

# DEVELOPER

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improved the situation at the Boys Jungle, which is one of the more popular sections of the Leo Adler Memorial Parkway.

That paved path for pedestrians and bicyclists, which the city built about 20 years ago, runs through the eastern edge of the Boys Jungle.

“We really appreciate the effort in cleaning that area up,” Bornstedt said.

She said the city, which has a street right-of-way east of the path, also plans to do some tree trimming and other work in that area this year to complement the Boys Jungle transformation.

Bornstedt said the city has received many comments from residents since Tsiatsos started work in the Boys Jungle this winter, and almost all were pleased about the changes.

Tom Clement, of Baker City, who spearheaded projects over the past two years to trim trees, remove underbrush and generally spruce up the riverside strip next to two other sections of the Adler Parkway, also lauded Tsiatsos’ work in the Boys Jungle.

Clement said he’s talked to many people who mistakenly credited him with cleaning up Boys Jungle, and the vast majority were happy



Jayson Jacoby/Baker City Herald

**Gust Tsiatsos of La Grande, who bought the parcel that includes the Boys Jungle last year, surveys the cleaned-up lot on Thursday, March 31, 2022. He hopes to transfer the property to the city for use as a public park.**

with the results.

Tsiatsos said he realized when he bought the property that even though it’s private, people did trespass, and that the conditions, with overhanging limbs and obstacles hidden by brush, were potentially dangerous.

“We recognized it to be a bit of a hazard, and we’re trying to be good neighbors and get rid of some blight and still keep its romantic appeal to the city,”

Tsiatsos said. “We tried to keep the feel of what it was. We’re really happy with how it turned out.”

Tsiatsos said he would prefer to transfer the Boys Jungle to the city for use as a public park.

Bornstedt said Tsiatsos has suggested a deal by which the city could make concessions for utility payments for the rest of the property he bought, in exchange for his donating the Boys Jungle.

That’s not possible, Bornstedt said, because of accounting issues, since the water and wastewater departments are separate funds in the city’s budget from the parks department, which is in the general fund.

Tsiatsos said he understands the potential bureaucratic obstacles.

But he still hopes he can work out an agreement with the city to transfer the Boys Jungle.

“I’d prefer it to be a park,” he said.

## Veteran housing

Although the Boys Jungle work has been the most conspicuous evidence of Tsiatsos’ purchase of the parcels between D and H streets, it’s actually a relatively small part of his overall plan.

His chief purpose is to create housing for military veterans.

Tsiatsos expects construction to start within 45 days on the first phase, which will include 13 rental cottage-style homes and a community center. Those will be built in the lot directly north of Memory Lane Homes assisted living facility on F Street just east of Elkhorn Village apartments.

The cottages are in the “tiny home” style, he said, covering about 500 square feet for the one-bedroom version and slightly larger for the two-bedroom units.

A new private street will access the cottages, running north and south between F and H streets.

The development is similar to the 10-cottage Veterans Village Union County that Tsiatsos built in La Grande. It opened in the fall of 2021.

For the Baker City development, Tsiatsos said he secured a \$1.5 million grant from Oregon Housing and Community Services to go along with \$350,000 to \$450,000 of private investment. He said the Northeast Oregon Housing Authority would manage the development.

The second phase of the development involves building cottages that would be available for sale to veterans, rather than rental units, Tsiatsos said. That phase would be south of the first phase, nearer F Street.

# CRIME

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A big reason for the confidence is that task force members went to the Finley Creek site where the woman’s remains were found twice in 2021 with cadaver dogs. The task force brought a single dog once and two on another trip. Each of the two dogs indicated they found ground under which there are human remains at the same site at or near a tree.

“One dog pawed at the ground near the tree,” Jederberg said.

The task force members did not dig at the site because it is a crime scene and thus it would be illegal to disrupt it. They instead notified the Oregon State Police who later decided to investigate the site and possibly dig there.

Suzanne Timms of Walla Walla, Washington, who is assisting with the search as a volunteer, is glad that highly trained OSP investigators will soon be examining the Finley Creek site.

“They know how to collect evidence without contaminating the site. I can’t wait,” Timms said.

## A daughter’s search

Timms is elated that the OSP will be investigating the site since she is certain the Finley Creek Jane Doe is her mother, Patricia “Patty” Otto, of Lewiston, Idaho, who has been missing since Sept. 1, 1976.

Timms first suspected that the Finley Creek Jane Doe was her mother in 2021 when she saw an image created by a forensic artist in Massachusetts, Anthony Redgrave, the operator of Redgrave Research Forensic Services. Redgrave was assisting the Finley Creek Jane Doe group, and the image he created look very similar to that of Timms’ mother.

Other details have contributed to Timms’ belief that the Finley Creek Jane Doe is her mother. The remains were found with a white shirt and red pants, which is what Patty Otto was last seen wearing before disappearing.

As part of the investigation in 1978, Lewiston police believed the Jane Doe could be Patty Otto, and Timms’ grandparents Thomas O’Malley and Ardys O’Malley were flown from Lewiston to La Grande to identify the body. Timms said they were sure the remains were those of their daughter, because the white shirt and red pants were found with the remains at Finley Creek.

“I found records indicating that they told the Lewiston police that the white shirt and red pants looked very similar to what my mother was wearing before she disappeared,” Timms said, who discovered this information earlier this year.

Timms believes that her mother was murdered in Lewiston by her father, and then taken to Finley Creek where he buried her in a shallow grave.

The OSP’s autopsy records for the Finley Creek Jane Doe, however, do not match those of Patty Otto.

Timms believes the discrepancy is due to an error made by the OSP’s med-

ical examiner while doing examinations of the skeletal remains for two Jane Does in his office at about the same time in 1978. She suspects he assigned his reports to the wrong Jane Does because his report for the second Jane Doe matches her mother’s autopsy photos and dental records.

“It appears that he had the two Jane Does confused based upon documents he wrote himself,” Timms said.

## A cash award

Timms said she is excited about the OSP’s plans to examine the Finley Creek site because if bones are found their DNA tests could prove that they are the bones of her mother. Currently, there are no known bones of the Finley Creek Jane Doe because they are believed to have been cremated by the state after they were found, Timms said.

A recent cash award for information on the Finley Creek Jane Doe also offers hope that new evidence may come to light.

Interest in the Finley

Creek Jane Doe has picked up since Crime Stoppers of Oregon announced in March that it was offering a cash award of up to \$2,500 to help identify the murdered woman.

“It has generated a lot of

calls about the case,” Jederberg said.

Jederberg, of the Finley Creek Jane Doe Task Force, said she hopes the reward and increased interest will encourage people to step forward.

## Mikel Terry Holbrook

November 18, 1940 - March 27, 2022

Mikel Terry Holbrook, 81, of Joseph, passed away at his home of heart failure.

Terry was born in Grangeville, Idaho, the third child of Charles Holbrook and Ruth Harris Holbrook. Early in his childhood the family moved to Joseph, Oregon, where his two younger sisters were born. He attended school in Joseph and graduated in 1959. In 1962 Terry and Judi Cornwell were married in Enterprise where they lived in town until their new home on Alder Slope was completed. Alder Slope remained their home for the next 56 years. There he enjoyed raising his two sons, sheep, cattle and pasturing retired horses and mules for others.

Terry was hired by The Wallowa County Road Dept. as part-time help the spring he graduated high school. He remained on the job 43 years, retiring in 2002 as road superintendent. After retiring, Terry enjoyed working for Jones Excavating and Moffit Brothers driving truck and travel bus with his buddy Jim Mackin.

He was a member of the Enterprise Elks Lodge and held a Voting Membership with Chief Joseph Days Rodeo, Inc. He was proud of being named Elk of the year in 1968. Terry was instrumental in forming the Enterprise Booster Club and was selected by the wrestlers to the Boosters’ Honor Roll. He was appreciative of being recognized as an Honorary Chapter Farmer for FFA.

He was selected Grand Marshal of the Chief Joseph Days Parade in 2008.

Terry participated and volunteered for everything involving his sons. He spent many years coaching youth baseball and raising 4-H and FFA sheep. He loved camping, fishing, hunting and making summer sausage, jerky and smoked cheese.

Terry is survived by his wife; son Ron (Denise) of Broomfield, CO; son Dan (Barb) of Keizer, OR; five grandchildren, Kyle, Sarah and Abby of Broomfield, CO; Wyatt of Scotts Mills, OR; Wade of La Grande, OR; and great-granddaughter Emberlynn of Scotts Mills, OR; three sisters, Dawn Meyers of Sutherlin, OR; Kathy Lamm (Kevin) of Leavenworth, WA; Connie Simonis (Larry) of Clarkston, WA; and many nephews and nieces.

He was preceded in death by his father, mother, sister Sharon, step-father Wayne Davis and brother-in-law Max Meyers.

The celebration of life will be at 11 a.m. Friday, April 8, 2022, at the Thunder Room in Joseph, Bollman Funeral Home entrusted with arrangements

Memorial contributions may be made to the Chief Joseph Days Rodeo, Inc. Hall of Fame fund or charity of choice.



# SENATOR

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was working toward training National Guard members to assist fire chiefs, as well as fighting for better pay for fire teams to combat high turnover. Merkley also said that his team was trying to see if “fire teams can be hired to do forest management work when they’re not fighting fires so they can have year-round work.”

Closely related to the fire season is the ongoing drought. The senator said that the irrigation district’s top goal has been to improve the efficiency of their distribution systems across Oregon.

“I have worked to get about \$130 million in Oregon for piping for irrigation systems,” Merkley said. “Obviously, the task of piping is much larger than that, but that is still a huge effort of an unusual possi-

bility for that much funding to help irrigation districts. (We’ve) really been focused on that program.”

Merkley also said that he was looking into agricultural research related to how to grow crops that are better in drier environments.

“The agricultural research station is doing a lot more work on how to conserve water in La Grande for our dry wheat farming, and what versions of wheat will do better in drier conditions,” he said.

## Access to internet and housing

Among those infrastructure projects are increased access to broadband internet in rural areas that have relied on satellite internet connections. An increasing number of companies are installing fiber-optic cables, but those solutions can be expensive and have a low return on investment for network providers

if they lay a line to rural areas outside of a municipality. A proposed solution, Merkley said, could be in newly developed microwave repeater networks and technology that keeps information signals terrestrial.

“Laying fiber becomes too expensive for just a couple of houses,” Merkley said. “Many counties are designing their system using microwave relays, which unlike satellites, can carry a much higher bandwidth at lower cost.”

He also touched on the growing housing crisis and how it impacts rural Oregonians who are getting priced out of the real estate market, or are facing homelessness as rents and real estate prices continue to increase. Those real estate changes have also hurt the economy as businesses struggle to attract workers in areas where housing costs have far outpaced wages.

“Almost every commu-

nity is wrestling with many aspects of housing. From housing homeless individuals to services related to some kind of addiction or to mental health, or the fact that it’s getting too expensive for middle-class Americans to buy homes, or there’s just no homes built,” Merkley said. “There’s no easy solution. We need to provide a lot of support for rural housing.”

## Build Back Better

Noting the omnibus infrastructure spending plan approved by the Senate, the Build Back Better act, Merkley said he is fighting to get projects approved in rural areas of the state.

“The question is how many applications can we get in,” he said. “I’m going to fight to get those applications funded, and we’re hoping there will be projects throughout rural Oregon as a result of the infrastructure bill.”

Union County will begin their roadside spraying program to control vegetation and noxious weeds that are encroaching on county road shoulders and right-of-ways. In most locations, spraying will extend four to eight feet from pavement edges. Property owners who do not want herbicides applied near their property must sign an “Owner Will Maintain” agreement with the county which must be updated annually. The county will provide signs for the owners participating. Property owners wishing to participate can sign up for the “Owner Will Maintain” program at the Union County Public Works Department located at 10513 N. McAlister Road in Island City. Any questions, please call Brian Clapp 541-805-5399 or email bclapp@union-county.org.

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