

THE OBSERVER

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August 23, 2022

TUESDAY EDITION

lagrandeobserver.com | \$1.50

Island City Market & Deli, shown here on Monday, Aug. 22, 2022, was robbed at gunpoint on Aug. 20 around 7:30 p.m. The robber got away with an undisclosed amount of money.



Dick Mason/The Observer

Nobody hurt in armed robbery

Armed gunman robs Island City convenience store

The Observer

ISLAND CITY — An Island City convenience store, Island City Market & Deli, 10101 W. First St., was robbed at gunpoint on Saturday, Aug. 20.

Nobody was hurt in the robbery, conducted by a man who threatened people with a gun and ordered

a store employee to give him money. The robber drove away from the store with an undisclosed amount of money, according to the Union County Sheriff's Office.

No shots were fired in the incident, which took place at about 7:30 p.m.

Law enforcement officers from the Union County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon State Police and the La Grande Police Department responded to the scene.

Additional information about the

Aug. 20 robbery will be released later by the Union County Sheriff's Office, according to Sheriff Cody Bowen.

Island City Market & Deli is about 250 feet east of Bullseye Muzzle-loader's and More, where there was an attempted robbery on Sunday, July 17.

A woman from Walla Walla, Washington, a man from Clarkston, Washington, and a man from Hermiston were arrested in that case by the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Curtains go up on new funding

Elgin Opera House receives grant funding from Oregon Cultural Trust

By SHANNON GOLDEN
The Observer

LA GRANDE — As the thespians at the Elgin Opera House ramp up for their September show — “School of Rock” — they’ve got a host of experts in their corner. With a new grant from the Oregon Cultural Trust the Opera House has big plans for its upcoming performances and programs.

The Friends of the Opera House organization received a \$12,599 grant

from the Cultural Trust as part of its Cultural Development Grant program. And plans are to use the funding to bring in more specialized training — including acting coaches, vocal instructors, choreographers and visual artists.

“It really takes the show up a notch when you can bring in these specialists,” Kathy Bonney, the Friends of the Opera House treasurer and a board member.

Friends of the Opera House is a nonprofit charity organization that

funds and operates the opera house’s local theater endeavors.

Terry Hale, the executive artistic director at the Opera House, founded the nonprofit organization in 2007.

Bonney said that when she started as Hale’s executive assistant over a year ago, her goal was to find funding that offered more security than simply using the funds from one show to pay for the next.

See, **Grant**/Page A6



Students follow instructions during an acting exercise at the annual summer theater camp at the Elgin Opera House during the week of July 25, 2022. Elgin Opera House/Contributed Photo

What to do with \$3 million?

City of La Grande receives massive funding from the American Rescue Plan Act

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The city of La Grande received just over \$3 million of funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and is seeking input from residents on where the money would best be spent.

The city council will host a virtual town hall meeting Wednesday, Sept. 14, at 6 p.m. in order to share information on proposed projects, answer questions and gather feedback on how the money should be allocated.

“This is once-in-a-generation type of funding,” said La Grande City Manager Robert Strope. “We want to make sure it goes toward what will give us the most bang for our buck for the city.”

Passed in 2021, the American Rescue Plan allocated \$1.9 trillion for economic stimulus to help speed with economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing recession. The money must be committed to projects by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026. When the funding was first released, there were a number of restrictions in place on how the money could be spent, severely limiting the types of work to sewer or water projects. Only a limited amount could be allocated to revenue replacement projects — a broader category of projects, where funding could be spent on things like building renovations or park improvements.

These restrictions were relaxed and the maximum allocation toward revenues replacement projects was increased, allowing the city council to consider a wider range of plans for La Grande.

Department heads put together project proposals and these were submitted to the city council for review during a work session in June. The council cannot make decisions during a work session, so they reviewed the proposals, asked questions and created a preliminary ranking.

See, **Funding**/Page A6

On the green, in the green

Wildhorse CEO predicts Epson Tour event will have wide-ranging positive impacts

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

MISSION — Wildhorse Golf Course expects to draw more than 2,000 people to the Pendleton area at the end of August for a weeklong golf tournament that culminates with the first Ladies Professional Golf Association qualifying tournament held in Oregon.

The Wildhorse Ladies Classic,

an Epson Tour event, will be Sept. 2-4 at Wildhorse Golf Course. According to Gary George, CEO of Wildhorse Resort & Casino, the golf course will host a stop on the tour for two years with the option for a third. “This is the inaugural event, so we’re pretty excited about it,” he said.

Following the attempted robbery turned shootout on Aug. 17, the Umatilla Tribal Police Department informed Wildhorse there is no on-going threat to the resort, casino or community. “To our knowledge, there are no specific threats directed toward the Epson Tour or specific players, but WRC Security will be prepared to deal with any situation,”

See, **Wildhorse**/Page A6



Isabella Crowley/The Observer

Wildhorse Resort and Casino CEO Gary George stands outside the clubhouse at Wildhorse Golf Course in Mission on Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022. George was instrumental in helping Wildhorse land a spot on the Epson Tour, which starts Aug. 29.



INDEX

- ClassifiedB3
- Comics.....B7
- CrosswordB3
- Dear AbbyB8
- Home.....B1
- Horoscope....B3
- Local.....A2
- Lottery.....A2
- Obituaries.....A5
- OpinionA4
- Sports.....A7
- Sudoku.....B7

WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight 57 LOW Partly cloudy

Wednesday 90/56 Sunny and hot

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Issue 101
2 sections, 16 pages
La Grande, Oregon

Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com.
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