

THE OBSERVER

SERVING UNION AND WALLOWA COUNTIES SINCE 1896

February 3, 2022

THURSDAY EDITION

\$1.50

'Please donate blood. Now.'

National blood shortage felt locally

By ALEX WITTWER
EO Media Group

EASTERN OREGON — Blood doesn't last long. Platelets last only five days, according to the American Red Cross, while red blood cells will last up to 42 days. Plasma can last up to one year if frozen. Nor can blood be manufactured; the supply of blood relies entirely on donors rolling up their sleeves.

The American Red Cross, which held a nationwide blood drive in January including several blood donation stations in Eastern Oregon, reports it is facing a blood crisis. The organization's website stated its blood supply is at the lowest levels in more than a decade. The alarm was sounded last month during National Blood Donor month.

"While some types of medical care can wait, others can't," said Dr. Pampee Young, chief medical officer of the Red Cross. "Hospitals are still seeing accident victims, cancer patients, those with blood disorders, like sickle cell disease, and individuals who are seriously ill who all need blood transfusions to live even as omicron cases surge across the country. We're doing everything we can to increase blood donations to ensure every patient can receive medical treatments without delay. We cannot do it without more donors. We need the help of the American people."

Local hospitals react to shortage

The national blood shortage has hit uneven ground in Eastern Oregon, with area hospitals reporting their blood supply falling below critical levels.

Most hospitals are handling it well, given the circumstances, while others

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Trae Frank uses a palm sander in Union High School's new woodshop on Monday, Jan. 31, 2022. Frank is among a handful of students participating in a Geometry in Construction class that merges mathematics with physical learning.

Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

Real-world relevancy

Union High School students applying geometry principles in woodshop class

By DICK MASON
The Observer

UNION — Union High School geometry students are trading protractors and compasses for hammers and circular saws.

The students are making the swap each school day because of a first-year class now giving a new twist to the instruction of one of the oldest branches of mathematics.

The course, Geometry in Construction, is providing students a real-world look at how geometry principles are used. Each morning its 30 students, all freshmen and sophomores, spend a 56-minute period in UHS's geometry classroom and another 56-minute period in its new woodshop.

"It is changing the way we teach math," said Union math teacher Carol Wyatt, who co-teaches Geometry in Con-



John Townsend, Union High School's woodshop teacher, instructs Wyatt McCants on an assignment on Monday, Jan. 31, 2022. UHS received a grant that allowed it to renovate an old bus barn into a fully outfitted woodshop and to hire woodshop and welding teachers to provide career-focused learning.

Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

struction with the school's shop and robotics teacher, John Townsend.

Wyatt and Townsend provide traditional geometry instruction each morning for

one period and then lead students into the Union School District's new woodshop where they tackle building projects, while applying geometry principals they just studied.

"It reinforces what they learned in the classroom," Wyatt said.

For example, if students

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Concerns linger over MERA project

Advisory board looks to find middle ground in first public meeting since start of logging

By DAVIS CARBAUGH
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Mount Emily Recreational Area Advisory board met virtually on Tuesday, Feb. 1, opening the doors for public comment for the first time since the start of the Red Apple Forest Improvement Project.

The forest management project, which drew public opposition, officially started on Wednesday, Jan. 26, after ReedCo Forestry was awarded the contract for the project Jan. 5. The project includes logging on the 300-acre Red Apple area at MERA — those opposed are worried that the project will bring damage to the trails and ecosystems in the area. The Zoom meeting was attended by roughly 15 individuals and included a letter voicing concerns from Friends of MERA, a group of local residents who aim to protect the



Trees are processed and stacked as forest management operations begin in the Red Apple portion of the Mount Emily Recreation Area outside La Grande on Friday, Jan. 28, 2022.

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Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

	Tonight 26 Low Mostly cloudy		Friday 34/25 Afternoon snow
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Issue 15
3 sections, 32 pages
La Grande, Oregon

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SATURDAY ICE-FISHING CURES THE WINTER DOLDRUMS

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