ON THE WEB
LaGrandeObserver.com

ISLAND EXPRESS
LUBE CENTER & CAR WASH
Pick-Up Bumpers

Designed to be tough, long lasting and can stand up to abuse. Call today to make an appointment.

Basic Maintenance • Oil Change Wash • Under Carriage Sprayer

(541) 963-7400 • Sales • Service • Installation
10603 ISLAND AVE • ISLAND CITY

GET ORGANIZED
www.CountrysideSheds.com

STORAGE BUILDINGS
(541) 663-0246
Locally owned and operated for over 25 years

Countryside SHEDS LLC
CCB #149931
"More Than Just a Shed"

10505 N. McAlister Road
(Corner of Hwy 82 & N. McAlister Rd.)

SPRING IS HERE ARE YOU READY?

RENT to OWN starting at \$68 Month