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Nurse helps others succeed

Sarah Hancock honored by Oregon Center for Nursing for work as a mentor for other nurses

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Sarah Hancock, a Grande Ronde Hospital intensive care unit nurse, didn’t have a stethoscope in hand but she knew her heart was racing. Hancock was at her parents’ home in Mount Vernon watching an Oregon Center for Nursing webinar when she learned that her legacy had been forever defined. The Oregon Center for Nursing announced that Hancock had been named one of the 10 best Oregon nurse preceptors for 2021.

“I was elated. My heart was beating so fast,” said Hancock, noting that her parents, Dennis and Mary Bradley, at first were concerned because they didn’t know what the commotion was about.

As a preceptor, Hancock is a mentor for those who are early in their nursing careers. Hancock has worked at Grande Ronde Hospital since 2011 and has been a nurse preceptor the past eight years, serving as a full-time nurse and mentor. Hancock thrives in this dual role, according to Shelby Humphry, the coordinator of the Preceptor Program at GRH. Humphry noted that Hancock was an outstanding mentor even before she was officially a preceptor.

“Sarah has been the go-to for questions for our entire second floor for 11 years,” Humphry said.

Hancock dispenses advice in a setting where people are made to feel comfortable about communicating and inquiring.

“She encourages an environment of learning and collaborations and offers her knowledge and encouragement to all who ask,” Humphry said.

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Hancock

FALL BACK

Remember to turn your clocks back Sunday morning



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

Art Trice, a driver for Salvation Army Cascade Division, loads up a van with food from the Community Connection of Northeast Oregon food bank in La Grande on Thursday, Nov. 4, 2021.

No need for hunger

Eastern Oregon food banks continue to deliver

By ALEX WITTWER | EO Media Group

Many food banks across Eastern Oregon have reported an increase in the number of clients they served this year as compared to the previous year.

Boardman Food Pantry, which serves residents of Morrow County, reported an increase in the number of individuals served from 3,470 to 8,570 — a nearly 150% increase since 2020.

“It was quite shocking to see the increase that we’ve had,” said Mary Killion, president of the Boardman pantry.

Killion said the need is not likely to let off.

“I honestly think that we will continue to see an increase, unfortunately,” Killion said. “I really wish we wouldn’t, to be honest, but with the current economic climate I see people

having more issues being able to purchase their gas, for instance. They’re going to have to make harder choices on how they spend their money. So I unfortunately see this as a trend.”

The increase in clients also means the Boardman Food Pantry is flirting with the idea of hiring staff to handle the new demand.

“We’ve been a 100% volunteer organization from the beginning, so we don’t have anybody on staff, and we are looking to add that in the future because our numbers are growing,” Killion said. “We see that as an opportunity to improve those supply chain issues, somebody to make those contacts and get those items more efficiently.”

Across Eastern Oregon, the Salvation Army reported it had an increase of roughly 50% in the number of individuals served. But not all food banks have shared this trend.

In Grant County, the local food bank has seen a marked decrease in clients throughout the year — roughly 113 families used the county’s food bank in September, down from its

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Is a Union County public safety building becoming a reality?

Firm may be hired to develop a conceptual plan for a new center

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — An early step in the process of having a public safety building constructed in La Grande was taken on Wednesday, Nov. 3.

The Union County Board of Commissioners gave the Union County Sheriff’s Office the green light to begin negotiations with a company — Mackenzie, an architectural, engineering, design and planning firm

with offices in Portland, Seattle and Vancouver, Washington — that would develop a conceptual plan for a public safety building.

Mackenzie was one of two companies that responded to a request for proposal sent out by the sheriff’s office earlier this year. A Union County Sheriff’s Office committee then scored the RFPs sent in by the two companies and recommended Mackenzie.

Should a proposed contract with Mackenzie be agreed upon, the board of commissioners would have to approve it.

Union County Sheriff Cody Bowen is encouraged by the commissioners’ approval

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The Observer, File

The Union County commissioners voted on Wednesday, Nov. 3, 2021, to take the next step in the process of building a new county jail and public safety building in La Grande.

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section



Tonight
29 LOW
Partly cloudy



Sunday
46/28
Partly sunny

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



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TUESDAY

REMEMBERING THE STEWARD BUILDING

Online at lagrandeobserver.com