

THE OBSERVER

SERVING UNION AND WALLOWA COUNTIES SINCE 1896

April 7, 2022

THURSDAY EDITION

\$1.50

INSIDE EXPLORE CONCERTS AND ESCAPE ROOMS IN **GO!**



Classic cars vandalized at Imbler prom

Local car shop offers services after vintage cars are damaged at high school event

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

IMBLER — On what is meant to be a highlight of the school year, several Imbler students saw their prom night end in disappointment.

Three vintage vehicles belonging to families of Imbler students were vandalized during the event, held at White Barn Estate outside of La Grande on the evening of Saturday, April 2. Those involved are still looking for answers, while a local auto detailing shop provides its services to those impacted.

“The biggest thing to me was that these rigs only come out on very special occasions like this,” said Krager Muilenburg, one of the students whose vehicle was vandalized. “The three of us did our best to make them look the best that they could, so the fact that they got messed with for no apparent reason was very frustrating.”

Three vehicles were found covered in strawberry syrup after the event — a 1997 Ford pickup truck, 1960s Plymouth Duster and a 1970s Chevrolet Blazer. The syrup reportedly damaged the paint on the vehicles, particularly one with a white paint job.

According to several involved, the cars belong to the students’ parents and grandparents, and the prom served as a special occasion in which the students were allowed to drive the vehicles.

“Those cars have been very precious to us,” Muilenburg said of driving his grandfather’s pickup by himself for the first time. “Ever since we were little, they were something we’ve taken care of and taken an interest in.”

The Union County Sheriff’s Office was made aware of the vandalism, and the car owners were encouraged to file a report. Sheriff Cody Bowen stated that each will need to file a separate victim report. The vandalism has potential to be filed as criminal mischief, with the culprit being held accountable if identified.

Dirty Girls Detailing, a car detailing service operating in

See, **Vandals**/Page A7



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group
Abri Meeks, 10, demonstrates a hair-raising experiment using a Van de Graaff generator at an OMSI presentation in the Island City Elementary School gym on Monday, April 4, 2022.

Hair-raising lessons

OMSI program teaching La Grande students about the wonders of electricity

By **DICK MASON** • The Observer

LA GRANDE — A number of La Grande School District grades schoolers are having electrifying experiences this week to the delight of their classmates.

The manes and curls of students in third, fourth and fifth grades are standing up, sometimes as much as 6 inches as they learn about the fundamentals of electricity during a program titled “Jolts, Volts and Wires” being presented by Michael Kirby, of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry’s Outreach Team.

Students are getting excited about electricity, while participating in demonstrations Kirby is conducting with the aid of devices such as a Van de Graaff generator, which generates static electricity by using friction. The generator uses a moving belt to accumulate an electric charge on a hollow metal globe on the top of an insulated column.

If a person holds the dome, they too



Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group
Calvin Samuel, 9, uses static electricity from a balloon to attract pieces of confetti at an OMSI presentation in Island City Elementary School’s gym on Monday, April 4, 2022.

will become charged and the individual hairs on their head will stand out and spread away from each other, as classmates cheer.

Kirby enjoys the demonstrations as much as the children.

“This is like a dream job,” he said. “I

don’t feel like I am working.”

He said that even on days when he encounters groups of students who are hard to instruct, he counts himself fortunate.

See, **OMSI**/Page A7

Political candidates vie for voters’ attention as primary looms

Baker City mayor appears at weekend Reawaken America rally in Salem

By **GARY A. WARNER**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — As Oregon’s political campaigns head into the final stretch before the May 17 primary, candidates on the left and right are working for votes among their ideological base to win the closed primary.

With only party members able to vote in partisan primary races, the turnout is usually about half of the general election.

Republicans are seeking votes of Republican activists who won’t skip the primary, while Democrats go after the progressive wing of their party who turn out in large numbers for primaries. It’s also a time when lesser-known candidates can make a splash and draw the attention of the party faithful.

See, **Primary**/Page A7



Kerry McQuisten for Oregon/Contributed Photo

Oregon Republican gubernatorial candidate and Baker City Mayor Kerry McQuisten, right, stands Friday, April 1, 2022, at the Reawaken America rally in Keizer with former Gen. Michael Flynn, who President Donald Trump pardoned of charges he lied about contacts with Russian agents while working at the White House.

INDEX

Business.....B1 Dear Abby....B6 Opinion.....A4
Classified.....B2 Horoscope....B4 Spiritual.....A6
Comics.....B5 Lottery.....A2 Sports.....A9
Crossword....B2 Obituaries....A5 Sudoku.....B5

WEATHER

 Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight 48 Low Partly cloudy
Friday 60/35 Rain and drizzle

CONTACT US

541-963-3161
Issue 42
3 sections, 32 pages
La Grande, Oregon

Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com.
More contact info on Page A4.



8 51153 00100 6

SATURDAY STATE TROOPER RISES TO CHALLENGE

Online at lagrandeobserver.com