

DEATH & SERVICE NOTICES

Brenda L. Lamoureux

La Grande

Brenda L. Lamoureux, 71, of La Grande, died Nov. 26, 2021. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

Michael T. Robinson

La Grande

Michael T. Robinson, 72, of La Grande, died Nov. 26, 2021, at a local care facility. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

Vernon Valiant

Union

Vernon Valiant, 91, of Union, died Nov. 24, 2021, at his home. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

Allen D. Hunter

La Grande

Allen D. Hunter, 70, of La Grande, died Nov. 24, 2021, at his residence. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

Mary K. (Mack) Reeder

Formerly of La Grande

Mary Kay Reeder, 65, of Central Point and formerly of La Grande, died Nov. 15, 2021. A celebration of her life will be Dec. 19 at 1 p.m. at the La Grande Nazarene Church.

Robert Graffi

Formerly of Enterprise

Robert Graffi, 94, formerly of Enterprise, died Nov. 20, 2021, at his daughter’s home in Montana. A funeral will be Dec. 2 at 11 a.m. at Bollman Funeral Home, followed by vault interment to follow at the Enterprise Cemetery.

UPCOMING LOCAL SERVICES



Please follow guide-lines regarding face coverings and social distancing at all gatherings.

Dec. 2 — ROBERT GRAFFI: 11 a.m. funeral, Bollman Funeral Home, Enterprise; vault interment follows at Enterprise Cemetery. — calendar courtesy of Loveland Funeral Chapel

OBITUARY

Harry E. ‘Gene’ McKinney

1938-2021

Island City

Harry Eugene “Gene” McKinney, 83, of Island City, died Nov. 16, 2021. A funeral service will be held Dec. 3 at 10 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Chapel, Island City. Known as Gene, he was born Feb. 28, 1938, in Weiser, Idaho, to Harry Jess McKinney and Lottie Rachel (Slyter) McKinney. He married his elementary and high school sweetheart, Shannon Joy Bateman, in the Idaho Falls Temple on July 27, 1956.

Gene lived in Weiser for a short time after he was born, then lived in Oregon for the rest of his life, with the exception of a year in Tucson, Arizona, while attending the University of Arizona. He then returned to La Grande to finish his degree at what is now Eastern Oregon University. Gene and Shannon spent 18 months in Australia while serving a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. However, of all the towns he lived in, he considered Union his hometown.

Gene started his working career as a teacher for a few years. Then he sold NY Life Insurance from 1964-2016. He also worked and retired from the U.S. Postal Service.

His greatest and most loved “job” was his service in the Church of

Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He served many years in Bishoprics and

was on the High Council for even more years. He loved to serve and share the gospel truths to those he came in contact with.

As a youth, Gene enjoyed playing sports, football being his favorite.

As an adult, he loved the games of handball and racquetball. He also loved being outside and was an avid fly fisherman and hunter. He was happiest when he was outside, working with his hands or teaching family members how to fish and/or hunt.

Survivors include his wife of 65 years, Shannon McKinney; children Shawna Romito, Keri Myer, Kyle McKinney, Forrest McKinney, April McKinney and Brooke Kreutz; 31 grandchildren and 60 great-grandchildren; and countless nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Harry and Lottie McKinney; sisters, Carol Burchert and Donna Johnson; and many brothers- and sisters-in-law.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.



McKinney

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

BRIEFS

Cove toy drive underway

COVE — Cheri’s Main Street Salon, 603 Main St. in Cove, is hosting its 23rd annual toy drive. Residents are encouraged to help make the holiday season brighter for children in Cove by donating new unwrapped toys by Friday, Dec. 10. The toys will be distributed Dec. 11. For more information, call 541-568-5069.

Shop local for the holidays

LA GRANDE — La Grande Main Street Downtown and the Union County Chamber of Commerce are sponsoring holiday activities and opportunities to support local businesses, including Small Business Saturday on Nov. 27. Look for special offerings and events in La Grande and at other businesses in the county. The promotions include a drawing for a gift basket. Go to www.lagrandemainstreet.org/pfsbs for a list of participating businesses.

The chamber is sponsoring a Shop Hop Dec. 1-5. For instructions on how to participate in the contest, go to www.facebook.com/TravelUnionCounty and choose “Events.”

Former Joseph resident gives virtual talk about Haiti

JOSEPH — The next installment of the Josephy Center’s Brown Bag lecture series will be held virtually via Zoom on Tuesday, Nov. 30, beginning at noon. The guest speaker will be Brian Concannon, former Joseph resident and executive director of the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti.

“Haiti slips across the news screens on our TV frequently: there’s a hurricane; missionaries abducted; a cholera outbreak; another hurricane,” stated a press release from the Josephy Center.

Concannon, who helped found the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti, for a few years lived in Joseph with his wife, Marcy. During that time he “commuted” to Haiti and to points across the country as a human rights lawyer representing Haitians.

For more information, click on the event at www.josephy.org/brown-bags.

Discount offered on dog licenses

LA GRANDE — During the month of December the Union County Sheriff’s Office is offering 2022 dog licenses at a 10% discount. Licenses are valid from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2022. Licensing, which is required by county ordinance, can be helpful if your pet is lost and gets picked up by animal control. They can return your pet to you before taking it to the animal shelter, according to a press release from the sheriff’s office.

Vegetables: good for body and mind

ENTERPRISE — The Wallowa County Rotary Club announced the “Great Potato Drive 2.0” — selling Patrick Thiel’s organic veg-

etables to raise money for its high school scholarship program. For \$20 each, purchase 10 pounds of potatoes or 8 pounds of carrots. Nearly half of all proceeds will go toward the club’s scholarships.

According to the release, the county’s Rotary Club has for more than 20 years given college scholarships to high school students from all county schools. In the spring of 2021, the club awarded \$9,000 in scholarships to eight students.

Residents are asked to consider donating purchases to the Community Connection Food Bank. Contact Rick Bombaci, Anette Christoffersen, Rich Wandschneider or any Rotarian to order. Wandschneider may be reached at 541-263-0930.

MENU

Union County Senior Center takeout lunches

Pick up between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. at 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande. Age 60+, \$3 donation; all others, \$5.

Nov. 29-30 Monday: mac and cheese, ham, salad greens, cashew-pea salad, fruit, cookie.

Tuesday: beef Stroganoff over rice pilaf, salad greens, bread, dessert.

(December’s menu will be published when it becomes available.)

— The Observer

MILESTONE

Dean Stone — 80th birthday



Submitted photo

Dean Stone will celebrate his 80th birthday with family and friends on Saturday, Nov. 27, from 2-4 p.m. at the Island City Faith Center, 10300 South D St. The party is hosted by his wife, Judy, and children, Terry, Todd and Sissy. No gifts, please — but cards and laughs are welcome.

MORE ONLINE

For public safety reports, as well as more news, go to lagrandeobserver.com



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Lee Thomas Insko

March 30, 1935 - November 16, 2021



Lee Insko, 86, of La Grande, OR, passed away on Tuesday, November 16, 2021, of heart failure.

He was born in Soda Springs, ID, on March 30, 1935, to Tom and Ella (Seitz) Insko of Cokeville,

WY. After 1st grade in Butte, MT, the family (now with brothers Alan and Don) moved to Post Falls, ID, where Lee graduated high school in 1952 at age 16. Walking off the football field as a 15-year-old senior, Lee decided any future career needed to keep him in the game he loved. After playing basketball for two years at North Idaho Junior College in Coeur d’Alene, ID, he earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Idaho. He taught high school math and sciences and coached football, basketball and track at Hailey, ID; Sprague, WA; Metaline Falls, WA (Selkirk H.S.); and Springfield, OR. In 1962, he obtained a school administrator certificate from Eastern Washington University and earned his Doctor of Education degree from the University of Oregon in 1980.

On April 4, 1965, Lee married Elizabeth Ann Stromberger of Ritzville, WA. Daughters Lisa and Lori were born in Springfield, followed by sons Tom and Matt after the move to Eastern Oregon College (now Eastern Oregon University) in La Grande, OR in 1968. Lee was head coach of the Mountaineer football program for 10 years, followed by 4 years as the head men’s basketball coach, and was inducted into the EOU Athletics Hall of Fame in 1994. He was inducted into the Springfield High School Athletics Hall of Fame in 2019. Even more impactful than Lee’s coaching expertise was his genuine devotion to each player and their personal development. He deeply believed in the power of athletics to form lifelong strength of character. He later stepped down from coaching to watch his four kids play high school and collegiate athletics.

Lee taught health education as a member of EOU’s faculty for 14 years, then became Dean of Continuing Education from 1986 until his retirement in 1994. EOU’s Distance Learning program was nationally recognized and innovatively served the geographically dispersed communities of rural Oregon. He also served as director of EOU’s Micronesia project, living for a time with his family in Truk Lagoon (Chuuk).

From 1994-1996, he directed Lewis-Clark State College’s Division of Extended Programs, expanding educational technology in north central Idaho.

All these years, he and Beth felt farm life would be best for raising kids. They “drove until they found land they could afford,” which meant a long daily commute for Lee, something he never regretted for the fulfillment of life in Palmer Valley, north of Elgin, OR. They raised cattle and hay, specializing in custom grass-fed beef. Lee served as the Union County Cattlemen’s president and as the district seven state vice president for the Oregon Cattlemen’s Association. He was awarded Cattleman of the Year in 2008.

Lee and Beth were active members of Zion Lutheran Church in La Grande and founding members of Grace Community Lutheran Church. They co-founded the local Young Life chapter and actively supported Youth for Christ. Lee never stopped learning and teaching. He lived by his faith in God’s saving mercy provided by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, his Savior, and served and loved his family and all those he knew.

Lee is survived by his wife of 56 years, Beth, and their four children; Lisa (David) Kaplan of Las Vegas, NV (Adam, Ashley, Kyle, Cassie); Lori (Kirk) Jameson of Walla Walla, WA (Kyle, Sarah, Evan, Joel); Tom (Emily) Insko of La Grande, OR (Melia, Lara); and Matt (Melanie) Insko of La Grande, OR (Austin, Isaac, Noah, Ella). He was blessed with 10 great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at Quinn Coliseum on the EOU campus in La Grande, OR, at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 4, 2021. Livestream access will be available. Those so wishing may donate to the EOU Lee and Beth Insko Scholarship Fund, One University Blvd., La Grande, OR, 97850 or the Eastern Oregon Youth for Christ, PO Box 1, La Grande, OR, 97850.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.



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