

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 12

8:18 a.m. — An Elgin resident on the 1100 block of Alder Street reported a stalking order violation. A Union County sheriff's deputy made contact.

9:20 a.m. — A caller made a complaint about stray cats in the 70000 block of Fletcher Lane, Cove. An animal enforcement officer made contact and referred the caller to a shelter.

9:35 a.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about a restraining order violation at Grande Woods Apartments, 2005 Gekeler Lane. An officer made contact and explained options.

11:26 a.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about a restraining order violation on the 2500 block of Depot Street. Police arrested Joshua Caleb Meier, 32, on a restraining order violation.

12:54 p.m. — La Grande police received a report of fraud at the Hideout Saloon, 219 Fir St. Police made contact and took a report.

4:34 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 600 block of 18th Street on a report of gunshots. Police determined the sound was from a BB gun and explained city gun laws.

6:52 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 2700 block of Empire Drive on a report of harassment. Police determined this was an ongoing civil issue and explained options.

THURSDAY, JAN. 13

11:58 a.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about fraud on the 2700 block of Bearco Loop. An officer responded and took a report.

12:17 p.m. — La Grande police received a report of a sex crime. An officer made contact and took a report.

1:21 p.m. — A resident on the 1700 block of X Avenue, La Grande, made a complaint about telephonic harassment. An officer made contact and took a report.

3:01 p.m. — Grande Hot Springs RV Resort, 65182 Hot Lake Lane, La Grande, reported fraud. A Union County sheriff's deputy made contact and took a report.

5:12 p.m. — A caller reported possible animal neglect at Baltimore Street and South 17th Avenue, Elgin.

6:41 p.m. — La Grande police responded to a report of a domestic disturbance on the 600 block of Crook Avenue. Police arrested Terry Allen Higgins, 45, on a restraining order violation.

10:08 p.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about a loud party on the 2100 block of Third Street. An officer responded, and the subjects agreed to keep the music down.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

MEETINGS

• **IMBLER** — The Imbler School District Board of Directors will meet for a work session on Tuesday, Jan. 18, at 5:30 p.m. in Room 1 of the high school. The purpose of the meeting is to conduct a training for the Superintendent Search Screening Committee and discuss contract parameters. A regular session will follow at 7 p.m.

• **PENDLETON** — The Board of Directors of the InterMountain Education Service District will meet in regular session on Wednesday, Jan. 19, at 4 p.m., at the IMESD, 2001 SW Nye Ave., Pendleton. The board will hold an Executive Session at the end of the meeting to discuss the superintendent evaluation.

• **LA GRANDE** — A meeting of the Union County Board of Commissioners will be held virtually beginning at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 19. Access information and a link to the meeting is available at www.union-county.org/commission-meetings.

BRIEFS

Library shows free movie for teens on Jan. 19

LA GRANDE — Cook Memorial Library, 2006 Fourth St., La Grande, invites those in middle school and high school to the Teen Mid-Week Movie on Wednesday, Jan. 19, starting at 4 p.m. The free movie this month

is "Jungle Cruise," starring Dwayne Johnson and Emily Blunt, and will be shown in the library's Community Room.

Play bingo in Union every Wednesday

UNION — The Veterans of Foreign Wars High Valley Post 4060 in Union is hosting bingo games on Wednesdays at the VFW Hall. All are welcome. Doors open at 5 p.m., with early-bird games starting at 6 p.m. and regular bingo at 7 p.m. The last game of the evening is the jackpot, and organizers say players could win up to \$500.

— *The Observer*

Wecks assumes role as Miss Teen Rodeo Oregon

By **RONALD BOND**

Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — Destiny Wecks is officially in the saddle as Miss Teen Rodeo Oregon, a title the former Chief Joseph Days co-queen will hold throughout 2022.

Wecks, 18, will be honored during an event at the Enterprise Elks Lodge at 5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15, unofficially kicking off a year of promoting the sport she has come to love.

"Yes, it's kind of exciting," Wecks said during a Dec. 30, 2021, interview of settling into the role, "but also (at) the same time a little nerve-racking ... not exactly sure what the year has to bring and what to expect."

One thing Wecks does know is that she will be busy. She has a goal of trying to attend a rodeo almost every weekend, and at each one will be doing what she can to help the events she is attending.

"My plan is to go to as many rodeos across the Pacific Northwest as I can," she said. "I will be doing grand entry with the other rodeo queens, I can help with selling programs, autograph signing during and after, as well as if they need help in the arena moving cattle, setting up barrels (or running a) sponsor flag. I will be able to speak on radio if other rodeos need it, (or) luncheons for myself promoting tryouts."

It's the third of what Wecks hopes eventually will be five rodeo titles. She previously has donned a crown in her rodeo career as Miss Rodeo Oregon Sweetheart and Junior Miss Rodeo Oregon.

The next one hopefully on the slate is Miss Rodeo Oregon, and the top hope is Miss Rodeo America, which, if garnered, would make her the first Oregonian to hold each honor. Mackenzie Carr Ivie is the only Oregonian to be named Miss Rodeo America.

Wecks wants to use her position in promotion to help the next generation learn about rodeo and the lifestyle of the West. One of her dreams, she said, is "to really just spread more knowledge about rodeo and the Western way of life, (and) to teach other young kids



Robert McLean/Contributed Photo

Destiny Wecks, shown with Opie, will be crowned as Miss Teen Rodeo Oregon during an event at the Elks Lodge in Enterprise on Saturday, Jan. 15, 2022.

they can do whatever they want if they put their mind to it."

In her blood

That Wecks has reached this level of success in rodeo at such a young age really should not surprise anyone who knows her or her family. Her mother, Vixen Radford-Wecks, is a former CJD queen who judges rodeo pageants and coached Carr Ivie.

"It's definitely always been in my family, in my blood, in my heart — just growing up around it, the more and more I get to experience and create these friendships," Wecks said.

But it's not solely because of that heritage that she is where she is at — it's her own drive and growing love for rodeo, for the Western way of life.

"It's definitely made my passion stronger, and my dream become more big and real," she said.

The passion has even extended beyond anything her mother can comprehend, even though the two have shared countless marathon drives from one rodeo to the next, horse trailer in tow. Radford-Wecks even asked her daughter about it one evening on a long drive.

"I think people think I make her do it, (but) she said, 'It's because of the family I have gained. I can be anywhere in (the) state ... and I know

somebody. It's my extended family I have gained,'" Radford-Wecks said. "I have no reason to tell her not to ... She is still very grounded in what has been her goal. It has been her goal since she was 6. It didn't change. It's gotten stronger."

The younger Wecks has benefitted from her mom being a pageant judge, as she can gain a behind-the-scenes look at what a judge is gauging.

Opie

Wecks has spent most of her time in rodeo with one horse as her main steed — an American quarter horse named Opie.

"Technically, he's my mom's horse, but I might have accidentally stolen him," she quipped.

When the family purchased the horse at age 4 — he's now 11 — he was going to take some work.

"He was really lame in his feet. The people didn't want to spend the money and the time to make him rideable again," Wecks said. "We took him as a ranch horse in case we needed to do a lesson."

The horse did have some professional training in his background, and in time, largely with Wecks' guidance, he became her partner in the arena.

"Hours in the saddle, time on the road, time spent with him. He'd never done any rodeo queen things — packing flags (or) a parade. That was an experience with him."

Coronation

Wecks is excited to have the coronation and to share it with that extended rodeo family — including people who may not have heard of Wallowa County previously.

"You have coronation in this small remote part of Oregon that is home to me — it's amazing that I can welcome all these other Oregonians to my hometown to show them what it is to me," she said.

The event is a fundraiser for the year ahead, and Wecks said she is looking for more sponsorship help. Those who wish to be a sponsor can reach out at destinywecksrodeo@gmail.com.

Barbara "Bobbie" Ann Ashburn

August 18, 1930 – January 8, 2022

Barbara "Bobbie" Ann Ashburn, 91, of La Grande, passed away on Saturday, January 8, 2022 at Grande Ronde Hospital. At her request, there will be no service.

Barbara was born on August 18, 1930, in Grand Mound, Iowa, to Lawrence and Anna (Ihrey) Lindaman. She resided in California, Iowa, Minnesota, and Oregon.

Barbara was a devoted wife and mother to 3 children. She enjoyed baking, cooking big meals for her family, sewing, crafts, loved watching her grandchildren and great-grandchildren,

dancing, watching rodeos and her grandchildren ride in horseshows, and especially loved being with family. She volunteered at the hospital and the senior center and at the Legion Hall.

Barbara is survived by her children; Ron Ashburn (Carleta) of Elgin, OR, Ken Ashburn (Vicki) of Union, OR, and Beverly Bowers (Dana) also of Union, OR; 6 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

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

DEATH & SERVICE NOTICES

Kaye R. Rogers

La Grande

Kaye R. Rogers, 87, of La Grande, died Jan. 13, 2022, at Grande Ronde Hospital. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

Cecilia B. Campbell

La Grande

Cecilia B. Campbell, 73, of La Grande, died Jan. 8, 2022, at her residence. A Mass of Christian Burial will begin at 10 a.m. Feb. 4 at Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, La Grande. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

MENUS

Union County Senior Center lunch menu

Dine-in meals: Served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; use front entrance and observe social distancing.

Takeout meals: Pick up from noon to 1 p.m. at kitchen's back door.

Cost: Age 60+, \$3 suggested donation; all others, \$6.

JAN. 17-21

Monday: baked potato bar, chili, salad greens, fresh fruit, dessert.

Tuesday: sweet and sour meatballs over rice pilaf, spinach salad, cottage cheese and fruit, chocolate chip cookie.

Wednesday: tender beef, whipped potatoes and gravy, salad greens, fresh fruit, dessert.

Thursday: chicken tenders, coleslaw, baked beans, fresh fruit, cookie.

Friday: Salisbury steak over noodles, steamed vegetables, salad greens, fresh fruit, dessert.

Grange to hold chili cookoff Jan. 22

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — A competitive chili cookoff is being hosted by the Hurricane Creek Grange to coincide with the conclusion of the 2022 Eagle Cap Extreme Sled Dog Race, according to a press release.

The cookoff will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 22, at the grange, 92930 Airport Lane just west of Joseph.

There is an entry fee

of \$10 each for the contest, with a \$50 cash first prize and a second prize of a basket filled by local vendors.

People who come to enjoy the chili will be charged \$5 for a bowl and some corn bread. Pies will be available for dessert. Whole pies go for \$15.

There also will be a local vendor market, the release stated.

For information, call Barbara McCormack at 541-605-8233.

State: Union County adds 42 new COVID-19 cases

The Observer

SALEM — The Oregon Health Authority announced its daily COVID-19 update on Friday, Jan. 14, documenting 42 new cases in Union County. Wallowa County tallied three new COVID-19 cases in the report.

The latest report increased Union County's total to 3,870 since the start of the pandemic, while Wallowa County saw its total rise to 879. Neither county recorded any new deaths in the latest report. Union County has recorded 31 or more cases in all three of the last daily reports.

Across Oregon, 8,672 new confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases

were reported. The state's total case count is up to 513,391 since the start of pandemic. OHA tallied 13 new deaths across the state, bringing the death toll to 5,883.

There are currently 811 patients hospitalized with COVID-19 in Oregon, which is an increase of 34 individuals from yesterday's report. OHA reported that there are 153 COVID-19 patients currently in intensive care unit beds.

Out of 666 total adult ICU beds in the state, 42 are currently available. There are 222 open adult non-ICU beds out of 4,122 in Oregon.

The state's seven-day running average of vaccine doses per day is 16,382.

John Richard Shafer

November 1, 1999 – January 3, 2022

John Richard Shafer, 22, of La Grande, passed away on Monday, January 3, 2022. A Celebration of Life will be held on Friday, January 14, 2022 at 3:00 pm at Elgin Nazarene Church. Casual dress is preferred by the family.

John was born on November 1, 1999 in La Grande, OR, to Richard "Dick" and Gloria Shafer. He graduated from Elgin High School and resided in Elgin and La Grande.

John worked at the saw mill and various construction jobs. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, and anything out-

doors. He loved music, poetry, and drawing.

John is survived by his mother, Gloria Shafer of La Grande and sisters, Rachelle Shaw of Union and Kristy Pelaye of Sand Springs, OK. He was preceded in death by his father,

Richard Shafer; grandfather, Juan Wise; and grandfather, Howard Swagger.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made in John's name to Elgin Community Bank.

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



UPCOMING LOCAL SERVICES



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

Jan. 15 — AUDREY BEAN: 9 a.m. viewing, 10 a.m. funeral; Island City Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Jan. 15 — MAMIE McCRAE: 11 a.m. funeral, Bollman Funeral Chapel,

Enterprise.

Jan. 15 — JIM LUNDY: 2 p.m. memorial service, Gilbert Center, Eastern Oregon University, La Grande.

Jan. 22 — WAYNE WOLFE: 1 p.m. Mass of Christian Burial, St. Katherine Catholic Church, Enterprise; vault interment follows at Wallowa Cemetery.

Feb. 4 — CECILIA CAMPBELL: 10 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial, Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, La Grande.

— *calendar courtesy of Loveland Funeral Chapel*