

Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon expands into two-story operation

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Things are moving up at La Grande thrift store Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon.

The store at 1315 Adams Ave. recently concluded an upstairs expansion that added 6,600 square feet of space. With a new look and more room for services and donation intake, the store is ramping up operations to serve as a focal point for the La Grande community.

“What we want to do is really establish ourselves as a hub to help people,” said Liz Meyer, who runs the store alongside her husband Grant Meyer. “We decided to go for it. How could we not, for the community? We were getting a bit crowded, we need to make people feel more relaxed and have a nice atmosphere and get more stock out.”

Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon underwent the expansion this winter, officially opening up the new area to the public in early March.

The added space allows the thrift store to create an extensive clothing area, while anything from dishes, electronics, records and furniture can still be found in the downstairs area. In addition to the expansive new clothing area, the space now includes two dressing rooms, a backroom for preparing the clothing and a meeting room for employees and board members. The added upstairs area increased the store’s clothing capacity significantly, allowing for a variety of brands, clothing types and even unique



Liz Meyer, co-owner of Community Kindness, says the thrift store’s newly renovated upstairs serves as a way to offer clothes to a wide variety of customers from casual wear to wedding dresses.

Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

items like wedding dresses.

In a large thrift store, the intake of donations can be an overwhelming task. The new backroom area now helps Meyer and the staff meticulously organize the items through the process of donation, cleaning, cataloging and shelving for sale. Every item in the new upstairs clothing area is itemized and color blocked for convenience to the customer.

“You have to be organized for it to be right,” Meyer said.

Meyer initially expressed concern over ADA accessibility in adding an upstairs section, but the staff came up with a solution that makes the shopping experience easier for any customer in Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon. The thrift store uses a tablet that lists the shop’s inventory, and personal shoppers pick out clothes from the upstairs section for customers.

“I want it to be nice for people,” Meyer said. “It’s been a really rough

three years for people.”

The renovation process involved a group effort, as local entities made a difference in the process. Carpet One Floor and Home donated and installed the carpeting on the new staircase, while former businesses Bealls and The Peanut Gallery donated shelves and racks that adorn the upstairs floor. The renovation involved in-house work as well as volunteer work and contractors.

Founded in 2019, Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon Thrift

store is the main fundraiser for the Community Kindness organization. Since that point, Meyer and the staff have placed a large emphasis on giving back to the community. The store’s manager hopes to continue sponsoring local organizations, churches, care facilities, schools and everything in between.

“This is my contribution to my community, which accepted me 21 years ago,” Meyer said. “People come in and smile. They love it. If I can make people happy and smile, that is what I always want to do.”

Meyer is originally from England, which is made evident by the store’s British flags adorning the exterior and the shelf full of candies and food items from her home country. Since joining on at the thrift store, Meyer has placed an emphasis on serving as a community centerpiece that gives back.

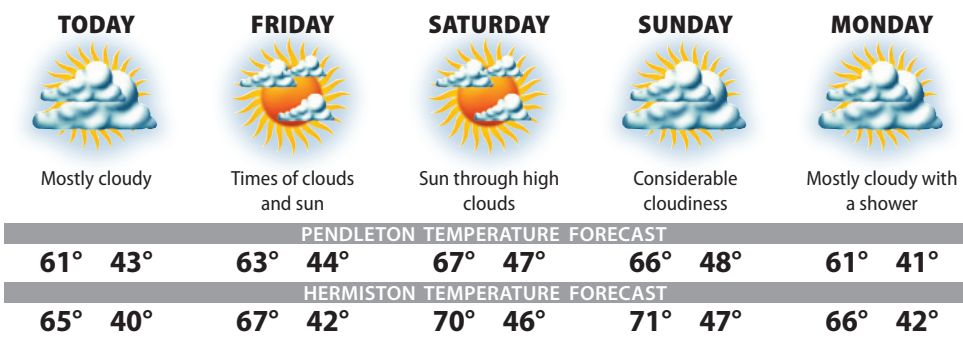
The store’s manager works roughly 60 to 70 hours per week, strictly on a volunteer basis. Meyer credits a steady flow of hard-working volunteers in bringing Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon to where it is now.

“I absolutely love what I do. I couldn’t imagine doing anything else,” Meyer said. “If we can make a difference in someone’s life, then this is what we’re going to do.”

Upon completion of the expansion project, Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon is currently back on its regular schedule and open to the public.

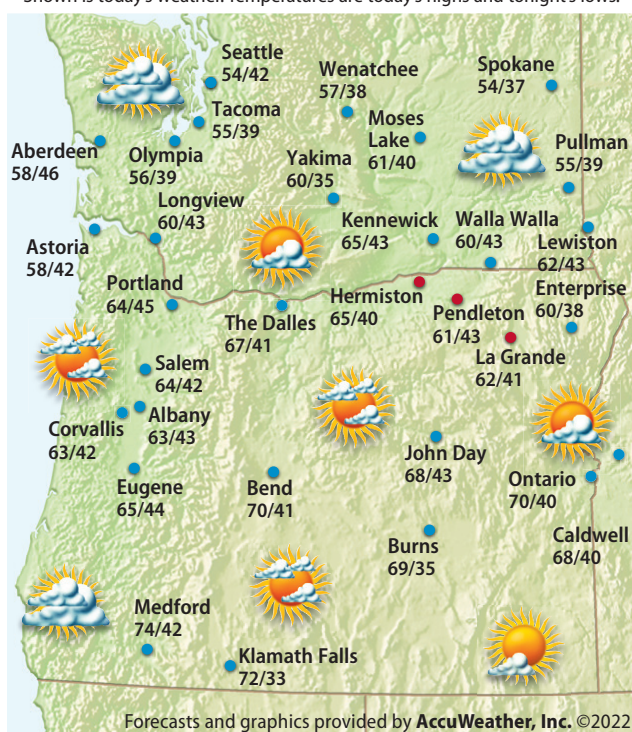
“It’s a very generous community,” she said. “I couldn’t do this without them. It’s a community teamwork experience.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today’s weather. Temperatures are today’s highs and tonight’s lows.



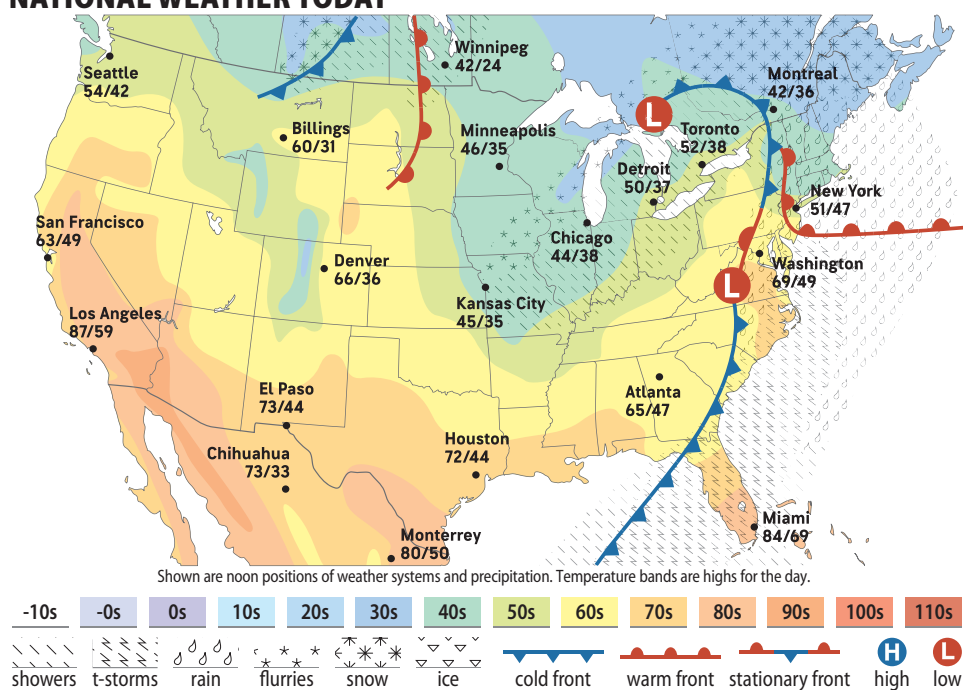
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.										
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW								
Yesterday	63°	39°								
Normals	58°	36°								
Records	74° (1960)	20° (1904)								
PRECIPITATION										
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"									
Month to date	1.14"									
Normal month to date	1.00"									
Year to date	3.58"									
Last year to date	3.28"									
Normal year to date	3.69"									
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.										
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW								
Yesterday	66°	39°								
Normals	61°	35°								
Records	79° (1940)	19° (2013)								
PRECIPITATION										
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"									
Month to date	0.88"									
Normal month to date	0.56"									
Year to date	1.94"									
Last year to date	1.70"									
Normal year to date	2.56"									
WINDS (in mph)										
	Today	Fri.								
Boardman	NE 4-8	SW 4-8								
Pendleton	NNE 6-12	NW 4-8								
SUN AND MOON										
Sunrise today	6:51 a.m.									
Sunset tonight	7:13 p.m.									
Moonrise today	2:15 a.m.									
Moonset today	10:33 a.m.									
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Last</td> <td>New</td> <td>First</td> <td>Full</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mar 24</td> <td>Mar 31</td> <td>Apr 8</td> <td>Apr 16</td> </tr> </table>			Last	New	First	Full	Mar 24	Mar 31	Apr 8	Apr 16
Last	New	First	Full							
Mar 24	Mar 31	Apr 8	Apr 16							

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday’s National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 91° in Plant City, Fla. Low -17° in Yellowstone N.P., Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Baker County gets \$280K for needed upgrade to emergency radio systems

By **JAYSON JACOBY**
Baker City Herald

BAKER COUNTY — The mountains and canyons that add beauty and variety to Baker County’s landscape also pose obstacles for the people who respond to emergencies ranging from missing hunters to car crashes to wildfires.

The county’s rumped topography creates “dead spots” where the radio signals that link emergency responders can’t always reach, Sheriff Travis Ash said.

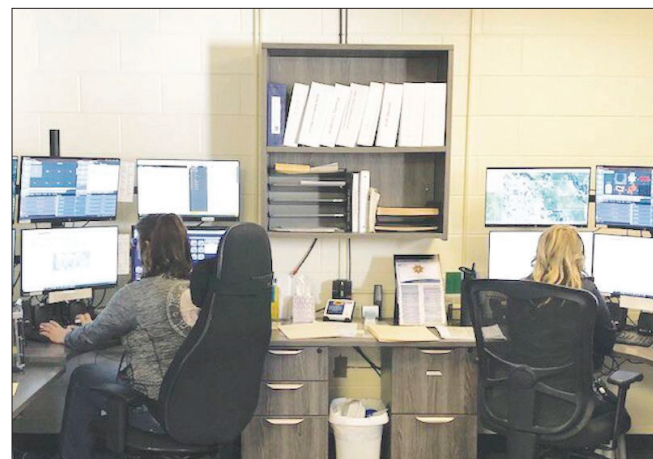
But a recent influx of federal and state government dollars will help to strengthen that electronic connection.

Baker County has received \$280,000 in three separate grants to install new radio repeaters on 10 mountaintop sites, and to replace the outdated radio consoles at the Baker County Consolidated Dispatch Center at the sheriff’s office, Ash said.

Dispatchers there communicate with officers from the sheriff’s office and Baker City Police Department, as well as with the county’s many volunteer fire protection districts.

Oregon State Police and federal agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, have their own radio networks, but those agencies also can use the county’s system if needed, Ash said.

The largest, and most recent, grant is \$190,000 included in the final funding package from Congress for



Baker County Sheriff’s Office/Contributed Photo
A \$190,000 allocation from the federal government will allow Baker County to replace 17-year-old radio consoles.

the 2022 fiscal year.

President Joe Biden signed the bill into law on March 15.

“The sheriff’s office appreciates this opportunity which will allow us to update radio infrastructure, improving communications among first responders (EMS, fire, and law enforcement) and also with the dispatch center,” Ash said. “These upgrades will not only increase officer safety, but will also enhance the services provided to those we serve throughout our community. This project will truly be a benefit to all.”

Combined with \$60,000 from the Oregon State Fire Marshal’s Office, money that the Greater Bowen Valley Fire Protection District applied for, and \$30,000 from the federal Department of Homeland Security, the \$190,000 should be sufficient to replace the repeaters at all 10 sites, said Chris Galisze-

wski, chief for the Bowen Valley district and the sheriff’s office’s radio technician.

Several of the mountains have two repeaters — one for fire districts and one for law enforcement.

Ash said the new repeaters should improve radio signal coverage in the county, although some dead spots likely will remain.

Work on the repeaters will start when the snow melts enough to allow access to the sites, Galiszewski said.

The county also will replace the radio consoles that dispatchers use to communicate with emergency responders, Ash said.

Those consoles, which date to 2005, are increasingly troublesome because parts are harder to come by, he said.

The sheriff’s office has not ordered new consoles and there is no firm timeline for that part of the project.

IN BRIEF

Dayville Fire receives \$1,500 donation

DAYVILLE — The OTEC Member Foundation has donated \$1,500 to the Dayville Fire Department to help construct a new fire hall and repair fire equipment.

The all-volunteer department has been without a fire hall since 2020 but recently

hit its fundraising goal and hopes to start construction on a new building soon.

The foundation is a nonprofit that oversees Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative’s charitable giving. The money came from the foundation’s Member-to-Member Bill Round Up Program, which lets members round up their monthly bill payments to the nearest dollar.

—EO Media Group

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