

# Rotary: From grilled onions to worldwide service

Rotary's longtime connection to Chief Joseph Days aids many

By **JEFF BUDLONG**  
Wallowa County Chieftain

**JOSEPH** — The sweet smell of fried onions is set to fill the air around Chief Joseph Days once again.

For more than 25 years, the Rotary Club of Wallowa County has been a fixture at Chief Joseph Days selling food as its primary fundraiser for the year. The cheeseburgers, hot dogs and drinks are popular enough that the club grew from a cramped trailer to a more permanent structure where the grill and wok are able to satisfy the happy customers.

"We run the Bronc Buster Grill out of that space, and it is the only time of the year it is open," club president-elect Jeff Fields said. "Our big draw is that we grill up a bunch of Walla Walla sweet onions and that aroma floats across the rodeo grounds. It is our biggest advertisement."

Seven rotary members work



Rotarian John McColgan takes an order at the Bronc Buster Grill during the 2019 Chief Joseph Days celebration.

Contributed Photo

shifts throughout the four days of the event with Fields often manning the grill with another person at the two-foot wok tending to the onions. Two people take orders at a time, someone preps the food, a

floaters helps where needed and a cashier collects money.

It comes across as a well-oiled machine, but planning begins in April to get the wheels in motion, and food vendors are lined up in

May. All of the food comes from local vendors. Fields said the club will grill about 100 pounds of onions and about 1,000 hamburger patties weighing in at one-third pound each.

Each day the grill is restocked and the process starts all over again. The long days lead to tired bodies, but Fields said it is all worth it in the end.

Rotary members work in shifts across the days and are often greeted by the smiles of returning customers throughout the years. It allows the club to showcase itself to people that come far and wide to Chief Joseph Days.

"It is a great community partnership and a great way to showcase the service reason behind Rotary," Fields said. "The motto of Rotary is 'a life of service.'" Fields said it also allows rotaractors (those 18 through their 20s) and interactors (high school rotary clubs) to see their club in action and build connections with other members.

"I think it is important for people of all ages to have examples," Field said. "To have people and those in their 20s is a great example of when people

work together, so much more can get done."

## Lasting impact

Although there are just four nights of rodeo at Chief Joseph Days, the proceeds that are raised help sustain the Rotary Club of Wallowa County's general fund throughout the year. The club focuses on education, health and the local environment.

"We do short- and long-term high school student exchange, there is a youth leader conference we send a person to and job shadowing for high school students," Fields said. "We also support seven female students in El Salvador."

The club also aids a drinking water project in Baja, Mexico, and helps the local food bank and several other projects out of its general fund.

Fields said being able to help others gets back to the core of the Rotary Club of Wallowa County.

"It is a group that is really animated by this idea of a life of service, and they are putting it into practice," he said. "It is just people who want to get things done and have a good time doing it."

## Foundation awards grant to Cook Memorial Library

Funds will be used to purchase new books for club members and all patrons

The Observer

**LA GRANDE** — Cook Memorial Library, La Grande, has been awarded a \$1,500 grant by the Libraries of Union County Foundation. The funds will be used to purchase six months of books for the Mystery Book Club's members and books to create Book Club Kits for all library patrons.



Peacock

Rose Peacock, adult ser-

vices librarian, in a press release said, "We're so grateful to the Library Foundation for this grant. It will allow our book club more flexibility in their choices and provide book club kits for our community."

The Libraries of Union County Foundation is dedicated to promoting lifelong literacy by providing grants to the public libraries in Union County.

Check out Cook Memorial Library's many offerings and programs at [www.cookmemoriallibrary.org](http://www.cookmemoriallibrary.org), call 541-962-1339 or stop by 2006 Fourth St.



The Observer, File

A clear blue sky outlines the main entrance to Cook Memorial Library, 2006 Fourth St., La Grande, in this 2016 photo. In July 2022 the library announced it was awarded a \$1,500 grant by the Libraries of Union County Foundation. The funds will be used to purchase six months of books for the library's book clubs.

## DEATH & SERVICE NOTICES

### Richard Tittle

North Powder

Richard Tittle, 70, of North Powder, died July 20, 2022. Arrangements are by Tami's Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Halfway.

### Richard 'Dick' Wood

Elgin

Richard "Dick" Wood, 88, of Elgin, died July 22, 2022, at his home. Arrangements are by Daniels-Knopp Funeral, Cremation & Life Celebration Center, La Grande.

## UPCOMING LOCAL SERVICES



**July 30 — MILDRED McMURPHY:** 10 a.m. memorial service, La Grande Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Stake Center.

**July 30 — MIKE RUTH:** 11 a.m. celebration of life, Daniels-Knopp Funeral, Cremation & Life Celebration Center, La Grande; food and fellowship follows at Island City City Hall.

**July 30 — TIFFANY GIRRARD:** 1:30 p.m. Rosary, 2 p.m. Mass of Christian Burial, Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, La Grande.

**July 30 — CLARENCE WILSON:** 2 p.m. celebration of life, Lighthouse Pentecostal Church, Island City (casual dress preferred).

**Aug. 5 — JOHN CEDERHOLM:** 2 p.m. funeral, La Grande Church of the Nazarene (casual dress preferred); graveside service immediately follows at Hillcrest East Cemetery, La Grande, then a celebration of life at the McIntosh Barn, 62576 Leffel Road.

— Calendar courtesy of Loveland Funeral Chapel, La Grande

## COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

### MEETING

• **LA GRANDE** — The Inter-Mountain Education Service District Board of Directors meets for a board retreat and regular board meeting on Wednesday, July 27, 1604 27th St., in La Grande. The retreat will be from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., followed by the regular meeting. To access the agenda and Zoom information, go to [www.imesd.k12.or.us](http://www.imesd.k12.or.us).

### BRIEFS

#### Visit Cook Memorial Library this week for storytime

**LA GRANDE** — Cook Memorial Library, 2006 Fourth St., La Grande invites children to the Thursday, July 28, storytime in the library's Story Circle at 10:30 a.m. for songs, stories and a craft. Older kids can get crafty at the weekly Kid Craft Friday from 3-4 p.m. The Friday, July 29 activity, for ages 7-10, is painting rocks. On Saturdays, join the Campfire Sing-Along at 10:30 a.m. in the Story Circle.

For more information on upcoming events, go to [www.cookmemorial-](http://www.cookmemorial-)

[library.org](http://www.cookmemorial-), stop by the library or call 541-962-1339.

#### Kids practicing safe bicycle riding may be rewarded

**LA GRANDE** — The La Grande Police Department has partnered with the La Grande Parks Department's Safe Routes to School Program and Cook Memorial Library to reward safe bicycle riders July 18-29. Local officers will be giving away free coupons periodically to kids they see practicing safe riding during the two-week event. For more information on bicycle safety, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website: [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov).

#### Sign up now for free QuickBooks class

**LA GRANDE** — Training & Employment Consortium, 1901 Adams, La Grande, is offering free hands-on QuickBooks training Aug. 2-4. During the three-day course, 8:30-11:30 a.m. each day, participants will build a sample company by developing and using accounts to make daily transactions, receive

and maintain inventory, pay bills, record payments and then review income and expense and balance sheet reports. Register by calling Coral at 541-633-2084.

#### Watch a movie under the stars

**LA GRANDE** — The city of La Grande Parks and Recreation Department and Union County Safe Communities Coalition are hosting movie nights at Pioneer Park this summer. Watch "Raya and the Lost Dragon" on July 29 and "Detective Pikachu" on Aug. 19. Come to the park by 9 p.m., and the free movies begin at dusk. Bring snacks and lawn chairs or blankets.

#### All ages invited to community dance July 30 in La Grande

**LA GRANDE** — The BlueMountaineers will provide live music for an end-of-the-month community dance on Saturday, July 30, from 6-9 p.m., at the Union County Senior Center, 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande Admission is \$5, or free for ages 12 and younger. The evening includes a finger food potluck.

— The Observer

## PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

### FRIDAY, JULY 22

5:03 a.m. — La Grande police responded to the 400 block of Harrison Avenue for a disturbance and arrested a 44-year-old woman for resisting arrest and disorderly conduct.

8:36 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1900 block of H Avenue on a report of an assault. Officers took a report and arrested one person.

9:21 p.m. — Emergency services responded to Greenwood Street and Madison Avenue, La Grande, on a report of a fire.

10:35 p.m. — A Union County sheriff's deputy responded to the 40 block of North 14th Avenue, Elgin, on report of a suspicious person. The deputy warned the subject.

### SATURDAY, JULY 23

2:53 a.m. — La Grande police responded to a complaint about a loud party on the 1900 block of H Avenue. Police dispersed the party.

1:28 p.m. — Union County Sheriff's Office responded to Panda Express, 11617 Island Ave., Island City, and cited Catlin James Ganung, 35, for first-degree theft, second-degree criminal trespass and second-degree criminal mischief.

3:50 p.m. — La Grande police responded to N Avenue and Ninth Street on a complaint about a suspicious person selling jewelry. An officer counseled the subject, who then left.

5:55 p.m. — Union County Sheriff's Office received a request for assistance with a vehicle theft from the 63200 block of Highway 203. A deputy responded and determined the vehicle was towed.

10:34 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1600 block of L Avenue on a complaint of a loud party. Police advised people to keep it down.

10:41 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 2400 block of R Avenue on a report of a disturbance. Police arrested a 26-year-

old man for second-degree disorderly conduct.

### SUNDAY, JULY 24

3:25 a.m. — Local emergency services responded to Phys Road and Highway 237, La Grande, on a report a vehicle that crashed and rolled. A Union County sheriff's deputy took a report.

9:43 a.m. — Law enforcement responded to the area of 69900 Hidden Valley Lane, Cove, on a domestic disturbance call and separated the parties involved.

3:08 p.m. — A Union County sheriff's deputy and Oregon State Police trooper responded to the 800 block of Third Street, North Powder, on a report of a disturbance. Officers separated the parties involved.

6:55 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1100 block of D Avenue for a disturbance and made an arrest.

8:27 p.m. — A caller reported a suspicious motor home on the 1300 block of Ninth Street, La Grande. An officer checked into it and found the friend of a resident in the neighborhood owned the motor home.

## La GRANDE AUTO REPAIR

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• Paid obituary information should be ready for print prior to submission. If a proof is requested, the obituary will be published in the next available edition once approved, based on the newspaper's advertising deadlines.

• DEADLINES: Noon Friday for Tuesday publication; noon Tuesday for Thursday publication; noon Thursday for Saturday publication.

• CONTACT: Devi Mathson, [dmathson@lagrandeobserver.com](mailto:dmathson@lagrandeobserver.com) • 541-624-6007

**DEATH NOTICE** - Free of charge • 150-word maximum in newspaper content style

• Includes name, age, town of residency and information about any funeral services or life celebrations. • No add-ons available (photos, etc.).

• DEADLINE: 11 a.m. the day prior to publication

• CONTACT: Lisa Lester Kelly, [lkelly@lagrandeobserver.com](mailto:lkelly@lagrandeobserver.com) • 541-624-6019



### Open Class Static Entries

Will only be accepted on the following dates & times. All static entries need to be dropped off at the Courtright Building

Sunday, July 31st

4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

Monday, August 1st

10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Tuesday, August 2nd

8:00 am to 10:00 am, **Horticulture Only**

Join us for the 150th Union County Fair!