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Man arrested for attempted murder

One shot reportedly fired during Oct. 4 confrontation

The Observer

LA GRANDE — La Grande police reported arresting two people Monday, Oct. 4, after reports of a gun being fired. Police arrested Jessey O'Quinn, a 25-year-old man, for attempted murder, menacing, reckless endangering, disorderly conduct, unlawful use of a weapon and two counts of felon in possession of a weapon, according to a press release from the La Grande Police Department. And officers arrested Parker Burns, a 19-year-old woman, for tampering with evidence, resisting arrest, assault of a public safety officer, unlawful possession of alcohol, unlawful possession of methamphetamine and minor in possession of marijuana.

Law enforcement responded to a report of gunshots at 10:16 p.m. Oct. 4 on the 2200 block of Cove Avenue. A witness informed the officers on scene that a male and female were snooping around vehicles in a nearby parking lot.

When confronted by the witness, Burns and O'Quinn became confrontational. O'Quinn pulled a handgun and fired one shot at the witness that missed. According to the declaration of the event from La Grande Police Officer Scott Norton, the witness recalled O'Quinn pointing a red laser connected to the firearm at his face during the confrontation. Burns also claimed the witness was confrontational toward her, pushing her shoulder to get her to leave during the dispute.

O'Quinn and Burns fled the scene, but the witness was able to give law enforcement an accurate description of their appearance.

A team of six La Grande police officers, one deputy from the Union County Sheriff's Office and one state trooper located O'Quinn and Burns one block away from where the gun was fired and made the arrests.

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INSIDE

THE JUNGLE AWAITS, IN GO!



CITY HITS A HOME RUN WITH TURF UPGRADE



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Tucker Weaver, an employee with Northwest Sports Turf Solutions, measures and cuts out seaming tape that will be used to join turf sections for the new field at Optimist Field in La Grande on Wednesday, Sept. 29, 2021.

New baseball diamonds ready in La Grande

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

LA GRANDE — It's a new day for local baseball and softball teams in La Grande.

The field renovations and turf installation at Optimist Field and Trice Community Field at Pioneer Park are just about complete, bringing state-of-the-art fields to La Grande. The renovations will allow for improved playing conditions and extended availability during inclement weather conditions.

"The kids and parents are really excited," La Grande Parks and Recreation Director Stu Spence said. "I'm excited to see their reactions when they get to play on it next year. It's going to be phenomenal."



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Douglas Trice Field awaits teams to try out its new turf on Wednesday, Sept. 29, 2021, in La Grande's Pioneer Park.

Northwest Sports Turf Solutions, a company based in Philomath, completed the turf installation on both fields after a handful of community members donated their equipment and efforts to prepare the fields for the project. The La Grande School District contributed \$150,000 to the renovations, while

Eastern Oregon University added \$75,000 and the city of La Grande spent \$25,000 and supplied construction equipment. Additionally, the city will be handling future maintenance costs.

The project officially broke ground at the beginning of August, and the fields are set to be fully operational in time

for the baseball and softball seasons this spring.

New fields take shape

The crew of about five workers from Northwest Sports Turf Solutions made steady work on the fields, staying in town for a little longer than a week. According to Keaton Weaver, one of the employees, the company does anywhere from five to 10 turf installations on sports fields in the course of a year.

The company started when its owner, Ryan Starwalt, felt the need to upgrade the playing conditions of the baseball team he coached. Weather cancellations and unplayable practice conditions inspired him to take matters into his own hands for his team and create a company that could do the same for teams in the region.

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School district sees rise in COVID totals

79 La Grande School District students missed class in latest report

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande School District's latest COVID-19 numbers

are up moderately from the week of prior.

The statistics, which reflect reports made to school district nurses, indicate a total of 79 students missed class during the week of Sept. 27 to Oct. 1 due to positive tests for COVID-19 or because they were in quarantine because of close contact with individuals believed to be COVID-19 positive. This

student total is up 11 from the week of Sept. 20-24.

The number of La Grande School District students out due to COVID-19 may be up moderately but the current total is still a big improvement from mid-September. The school district then had 123 students out because of positive COVID-19 tests and close contacts. La Grande School District Super-

intendent George Mendoza is heartened that the school district is still significantly below the mid-September level.

"I am very encouraged by the overall reduction in the number of cases," he said.

Another positive sign is that the majority of students out are close contacts, not positive cases. Last week 21 students in the district were

not on campus because they tested positive for COVID-19, the same number as the week before, meaning that the increase in students out because of COVID-19 was mostly due to being a close contact.

The number of staff out because of COVID-19 was nine, up from six the week before. Five of the staff out

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

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CONTACT US

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Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com. More contact info on Page 4A.



SATURDAY

A SCOTS TRADITION, ACTED OUT IN THE IMNAHA UNIT

Online at lagrandeobserver.com