

Reflecting on a 46-year career as librarian

Louise Shelden will retire at the end of November

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

UNION — The sight alarmed Louise Shelden during her first day as director of the Union Carnegie Library 18 years ago. Shelden was greeted by water that was up to half an inch high in a storage room on the first floor of the Union library. Other portions of the first floor had no standing water, but it was wet because of the water seeping in from saturated ground. “It was starting to smell moldy,” said Shelden, who noted that the water did not cause serious damage and that later a French drain was installed to all but eliminate future flooding. Fortunately, the intruding water was not a harbinger of things to come. It did not douse Shelden’s buoyant spirit or prevent her from continuing to do what she does as well as Tom Clancy writes spy thrillers — inspire people of all ages to develop a passion for reading.



Louise Shelden poses for a portrait at the Union Carnegie Library on Monday, Nov. 1, 2021. Shelden is retiring from the library after serving as its director for 18 years, and nearly 50 years as a librarian.

Shelden has kept the Union Carnegie Library on an upward trajectory since 2003 and today its collection is larger than ever at 11,000 volumes, many of which are kept in the more expansive shelving that has been added. Turn another page and one will find a collection of 5,000 DVDs on the first floor, one which has grown enormously from community donation. There is also a more expansive array of

computers with internet connections. Shelden’s days of piloting the library are quickly winding down, however. She will retire at the end of this month, closing the book on not only her 18-year tenure in Union but also a 46-year career as a librarian. Shelden’s decision to retire is not one she took lightly. “It was a hard decision. I do love it so,” said Shelden,

referring to the Union library and her career. Shelden, throughout her more than four-decade career, has never tired of helping young and old alike to embrace reading. “If you are a reader it opens so many doors in life,” she said. “It stimulates your imagination and opens new worlds to you.” She said people can develop a love of reading even as adults. Shelden fondly recalls a man in

his mid-20s who told her he desperately wanted to become a passionate reader but was not sure he was capable of doing so. “He had avoided reading in school,” she said. Nevertheless, Shelden was sure he would develop a love of reading and provided him with a list of books she thought he would enjoy. A few weeks later, after reading some of the recommended books, he told Shelden that he believed he was becoming someone who loved books. Then the man’s emotions got the best of him. “The tears he had in his eyes were tears of joy,” Shelden said. On the younger level Shelden has done an excellent job of inspiring children to read, said Randy Knop, who previously was a member of the Union City Council and has long been a supporter of the Union Carnegie Library. “She has been instrumental in bringing important reading programs to the community for children,” Knop said. He said he cannot think of a better person to take children under her wing and put them on the road to

become readers. “I couldn’t say enough about the importance of having such a warm, sensitive and caring individual looking out for our children,” Knop said. Knop also credits Shelden with making it possible for everyone in town to access the internet. “She has ushered the electronic age into the library by giving people access to the internet so that they can learn,” Knop said. “Not everyone can afford a computer or access to the internet.” Shelden has made a point of making wireless internet available both inside and outside of the library. This means that even when the library is closed people can drive up outside to use the internet to check their email and more. Shelden will be succeeded by Tiffany Derichsweiler, who previously worked for the Mohave County Library in Arizona, and most recently for Eastern Oregon University Head Start, where she was with its infant and toddler mental health program. Shelden said the Union Carnegie Library will be in good hands with Derichsweiler in charge.

Union Family Dental Clinic lands \$8,000 grant

Clinic stays afloat thanks to Wildhorse Foundation grant

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

UNION — After facing uncertainty, a local dental office is running at full force thanks to a recent grant. Union Family Dental Clinic, part of the South

County Health District, purchased roughly \$8,000 worth of dental equipment through grant funding from the Wildhorse Foundation. The dental clinic purchased four new dental motors and attachments that will allow the office to continue operating at full capacity. “It’s a huge deal,” said Adina Ferguson, the office manager at Union Family Dental Clinic. “We were

very, very grateful for their generosity.” Recent mandates from the Oregon Board of Dentistry changed the methods in which dental offices are required to sanitize their hand-held motors, which would have put Union Family Dental Clinic in a difficult position. “Without the grant that they gave us and being able to purchase more of them, we would have had

to cut our patient load by a fourth,” Ferguson said. Adding four new hand-held dental motors will allow the clinic to continue working with patients while the equipment is being sanitized. With the new grant funding, Ferguson noted that the clinic will be able to continue operating without any delays and provide service as usual to the community.



The Union Family Dental Clinic received approximately \$8,000 in grant funding from the Wildhorse Foundation to buy more dental motors in the fall of 2021.

EPIC ADVENTURES AWAIT

Snowmobile rates as low as

4.74%^{APR*}

Start your outdoor adventure today!

HZCU.ORG/FUN

*OAC. Rates subject to change without notice. Rate displayed is the lowest available to qualified borrowers; your rate may be higher and will be determined by the loan type, model year, term, amount you finance and your credit history. Membership fee and restrictions may apply.