

Ukraine:

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Reaching out

The Dempseys are exhausting all resources to help similar families in need, both fleeing Ukraine and those still residing in the country. The couple is working with lasting connections they made during their time in Ukraine, sending donations from family, friends and colleagues directly to the hands in need. Through the Anne Morrison-Ukraine Fund, local efforts in La Grande directly benefit these humanitarian efforts.

“The folks that we’re connected with in Kyiv are all church organizations mostly,” Ian Dempsey said. “We’ve given some money to friends in need, like a friend who has five kids. When they evacuated, they were not able to bring most of their clothes and most of the kids did not even have a pair of shoes when they left.” Most connections involve



Supplies and bedding stand at the ready in Kyiv, Ukraine, during the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Fundraising efforts have helped transport donations from La Grande to those in need in war-torn areas of Ukraine.

Anne Morrison/Contributed Photo

church organizations, one of which is located in West Ukraine and housing roughly 60 refugees from the eastern side of the country. Another church receiving funds is holding over 400 refugees and loading vans full of supplies to take into the most dangerous and war-torn areas of Ukraine.

The Dempseys are also assisting similar refugees who left everything behind to escape to freedom, many of which are women and children.

“I think what people like about the way we’re sending money is that it’s really cool to see the pictures of these people that have specif-

ically received money,” Ian Dempsey said. “To be able to see things getting directly into the hands of the Ukrainian people gives a full sense of who it’s going to and who it helps.”

The donations are going toward medical supplies, food, gas for supply distri-

bution, bedding for refugees, financial support for individuals fleeing the country and defensive gear for Ukrainian fighters.

Following the large local contributions at the Ukraine demonstration, Morrison is hoping to continue efforts in La Grande to provide continuing fundraising. The Dempseys proceed to send out ongoing donations to these local connections in Ukraine, staying in the loop with regular updates on what supplies are needed the most.

In addition to the Anne Morrison-Ukraine Fund, several other La Grande residents have ties to Ukraine and are putting together efforts to garner donations to reliable sources. Fuji and Jim Kreider lived in Odesa, Ukraine, for a year in 2003, staying in touch with a close friend, Nataly Kartasheva, who is now living in the Netherlands and helping refugees afford transportation, temporary residence and safe traveling.

Arie Farnam, another La Grande resident, came from the Czech Republic and has

been helping migrate disabled individuals in Ukraine out of danger.

Continuing the efforts

Those involved and in close contact with front-line Ukrainians see no immediate end in sight to the dispute with Russia,

Ian Dempsey noted that donations go a long way, especially with the U.S. dollar going a long way in Ukraine — the average monthly salary in the country is roughly the equivalent of \$200 in the United States.

The Anne Morrison-Ukraine Fund is accepting donations through PayPal, which can be sent to amorrison@conic.com. The Kreiders’ trusted volunteer from Odesa, Ukraine helping refugees flee the country can be helped via PayPal at Pranzhu@gmail.com.

“No one really knows how this will end, or when,” Ian Dempsey said. “I pray that these free countries around the world continue to come together to help these people in need.”

WWII:

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Kelly (U.S. Army, retired), presented the commission with three options for the guardhouses: tear them down, move them to preserve them or preserve them in place. Kelly said the museum recommends restoring the shacks where they have always been.

“Moving the concrete, stone masonry and hewn timber guardhouses would be more difficult and expensive than transporting smaller, lighter wooden buildings,” he said. “The process would risk damage to the 81 year-old structures.”

He also spoke against rerouting traffic around the venerable structures.

“Let people drive between them as was intended in 1941,” he said. “Set up a truck route

to avoid them, with vehicle weight or length limits.”

Airport Commission Chair Jim Webster said there was “a lot of good information from Pendleton Air Museum folks and other members of the public” during the meeting, and a good number of people “with a long history in Pendleton showed up in favor of keeping and improving the guardhouses, and stating why they’re important. There was support for maintaining the history.”

But, he added, the commission has not received a statement from the city or planning department requesting an opinion.

“That’s usually the direction discussions flow,” he said. “So we’re not at a decision point yet.”

Kelly, however, said he was under the impression the airport commission could initiate and forward a

recommendation to the city for approval.

“If we have to go to the city planning department first, then the city council, we will,” he said. “We could come up with a detailed proposal.”

Decades since last work on shacks

Honemann said he would like to form a group or committee on a cross section of stakeholders to determine the way forward, work on funding grants and preserve the town’s history.

Kelly said he would prefer to keep such a project local, use volunteers, online fundraising and donations of equipment and labor from Pendleton construction companies. Surveyors, engineers or architects could donate blueprints and visualizations to present to the planning department and council. Going this route, he asserted,

the project would wrap up in six months to a year.

“If we get governments involved, and apply for grants to fund the project, it could take two years or more,” he said.

Harold Nelson of Pendleton Aircraft Services offered a similar suggestion, at least for renovating the guard shacks, if not improving their environs.

“This community can come together and take care of them, without city support,” he said. “Local log house builders might well donate logs to replace those most damaged, or all of them.”

He said the last maintenance work on the shacks probably was Chris Demianew’s Eagle Scout project about 30 years ago.

Demianew, a teacher at Sunridge Middle School, Pendleton, said his project was to replace the guard shacks’ roofing.

“I got donated materials from Tum-a-Lum and the city helped cover some of the costs,” he recalled. “My project was completed in 1993 or 1994. I had a friend’s parents who were professional carpenters who assisted on the guidance and helped with reroofing the buildings. I was 17 years old when I did my project.”

Nelson said the airport commission doesn’t favor bulldozing the guardhouses, but the city and airport commissions for decades have not taken care of them.

“Just let the many citizens who care about them do it,” Nelson said. “Get the Air Museum and VFW involved. We don’t need grants for restoration.”

He also said this could use the cooperation of the Radisson. The Pendleton Air Museum could provide artifacts and informative plaques for its foyer, he said,

and the hotel in return could help support the guard shack project. And the clients at the Pendleton UAS Range “are another obvious source of support, should more money be needed,” he said.

Nelson stressed the history of the airport is important.

“The heroics of the men who served at Pendleton Field,” he said, “gave American morale a boost when it was most needed.”

Former Oregon National Guard Adjutant General Fred Rees of Helix spoke in favor of restoration during the Pendleton Air Museum’s dinner April 18 commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Doolittle Raid. The U.S. Army Air Forces volunteers for the Raid passed often through the gates of the guardhouses in 1941 and early 1942. Rees said the Oregon Military Department favored building a plaza around the shacks.

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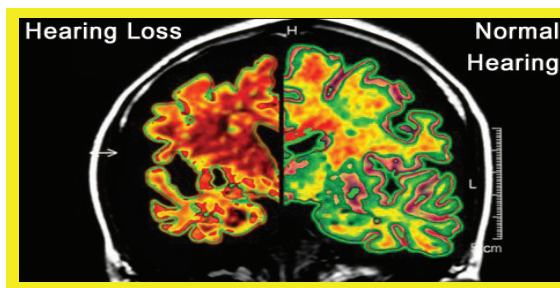
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