

Chief Joseph Days court excited for chance to lead

By JEFF BUDLONG
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH – Maggie Zacharias is carrying on a family tradition as queen of the Chief Joseph Days Rodeo, but it also has a bigger meaning for the 19-year-old from Joseph. Zacharias saw her aunt crowned queen in 2000, her cousin followed in 2019 and her grandparents were involved with Chief Joseph Days for years.

Zacharias has experience as queen of a rodeo court, taking that honor for the Elgin Stampede in 2019. It was during this time she met Ty Hallgarth, who would make a big impression on her.

“Ty was a board member at Elgin and we went to Vegas in December of 2019, and the conversation we struck up on the plane was whether I was running for Chief Joseph Days,” she said. “I told him ‘yes’ and he said he would be my biggest fan.

“Unfortunately, Ty passed away at the beginning of this year. I have dedicated my queen year and everything to Ty because he helped me get here.”

Hallgarth was a major supporter of rodeo and worked to help others get the most out of their experiences.

For Zacharias, who was named queen in April, it is also a chance to support her hometown rodeo, even if it did have its challenges at times.

“On the other rodeo court, we only had to give one speech one time,” she said. “For Chief Joseph Days we had to give it four times. I never have had to tryout in the snow, but I ran barrels in the snow and



Ellen Bishop/Contributed Photo

The 2022 Chief Joseph Days Court are, from left, princess Mia Salerno, queen Maggie Zacharias and princess Bailey Vernam. They are presiding over the festivities July 27-31, 2022, in Joseph.

did our tryouts in the snow in April. It was a lot with it being senior year, and I wondered how I would get it all done.”

Zacharias is joined on the court by princesses Bailey Vernam of Enterprise and Mia Salerno of Joseph. All three were judged on their speeches, ticket sales and horseback riding.

Each enjoys time on their horses and are excited to be part of the events and celebrations of Chief Joseph Days.

“I am excited to do our rodeo and for it to be our time to push cows and do run-ins,” Zacharias said.

She will be showcasing several horses during Chief Joseph Days. Cowboy is a

10-year-old gelding, Rudi is a 7-year-old gelding, Snickers is another gelding and Kaddi is a 9-year-old mare.

Vernam, 18, also has a history with the event. Her mother, Shannon, of Enterprise, was also a princess at Chief Joseph Days. Vernam will ride Domino, which stands more than 17 hands high during Chief Joseph Days.

Salerno, 18, trained her horse, Bugatti, named after the sports car for her passion for speed.

Salerno earned her first royalty honors at Chief Joseph Days and has been excited to attend different rodeos to meet people and strike up friendships. She has a passion for riding.

“I first sat on a horse when I was a couple of months old and I started competing actively when I was 7,” she said. “I have done rodeos, gaming shows and barrel racing.”

Vernam is looking forward to riding in the parade and watching children come up and interact with her and Domino.

The trio are spending the summer on the rodeo circuit, starting with the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show in early June, and ending with the Pendleton Round Up in September. At each rodeo, they will ride in parades, participate in rodeo run-ins and meet other rodeo courts from around the region.

Zacharias, the daughter of Luke and Merilee Zacharias, is set to enter the workforce as a medical assistant at Winding Waters Medical Clinic in Enterprise. Vernam will attend the University of Idaho in the fall and major in pre-health professions with designs on becoming an orthodontist. Salerno, the daughter of Damian and Kristan Salerno, will enter a trade school to learn to weld.

After the pandemic canceled the 2020 Chief Joseph Days and life returns to more normal with each passing day, this year’s event is important to the court.

“We can show people that we are back with rodeo,” Zacharias said. “We still need to be cautious of COVID, but don’t be afraid to come out and have a good time.”

“It is so nice to be back to normal,” Vernam said. “Being able to see people’s faces and the smiles we bring to them is so amazing to me.”

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

WEDNESDAY, JULY 27

7:03 a.m. — A caller reported cattle on the loose at Spruce Street and May Lane, La Grande. Union County sheriff’s deputies responded and returned the cattle to their owner.

3:21 p.m. — A caller in the area of 70600 Palmer Junction Road, Elgin, reported finding horses. A Union County sheriff’s deputy made contact and returned the horses to their owners.

7:53 p.m. — Union County Sheriff’s Office received a report of a possible sex crime.

8:33 p.m. — A caller reported animal cruelty on the 2600 block of Fourth Street, La Grande.

10:23 p.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about fireworks on the 1300 block of O Avenue. An officer responded and counseled the subjects.

THURSDAY, JULY 28

12:51 a.m. — Union County sheriff’s deputies responded to the 1700 block of Highway 204, Elgin, on a report of a domestic distur-

bance. Deputies separated the parties.

8:22 a.m. — A caller reported goats on the loose in the area of 10600 South Walton Road, Island City. An animal enforcement officer returned the goats to their owners.

1:36 p.m. — La Grande police took a report for someone who failed to register as a sex offender.

4:16 p.m. — A caller reported livestock on the loose in the area of 11200 South McAlister Road, Island City.

5:21 p.m. — A Union County sheriff’s deputy responded to Walmart, 11619 Island Ave., Island City, on a report of a dog in a hot car. The dog was OK, and the deputy counseled the owner.

7:23 p.m. — Union County Sheriff’s Office responded to Walmart, 11619 Island Ave., Island City, on a report of shoplifting. Deputies arrested Ruben Kenneth Richard Shockman, 23, for first-degree theft.

11:41 p.m. — A resident on the 1000 block of C Avenue, La Grande, reported a violation of a no-contact release agreement. An officer responded and explained options.

BIRTHS

GRANDE RONDE HOSPITAL, LA GRANDE

NEAVES: Nova Rose Neaves, born July 16, 2022, to Hope Marie Morasch and Jason Tyler Neaves, of La Grande.

PUA: Teagan Kross Hiatt Pua, born July 19, 2022, to Sarah Anne Hiatt and Roland Pua, of La Grande. Grandparents are Robert Hiatt and Rocky Lakey.

ROSS: Desmond Allan Ross, born July 15, 2022, to Sarah Ann Wehrle and Tamson Losgrove Ross, of La Grande. Grandparents are Cheryl Losgrove, Doug Ross and Janet Wehrle.

SOFE: Syllas Sofe, born July 14, 2022, to Meagan Sofe and Nur Sofe, of La Grande.

Darlene Ruth Ables April 11, 1933 - July 16, 2022

Darlene Ruth Ables was born on April 11, 1933, in Union, Oregon. She was raised in Union, starting first grade in Union and graduating from Union High School in 1951. She married David Ables on Aug. 13, 1956, and they had six children.

Darlene worked mostly in restaurants, waiting tables in Union, La Grande and Otis Junction on the coast. She also worked at the Oregon Experimental Station as a file clerk. She enjoyed sewing, crocheting, knitting and camping with the family.

Memorable times in Darlene’s life included going to Disneyland as a family and a month-long trip to Tennessee traveling by Amtrak. She was most proud of growing up in Union, being able to attend all of her children’s school events and special occasions. She was a room mother and 4-H leader for all of her children.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, David; and three infant children

Darlene is survived by three children and their spouses, David and Charlene Ables of La Grande, Oregon, Curtis and Deanne Combs of Pasco, Washington, and Debbie Ables of Union, Oregon; four grandchildren; brothers, Donald George of Union, Oregon, and Terry George of Bates, Oregon; and nephew, Matt and his wife Cara Ediger, of Union, Oregon.

Those who would like to make a donation in memory of Darlene may do so to the Multiple Sclerosis Society through Tami’s Pine Valley Funeral Home & Cremation Services, P.O. Box 543, Halfway, OR 97834.

Online condolences may be shared at www.tamispinevalleyfuneralhome.com.



Dick Mason/The Observer

Nobody was injured in a motor vehicle accident at Cherry Street and Adams Avenue in La Grande at about 10 a.m. on Wednesday, July 27, 2022. The accident occurred when the driver of a 2001 Chevy Tahoe allegedly ran a stop sign and collided with a 2013 Ford Escape, according to the La Grande Police Department. The Ford Escape, shown above with Lance Hafer, of Captain Hooks Towing, had to be towed from the scene. A third vehicle, a 1998 Ford, was also hit but was not seriously damaged. The driver of the 2001 Tahoe, Tyler D. Smith, 18, of La Grande, was cited by the La Grande Police Department on charges of failure to perform the duties of a driver in an accident and failure to obey a traffic control device.



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DEATH & SERVICE NOTICES

Scott C. Charon

Formerly of La Grande

Scott C. Charon, 52, formerly of La Grande, died June 21, 2022, at OHSU in Portland. A graveside service will be held Aug. 12 at 1 p.m. at the Island City Cemetery.

Donald L. Dickison Jr.

Formerly of Union County

Donald Lewis Dickison Jr., 55, formerly of Union County, died July 23, 2022, in Vancouver, Washington. A celebration of his life will be held at a later date.

Calvin Isley

La Grande

Calvin Isley, 82, of La Grande, died July 28, 2022, at a local care facility. Arrangements are by Loveland Funeral Chapel & Crematory, La Grande.

UPCOMING LOCAL SERVICES



July 30 — TINA HOWELL: 10 a.m. memorial service, Elgin Community Center (casual dress preferred); a potluck follows the service.

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 — DOUG TRICE: 1 p.m. celebration of life, Pioneer Park Pavilion; ceremony will include a ribbon cutting ceremony for the field named in his honor.

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.

Aug. 12 — SCOTT CHARON: 1 p.m. graveside service, Island City Cemetery.

Aug. 20 — DORIAN ‘DORN’ COX: 2 p.m. graveside service, Union Cemetery (casual dress preferred); a barbecue follows at Georgia Cox’s home.

Sept. 3 — NYLE ROLLINS: 1 p.m. celebration of life, Fred Beeman Park, Island City.

Sept. 4 — JEFF BOND: 1 p.m. celebration of life, Lone Hawk Ranch, 57899 Highway 237, Union.

— Calendar courtesy of Loveland Funeral Chapel, La Grande

OBITUARY AND DEATH NOTICE POLICY

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 - 2 column x 5" (approx. 150 words)\$79.50
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- 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.).

Timothy Jon “Tim” Conklin November 26, 1964 - July 21, 2022

Timothy Jon “Tim” Conklin, 57, passed away unexpectedly in Anacortes, Washington, on July 21, 2022. Born in La Grande, Oregon, he grew up on the Conklin family farm in Cove with his sisters in the same house in which his dad was born, on Conklin Lane. The farm was run by Conklins for generations. As an adult, he spent time living in La Grande, the Portland area, Northern California and Walla Walla, Washington, before moving to the Pacific Northwest. He settled in Anacortes in 2001, where his mother and one of his sisters were already living.

Tim worked for Puget Sound Rope for many years and more recently for Puget Sound Provisions at the Anacortes ferry dock. He was a motorcycle enthusiast from a young age, choosing motorcycles over horses growing up on the farm. But more than anything, Tim loved spending time with his pit bull, Roscoe, who was truly his best friend.

Tim was predeceased by his father, Thomas Richard Conklin, and his mother, Janis A. Conklin-Stavig. He is survived by his son, Tye Roberts of Spokane, Washington, and his daughter, Gwyneth; daughter, Shelby Conklin of Spokane and her son, Asher, and daughter, Izabelle; son, Dustin Conklin of Spokane and his son, Myles, and daughters, Mercedes and Zaley; sister, Lezlie Massey and her husband, James Massey, of Anacortes and their sons, Nikolaus and Tristan; and sister, Heather Theny of Grenoble, France, and her daughters, Emma and Lucy.

Tim touched a lot of people’s lives, and he was truly grateful for all of the friends, neighbors and family who provided friendship and support throughout the years.

As per his wishes, his remains will be buried in the Cove Cemetery alongside family members at a later date. A service was held at Evans Funeral Chapel and Crematory in Anacortes, Washington, on July 27. To share memories of Tim, please sign the online guest register at www.evanschapel.com/obituary/tim-conklin.

