

From shovels to operating rooms



Karrine Brogoitti/The Observer

Grande Ronde Hospital officials, local dignitaries and representatives of the project’s design and construction teams pose at a groundbreaking ceremony for the hospital’s surgical facilities expansion on Thursday, Sept. 1, 2022. The \$72.6 million project will add a 98,000-square-foot surgical services building at the hospital campus in La Grande and is expected to be completed in 2024.

When it’s all been said before

Author and wilderness advocate Amy Irvine to lead online writing workshop

The Observer

ENTERPRISE — Wilderness advocate Amy Irvine will lead “Writing to Captivate When It’s All Been Said Before,” an four-session online writing workshop presented by Fishtrap, beginning Tuesday, Sept. 13.

As noted in a press release from Fishtrap, “In this time of viral memes and recycled sound bites, it can be hard to find fresh stories, new words — the kind that persuade more than the choir, that transcend today’s cultural and political divisions, But stories have

always changed and unified the world in its darkest hours — if only we can arrest the attentions of the distracted, the harried.”

In this workshop, each participant will develop a short work of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, or even a letter to the editor that addresses a social and/or ecological concern. Emphasis will be on learning how to avoid recycled and predictable language, scenes and ideas with the goal of discovering “how to surprise and compel (even ourselves!) so our words seize readers anew.”

The online sessions will



Fishtrap/Contributed Photo

Amy Irvine, author and wilderness advocate, will lead “Writing to Captivate When It’s All Been Said Before,” an online writing workshop beginning Tuesday, Sept. 13. See full details and register at www.fishtrap.org.

be held on Tuesdays, Sept. 13 to Oct. 4, from 5-7 p.m.

Registration is \$240, or \$215 for Fishtrappers. Register online at www.fishtrap.org. Call Fishtrap for further information at 541-426-3623.

Irvine is a wilderness advocate, a sixth-generation Utahn, a feminist and a “descendant of notorious Mormons,” according to the release.

Irvine’s memoir “Trespass: Living at the Edge of the Promised Land” received the Orion Book Award, the Ellen Meloy Desert Writers Award and the Colorado Book Award. She is also the author of “Desert Cabal: A New Season in the Wilderness,” a feminist response to western wilderness icon Edward Abbey’s “Desert Solitaire,” and of “Air Mail: Letters of Politics, Pandemics, and Place,” co-written with Pam Houston. Learn more at www.amyirvine.com.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 31

11:10 a.m. — A La Grande police officer responded to the 1600 block of Portland Street for a disturbance. The officer cited two people.

1:54 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 2000 block of Fourth Street on a report of a person with mental illness. Police arrested a 37-year-old woman for second-degree disorderly conduct and criminal trespass.

5:30 p.m. — A caller in Elgin made a complaint about a dog bite. A Union County sheriff’s deputy responded and took a report.

11:50 p.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about loud music on the 3200 block of Alder Street. An officer checked the area but heard no music.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 1

1 p.m. — A caller reported livestock was on the loose on Lower Cove Road, Cove. An animal enforcement officer checked but did not find any livestock.

2:40 p.m. — La Grande police on a follow-up arrested Jennifer Stewart, 40, of La Grande, for fourth-degree domestic violence assault.

4:53 p.m. — La Grande police received a complaint about identity theft. An officer provided options.

8:23 p.m. — La Grande police responded to JC Woodworks, 1415 Jefferson Ave., on a report of a disturbance. Officers warned a person for disorderly conduct.

10:05 p.m. — A La Grande resident on the 600 block of 12th Street reported harassment. An officer made contact and explained options.

**Norman Keith Titus
May 6, 1934 - August 11, 2022**

Norman Keith Titus, age 88, passed away Aug. 11, 2022, from underlying complications of COVID-19, at Wilcox Medical Center in Lihue, Kauai.

Norman was born May 6, 1934, in Haines, Oregon, to Marvin and Gertrude (Schuetz) Titus. He spent his youth in Union. Norman graduated in 1953 from Union High School, Union, Oregon.

On May 20, 1956, Norman married the love of his life, Carol Phillips. Norman and Carol had two children. Norman and his family also lived in Pendleton, Oregon; Boardman, Oregon; and Nampa, Idaho; before moving to Lihue, Kauai.

Norm was preceded in death by his parents, Marvin and Gertrude (Schutz) Titus; brother, Richard Titus; sister-in-law, Jill (Hermanson) Titus; and sister, Willora (Titus) George.

He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Carol (Phillips) Titus; son, Gray (Mary Lou Mindoro) Titus of Lihue, Kauai; daughter, Gayle Titus Westfall of Nampa, Idaho; five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and three great-great-grandchildren; brother, Ron (Dorothy) Titus of Union, Oregon; sister, Cinda Titus Petersen of Newberg, Oregon; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

**Ralph Eugene Giuffre
January 11, 1937 - August 24, 2022**

Ralph Eugene Giuffre passed away after a short illness in Corvallis, Oregon, on Wednesday, Aug. 24, 2022, surrounded by his loving family. He was born Jan. 11, 1937, to Giuseppi and Adeline Giuffre in San Francisco, California.

Ralph is survived by his loving and devoted wife of 34 years, Charlene Giuffre; his daughter, Tracy Witty (Steve); and stepsons, Steve George (Cathy Law) and Rick George (Kathleen). Ralph was so very proud of his grandchildren, Kyle, Jered, Chad, Sebastian, Maggie, Dylan, Noah and Sean.

Ralph was a devoted and lifelong Beaver fan, graduating from Oregon State College in 1963 with a BS degree in forest engineering. He worked for 33 years for Boise Cascade in La Grande, and Elgin, Oregon, as a forest engineer, designing roads and bridges all over Northeastern Oregon.

Hobbies included a lifelong love of all things golf and tennis. When he no longer could play the games himself, tennis and golf were always on his big-screen TV. He was also an avid hunter and fisherman and very proud of the first steelhead he caught, in the Grande Ronde River in beautiful downtown Troy, Oregon.

At his request there will not be a formal service. Cremation was provided by DeMoss-Durdan Funeral Home & Crematory, Corvallis.

UNION COUNTY SENIOR CENTER LUNCH MENU

LA GRANDE — Lunch is served at the Union County Senior Center, 1504 N. Albany St., La Grande, on weekdays. The meals are open to the public.

Dine-in meals are served from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; suggested donation is \$4 for age 60 and older, \$7 for all others. Takeout meals are available from noon to 1 p.m. at the kitchen’s back door; to-go meals are \$7.

For information on the senior center’s meal programs, including having lunches delivered by Meals on Wheels, call the

kitchen at 541-605-5556.

The senior center will be closed Monday, Sept. 5, for Labor Day. The menu for the rest of week is:

Tuesday: beef bourguignon over noodles, salad greens, fresh fruit, cookie.

Wednesday: chicken cordon bleu, rice pilaf, steamed winter blend vegetables, cucumber salad, cake.

Thursday: chicken potpie, salad greens, cottage cheese, fruit, lemon sorbet.

Friday: sloppy joes, steak fries, coleslaw, fresh fruit, cookie.

UPCOMING SERVICES



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.

Sept. 4 — MARJORIE JARVIS, KATHLEEN HATTON & JOAN JARVIS: 3 p.m. joint memorial service, The Barn at Tamarack Springs, Summerville.

Sept. 10 — LEE FRIES: 11 a.m. graveside service, Summerville Cemetery (casual dress preferred); gathering follows at the Summerville Tavern.

Sept. 10 — THORVAL BURROWS: 1 p.m. celebration of life and dinner, Wallowa Senior Center.

Sept. 17 — ROBERTA WITHERSPOON: 2 p.m. celebration of life and potluck, Elgin Community Center (casual dress preferred; bring a side dish or dessert if you wish).

Out-of-area services

Sept. 2 — DAN HAMRE: 11 a.m. service with military honors, Idaho State Veterans Cemetery, 10100 N. Horseshoe Bend Road, Boise; noon to 3 p.m. memorial gathering, VFW Capitol City Post 63, 8931 W. Ardene St., Boise.

Sept. 30 — JOHN FARRAR SR.: 9:30 a.m. memorial service, Tahoma National Cemetery, 18600 SE 240th St., Kent, Washington.

— Calendar courtesy of Loveland Funeral Chapel, La Grande

**Katherine “Kate” Ann (Flanagan) Moore
April 21, 1938 - August 23, 2022**

Katherine “Kate” Ann (Flanagan) Moore, 84, of La Grande, passed away on Tuesday, Aug. 23, 2022, at OHSU Hospital in Portland, Oregon. A funeral service will be held at Loveland Funeral Chapel on Saturday, Sept. 17, at 10 a.m.



Kate was born April 21, 1938, in Wilbur, Washington, to Aaron B. and Bessie M. (Schiebner) Flanagan. She graduated from La Grande High School with a 3.93 GPA. She married Ralph Edward Moore, and they had seven children. Kate resided in Santa Ana and Los Angeles, California, and in La Grande, Oregon.

Kate and Ralph moved to Southern California shortly after the birth of their second child, to further Ralph’s artistic education. While living in south-central Los Angeles, she worked for Union Bank as a teller. Kate would walk to ride the bus to work and back home, and she was always on time. Living in California, they had many visitors, Disneyland, San Diego Zoo, Sea World ... but mostly to see Kate and her family.

Kate, Ralph and the kids moved back to La Grande for a better life and to be closer to family. Another example of Kate’s work ethic - Kate and her family initially lived with her mother at the foot of Mount Emily, and she was employed by Terry Trailers. That winter, it snowed very heavily. She had to walk down a 3/4-mile lane with snow up to her thighs and shovel out the car that the snowplow had plowed in, before she could drive to work. You had to clock in on time all week to get your weekly bonus. Kate was always on time and never missed a bonus her entire time working at Terry Trailers. She also worked for Grande Ronde Sign Co. as the bookkeeper and Grande Ronde Hospital in the sewing department.

Kate enjoyed gardening. She once won Garden of the Month in La Grande. She enjoyed traveling and visited Germany, Italy, Amsterdam, Ireland, England and Belgium. Kate also enjoyed cooking, listening to music and attending concerts, viewing and creating art, reading, playing cards, her dogs and feeding the birds. Her greatest joy was spending time with her family.

Kate was a fantastic wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She was someone you could always depend on, and she had a great sense of humor and a great sense of style. Her home and flower gardens were always beautiful. Kate cared for her mother and brother in her own home, she also took in foster children, and she believed in people.

Kate could have been anything in life, but what she wanted most of all was what she had: a family who loved her deeply. In her last days she was asked, “Do you know how much you are loved?” She nodded “YES” without hesitation.

Kate is survived by her husband, Ralph E. Moore; her children, Katherine Moore of Beaverton, Oregon, Stephen (Tanna) Moore of Hayden, Idaho, David (Helen) Moore of Union, Oregon, Don (Elizabeth) Moore of Tacoma, Washington, Ruben Moore of La Grande, Oregon, and Larry (Virginia) Moore of Nyssa, Oregon; her sister, June Wood of La Grande, Oregon; daughter-in-law, Nancy Moore; 15 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and 18 nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, Aaron and Bessie (Schiebner) Flanagan; her son, Ralph M. Moore; and her two brothers, Keith and Larry Moore.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.

**Roberta Jean (Pierce) Witherspoon
July 10, 1951 - August 25, 2022**

Roberta Jean (Pierce) Witherspoon, 71, of Elgin, passed away peacefully on Thursday, Aug. 25, 2022, surrounded by her family. A celebration of life will be held at the Elgin Community Center on Saturday, Sept. 17, 2022, at 2 p.m., with a potluck lunch. (The family will provide the main dish.) Please dress casually and bring a dish to share if you wish.



Roberta was born on July 10, 1951, in Fowler, California, to Artie G. and Pearl Irene Pierce. She was sister to two brothers, Artie and Lindsey Pierce, and one stepbrother, Ray Morrison. On Sept. 13, 1969, Roberta married Dale Ray Witherspoon. They had three children, Keara Lerae, Trista Michele and Kelby Sean Witherspoon, and raised one grandchild, Lerae Nichole Ruck.

Roberta was a loving and compassionate woman who cared for others with her whole heart. She taught us all how to persevere and complete a task without “ruffling any feathers.” She enjoyed traveling with her best friend, Janice (Wells) Becker, and riding her bike to see new countries. She had a passion for adventure and shared her love for learning new things.

After a successful career of 48 years, Roberta retired from Boise Cascade, Elgin Complex, as the weighmaster. She was very passionate about her job and looked forward to seeing her “kids” each day and bringing Christmas goodies each year. Each of them was loved as a friend by Roberta.

Roberta is survived by her husband of 53 years, Dale Witherspoon; her children, Keara Witherspoon of Eugene, Oregon, Trista Svoboda of Walla Walla, Washington, and Kelby Witherspoon of Baker, Oregon; her brother, Artie Pierce of Tillamook, Oregon; her five grandchildren, Lerae Nichole Ruck, Aaron Hunter Johnson, and Aubrey Grace, Landen Rhett and Annalise Paige Witherspoon; and many cousins, nieces, nephews, and family friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations in Roberta’s name be made to either the Shriners Children’s Hospital, 3101 SW Sam Jackson Park Road, Portland, OR 97239-3095, or St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital, 262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.lovelandfuneralchapel.com.