

Local

Haines celebrates heroes

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Kylie ran to get her mother who was working nearby in the garden. Wesley pulled Thomas from the pond and Caleb remained calm and dialed 911 while their mother performed CPR. Emergency service personnel, Gary Timm, Tom Everson, Baker City Fire Chief Mark John, Deputy Eric Colton, and Sara Blair responded to the scene and began lifesaving medical procedures on Thomas, bringing him back to life. Local emergency treatment on Thomas was followed by a Life Flight helicopter ride to a Boise hospital. Thomas remained hospitalized until May 29 and was doing well after being released.

Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash presented Kylie, Caleb, and Wesley each with a life saving certificate during the assembly recognizing their bravery, quick action, and calmness in the face of dire circumstances. Father Adam watched on proudly with Thomas happily in his arms.

“The different agencies work together every day,” said Ash. “This was a miraculous outcome.”

The first responders, Timm, Everson, John, and Blair were also recognized and received certificates as Haines Heroes.

Baker City resident Jim Tomlinson, coordinator of the Baker County Community Literacy Coalition, Inc., was another recipient of the Haines Heroes award. Tomlinson is well-known for his years of volunteer work promoting literacy. Nanette Lehman, Haines Head Teacher thanked Tomlinson for his



Brian Addison / The Baker County Press

Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash presents lifesaving certificates to Kylie, Wesley, and Caleb Kerns for their quick and calm actions to save their the life of their little brother, Thomas.



Brian Addison / The Baker County Press

Dad Adam Kerns holds 15-month-old Thomas, who was pulled nearly lifeless from a pond by his siblings May 26.

work in writing literacy grants and for helping to provide each student with two or three books every year.

Darci Turley was the final recipient of the Haines Heroes certificate for her volunteer work with the Haines Hawk Store. Turley

was noted for her enduring smile and hard work making the school based store a successful endeavor.

Walden staff

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The 23-year old Bend, Oregon native graduated from Baylor University in Waco, Texas with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and a minor in Environmental Studies. He had been at the La Grande office for the past year-and-a-half and has been promoted to Legislative Assistant. Garrett joins a staff of three Legislative Assistants working in D.C. for the Rep. Walden.

“I'm helping track legislation,” Garrett said. “This includes financial services, taxes, Second Amendment issues, education, transportation, and various resource issues as well.”

“While in La Grande, I was Rep. Walden's eyes and ears on the ground keeping touch with folks in the district,” he explained.

His work as Field Representative involved case work helping people engage with federal agencies. “I traveled with Greg throughout the district and attended town halls. My experiences included seeing first-hand how folks were affected back in the district.”

One of the most important issues for Garrett during his time in La Grande and a focal point for Rep. Walden continues to be forestry and local economies. Also topping the list of Walden's working topics and ongoing concerns felt

by the people of the Second Congressional District are resource issues with mining, grazing, impacts with the possible listing as a federally recognized endangered species of the Greater sage-grouse, and to push back against the expansion of control by the Environmental Protection Agency with the proposed changes to the Clean Water Act, said Andrew Malcolm, Communications Director for Walden.

To the people of the 2nd Congressional District Garrett says, “Thank you. It was a pleasure getting to know folks locally. Central Oregon is home but I enjoyed getting to know the people of eastern Oregon. I'll be back out periodically, meeting with folks from different sectors to see how Greg can be helpful.”

“I'm enjoying the role I'm in now and I look forward to staying in touch and continuing to work on issues that impact people from here in D.C.. It is a challenge and a steep learning curve,” Garrett said of his new position. “The 2nd Congressional District varies. If you drive a short ways the landscape and the issues are very different. One of the greatest challenges is keeping up with Greg and the amount he travels and how hard he works.”

Jorden Noyes, a 22-year-old from Prineville, Oregon, replaces



Submitted Photo.

Kirby Garrett now works in Washington D.C.

Garrett as Walden's Field Representative in the La Grande office. Noyes is a recent Willamette University graduate with a Bachelor's Degree in Politics with a minor in Economics. He served an internship for Walden during his Sophomore and Junior years at Willamette and first become acquainted with Walden and his staff through his involvement with the College Republicans organization.

“If there is anything I can do to help anybody out, I'm ready. Don't hesitate to call,” Noyes said.

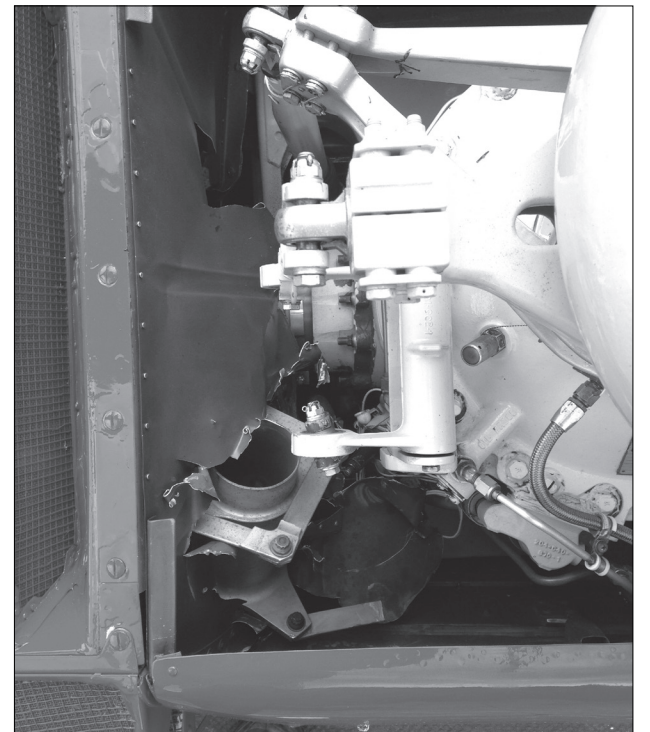
Noyes can be reached at the La Grande office at phone number: 541-624-2400.

Military veterans are a special focus of Rep. Walden's efforts, according to Malcolm. “We get a lot of requests from veterans and their families. We can help veterans cut through

the red-tape with the Veterans Administration,” said Malcolm. “We have two veterans on staff who work as liaisons with the VA. We have other liaisons to work with the federal agencies. Greg'll do whatever he can to help people cut through the red-tape with the federal agencies.”

As an addendum to the interview with the three Walden staffers, Malcolm mentioned progress on Walden's proposed legislation titled, Forest Access in Rural Communities Act, HR 1555. The legislation has been reintroduced to Congress and has gained bi-partisan support with 11 co-sponsors. HR 1555, if passed into law, requires the United States Forest Service to get local governmental approval before enacting access regulations on land managed by that federal land management agency, said Malcolm.

Helicopter crash



Submitted Photo.

Jagged metal is visible while standing on top of the helicopter looking down at the K-flex joint broken off between the engine and transmission. This joint is critical for the engine to power the transmission, which powers the main rotor and tail rotor.

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That gardener raised his iPhone to the skies as the loaded helicopter flew over, panned back to his watering for a second, then cut back to helicopter to show the logs, once attached to the line, suddenly sticking vertically out of the ground like fence posts. As he filmed, Woydziak's crash is captured as the helicopter is engulfed in dust—not from hitting the wet ground, but rather from the K-Flex coupling between the transmission and motor being sucked into the motor and exploding.

Inside the chopper, Woydziak said, “About half way down, I felt the controls get stiff and realized I had some type of hydraulic failure. I have been told this was probably caused by the lower half of the transmission separating, which also caused a loss of tail rotor control. I made a deliberate input on the controls and pulled up on the collective to slow my descent when I heard the rotor RPM slow down; this made me think that maybe I still had some type of drive-train failure, so I lowered the collective again and pulled back on the cyclic to stop my descent and forward airspeed, which I estimated to be at only five to 10 knots at this time, about five feet off the ground. I simultaneously started pulling up on the collective knowing that it would be stiff as I have done quite a bit of hydraulics off training. I heard the rotor RPM slow down but I did not hear the low rotor horn come on. This concerned me and I was told later that this system is tied into the lower half of the transmission and was most likely not working with the transmission half separated.”

The next few seconds may have seemed like minutes.

Said Woydziak, “The impact was not hard enough to damage the main rotor blades tail rotor or tail boom, but it was hard enough to break both skids and the Plexiglas broke out above the pilot and copilot seat along with the chin bubble on the right-hand side.”

Last week, the Huey was carried out of the crash site by a larger helicopter, then loaded onto a flatbed bound for Billings, Montana. As with any crash, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will inspect the helicopter and do an investigation of the incident.

In talking with other experts, Woydziak believes the Huey suffered failure in the lower half of the transmission as well as failure of the K-Flex coupling at once. He doesn't believe the weight of the load contributed to the malfunction. Though the investigation has not been completed, initial thoughts are that the damage inside the transmission occurred in-flight, causing the crash, not as the result of the hard landing.

Woydziak's nearly 14,000 logged hours of flight time likely had something to do with the expert level of piloting skill shown in that amateur video, which mitigated the extent of the impact.

“When I was young,” he said, “F-4 jets used to fly over Bridgeport regularly and break the sound barrier I thought the sonic booms were cool so this was the start of my love of flight.”

Woydziak and his siblings were raised in large part in Bridgeport and attended Burnt River School while his parents, Greg and Ellie, worked and resided on a local ranch. The family later moved into Baker City.

He said, “Mike Trindle gave me an opportunity after I completed my flight training to flight instruct and manage the La Grande Airport FBO. This led into Recon flights and Air Attack missions on fires. Some of the best parts of my flying career have been flying the Huey and dropping water on fires with a bucket and long-line and my experience flying large airtankers the PB4Y-2 Privateer and the P2-V Neptune dropping fire retardant on fires. I also enjoy flying predator control flights for the local ranchers and the big game flights counting deer, elk, moose, antelope, Rocky Mountain Goats, wolves and Big Horn Sheep.”

“Last Sunday, May 31, was the first major incident I have had,” added Woydziak.

Woydziak began flying in 1988.

“Luckily I stepped away from the helicopter without a scratch or any other injuries. The actual impact from my perspective felt no harder than hitting a large pothole on a back road,” Woydziak said.