

**DEATH & SERVICE NOTICES**

**Roger Kirkland**  
North Powder

Roger Kirkland, 77, of North Powder, died Aug. 25, 2021, at St. Mary's Medical Center in Walla Walla, Washington. Arrangements are by Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Halfway.

**Gayleen M. Henderson**  
La Grande

Gayleen Marie Henderson, 67, of La Grande, died Aug. 20, 2021, in Bonner, Montana. A memorial service will be held Sept. 4 at 1 p.m. at the Imbler Christian Church, followed by a dinner.

**Steven E. Merrick**  
Union

Steven E. Merrick, 71, of Union, died July 27, 2021, at Grande Ronde Hospital. A celebration of his life will be held Sept. 4 at 1 p.m. at the Union Baptist Church. The service will be streamed live; go to [www.loveland-funeralchapel.com](http://www.loveland-funeralchapel.com) and click on "Funeral Videos" at the bottom of the page.

**David H. Payne**  
Formerly of La Grande

David H. Payne, 60, formerly of La Grande, died Dec. 15, 2020, at his home in Pendleton. A celebration of his life and tribute will be held from 2-4 p.m. Aug. 28 at Pendleton's Pioneer Park, 400 NW Despain Ave.

**Bernice M. Webster**  
La Grande

Bernice M. Webster, 85, of La Grande, died April 21, 2020, at her residence. A celebration of her life will be held Sept. 9 at 10 a.m. at the La Grande First Christian Church. The service will be streamed live; go to [www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com](http://www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com) and click on "Funeral Videos" at the bottom of the page.

**UPCOMING LOCAL SERVICES**



Please follow guidelines regarding face coverings and social distancing at all gatherings.

**Aug. 28 — LELAND SAMS:** 10 a.m. graveside service, Island City Cemetery (casual dress preferred).

**Aug. 28 — RODNEY PAYANT:** noon to 3 p.m. celebration of life, Pendleton Eagles Lodge.

**Aug. 28 — DAVID PAYNE:** 2-4 p.m. celebration of life and tribute, Pioneer Park, Pendleton.

**Aug. 28 — SHIRLEY KUNKEL:** 1:30 p.m. celebration of life, La Grande Seventh-day Adventist Church.

**Aug. 28 — STEPHEN CRUIKSHANK:** 2 p.m. service with military honors, Daniels-Knopp Funeral, Cremation & Life Celebration Center, La Grande.

**Sept. 4 — GAYLEEN HENDERSON:** 1 p.m. memorial service, Imbler Christian Church; dinner follows.

**Sept. 4 — STEVEN MERRICK:** 1 p.m. celebration of life, Union Baptist Church; also livestreamed at [www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com](http://www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com) (click on "Funeral Videos" at bottom of page).

**Sept. 9 — BERNICE WEBSTER:** 10 a.m. celebration of life, La Grande First Christian Church; also livestreamed at [www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com](http://www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com) (click on "Funeral Videos" at bottom of page).

**Sept. 18 — DEBRA DAVIS:** 2 p.m. celebration of life, Riverside Park Pavilion, La Grande.

**Sept. 18 — JAMES YOST:** 2 p.m. celebration of life, Cloverleaf Hall, Enterprise.

**Sept. 26 — DEBBIE RACHAU:** 2 p.m. celebration of life, Elgin Community Center.

**Oct. 16 — MEL ELDER:** 10 a.m. memorial service, La Grande First Christian Church. — *calendar courtesy of Loveland Funeral Chapel, La Grande*

**PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT**

**WEDNESDAY, AUG. 25**

8:16 a.m. — A caller reported drug paraphernalia on the 65300 block of Courtney Lane, Imbler. A Union County sheriff's deputy made contact, took information and arranged for extra patrols.

9:09 a.m. — La Grande police received a report of a transient camp on the 2600 block of Island Avenue. An officer made contact with the caller and took information.

10:18 a.m. — A La Grande resident asked to speak to law enforcement regarding fraud. A Union County sheriff's deputy made contact.

12:27 p.m. — La Grande police received a report of a burglary on the 2600 block of Bearco Loop. An officer made contact and logged information.

4:07 p.m. — A La Grande resident reported computer fraud. A Union County sheriff's deputy made contact and explained options.

5:13 p.m. — La Grande police received a report of a possible intoxicated driver on Willow Street. Officers responded and counseled the driver, who was not impaired.

8:09 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office responded to Highway 204 and Valley View Road on a report of a deer that was injured after a vehicle hit it. A Union County sheriff's deputy responded and euthanized the deer.

10:35 p.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about youths playing loud music at the high school parking lot, 708 K Ave. An officer responded and advised the group to keep it down.

11:29 p.m. — A resident on the 1900 block of H Avenue reported a disturbance at a neighbor's place. Officers responded, found people were arguing and the parties agreed to separate for the night.

**THURSDAY, AUG. 26**

4:08 a.m. — A caller complained about noise from a residence on the 1900 block of Cove Avenue, La Grande. Officers responded and resolved the situation.

12:43 p.m. — A caller reported livestock on the loose in the area of 69100 Summerville Road, Summerville.

3:24 p.m. — A caller reported harassment at Walmart, 11619 Island Ave., Island City. Law enforcement made contact and took information.

7:40 p.m. — La Grande police received a report of a dog bite on the 1700 block of Claire Street. An officer responded and will follow up.

8:17 p.m. — A caller reported finding a dog at Y Avenue and Spruce Street, La Grande.

8:46 p.m. — A caller reported finding a dog on the 1100 block of Adams Avenue, La Grande. There was no information to indicate if this was the same dog as the earlier call.

**RECENT OREGON STATE POLICE ACTIVITY**

Aug. 17 — A trooper arrested Christopher Wayne Jackson, 38, of La Grande, for driving under the influence of intoxicants.

Aug. 22 — A trooper stopped a driver on Highway 82 near milepost 11, La Grande, for tossing a cigarette onto the road. The trooper cited Jennifer Lee Allen, 56, for throwing burning material from a vehicle and for driving without a license.

**HOSPITALS**

*Continued from Page A1*

National Guard have already begun assisting operations in the Blue Mountain Hospital District. The hospital is among only 11 hospitals in Oregon to receive support from the nearly 500 national guard members currently activated. Officials with the Oregon National Guard have indicated roughly 20 more hospitals will be bolstered by an additional 1,000 guard members by next week, with numbers varying based on need.

Soldiers' tasks include assisting in support roles, such as entrance screeners, janitorial services and security for the hospital, as well as providing logistical relief for overworked health care staff who have been on the front lines of the pandemic for nearly two years.

"We have staff burnout. They have been working very long, stressful hours, and we are looking for ways to help our staff out as they face this next wave of COVID-19," said Mark Snider, public relations and digital strategy coordinator at Saint Alphonsus Health System in Baker City.

Soldiers with the Oregon National Guard are serving



Maj. Chris Clyne/Oregon Army National Guard

**1st Battalion, 186th Infantry Regiment, Oregon National Guard soldiers staff the front desk and screen patients at Mercy Medical Center, in Roseburg on Saturday, Aug. 21, 2021. The soldiers are part of a state-wide effort to help hospitals with support functions due to increased COVID-19 cases and staff shortages.**

in support roles in Josephine County in Southern Oregon, which has experienced the fastest growing outbreaks of COVID-19 in the United States within the past two weeks.

"The goal is to help these hospitals with nonclinical support staff," said Maj. Chris Clyne, public affairs officer with the Oregon National Guard.

Mardi Ford, director of communications and marketing at Grande Ronde Hospital, said that the situation at the hospital is fluid — while they haven't needed support from the National Guard yet, that situation could change.

"Yes, we are short staffed, but at this point we have contingencies locally and at the state level for bringing in support and are in the process of working through all of that if needed," Ford said in an email.

According to Ford, the

situation in Union County is not as dire as it is in Southern Oregon, but GRH is monitoring the situation closely.

"Right now, we are managing. But it requires daily — often hourly — oversight," Ford said.

Hospitals in Eastern Oregon have reported staffing issues and are looking to add several dozen workers to their ranks. As of Aug. 26, Grande Ronde Hospital had 63 positions available on its career webpage, while St. Anthony had 57 open positions. Ontario had 41 open positions, Willowa Memorial Hospital had 31 and Baker City St. Alphonsus Medical Center had 28 open positions.

More than 1,600 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Northeastern Oregon between Aug. 11 and Aug. 26. Region 9, which encompasses Morrow, Umatilla, Wal-

lowa, Union, Baker, Grant and Malheur counties, during that time reported five available staffed intensive care unit beds. Jackson and Josephine counties in Southern Oregon reported having only one ICU bed available. On Aug. 27, Region 9 reported the same situation: only one available staffed ICU bed.

As hospitalizations increase throughout the state, the stress it puts on normal operations at hospitals is immense. Grande Ronde Hospital in Union County reported last week it had to transfer a patient to Montana because there wasn't enough space available at the 25-bed hospital.

"As the volumes continue to rise statewide and as facilities elsewhere in the state become overrun and start looking for other locations to transfer patients," Snider said, "they turn to smaller locations like Baker City."

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**MENUS**

**Union County Senior Center takeout lunches**

Served 11:30 a.m. to 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. All are welcome.

**Aug. 30-Sept. 3 Monday:** ravioli, salad greens, garlic bread, fruit, cookie.

**Tuesday:** meatloaf, mashed potatoes with brown gravy, garden salad, fresh fruit, dessert.

**Wednesday:** tender beef, red potatoes, gravy, steamed vegetables, salad greens, fruit, light dessert.

**Thursday:** cashew-chicken stir-fry, cucumber-dill salad, fruit, cookie.

**Friday:** cabbage rolls with rice and beer, layered salad, fresh fruit, ice cream.

**BRIEFS**

**Registration open for Parks and Rec after-school program**

LA GRANDE — La Grande Parks and Recreation is offering an after-school program for elementary students. On school days, the program will run from 2:30-5 p.m., with late pickup until 5:15 p.m. The cost is \$60 per week.

Each day will have homework help, outside play time, arts and crafts, snacks, bike and pedestrian safety, and science, technology, engineering arts and math activities. The program will be at the Riveria Activity Center at the beginning of the school year, but will move into all three elementary schools once the COVID-19 risk levels drop.

For full details and to sign up, go to [ww.lagrandeparks.org/program/41339/](http://ww.lagrandeparks.org/program/41339/) after-school-program.

**Fishtrap sets online writing workshop**

ENTERPRISE — Fishtrap is launching its 2021-2022 season of workshops and seminars with an online writing course led by Nick Jaina, an Oregon Book Award finalist. "Refining Our Writing Voice Through Poetry" will be held on Wednesdays from Sept. 8 to 29 from 6-7:30 p.m.

"One of the core components of writing is developing a distinctive voice. We can look at poetry not just as a genre of writing, but as a way of viewing the world," according to Jaina. "In this workshop we'll work on developing a poetic heart to improve our writing, no matter what genre it might be."

The cost of the workshop

is \$180. For more information and to register, go to [www.fishtrap.org/poetry-workshop-with-nick-jaina](http://www.fishtrap.org/poetry-workshop-with-nick-jaina).

**BIRTHS**

**Grande Ronde Hospital**

**CALEY:** Maverick Archer Cruise Caley, Aug. 13, 2021, son of Melissa Kropf and Taylor Caley, of La Grande. Grandparents are James and Lynette Kropf.

**DIXON:** Rowan Adelaide Dixon, Aug. 19, 2021, daughter of Meghan Anne Dixon and Trenton Lee Dixon, of Union. Grandparents are Lance and Suzi Dixon and Paul and Jennifer McDonough.

**HUELTER:** Holly Lynn Huelter, Aug. 10, 2021, daughter of Katelyn Laine Huelter and Nicholas Alvin Huelter, of Union. Grandparents are Brad and Jeanne Trisler and Chris and Donna Huelter.

**WEBER:** Beaux Weber, Aug. 18, 2021, son of Shelby Weber and Joshua Weber, of La Grande.

**WHITCOMB:** Landrey Darlene Whitcomb, Aug. 13, 2021, daughter of Courtney Whitcomb and Bud Whitcomb Jr., of La Grande. Grandparents are Michael and Darlene Key and Rick and Barb Whitcomb.

— *The Observer*

Tribute and Toasts for  
**DAVID PAYNE**  
August 28th • 2-4 pm  
Tributes at 2:30pm  
Pioneer Park  
400 NW Despain, Pendleton  
Masks are required



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