

Small-business & Ag HAPPENINGS

Pub Talk held at hq tomorrow

LA GRANDE — The next edition of Pub Talk will begin at 6 p.m. Nov. 29 at hq, 112 Depot St., La Grande. Jeff Crews will host the evening fun. All are welcome to come network and have refreshments.

Holiday Open House Party held in downtown Joseph

JOSEPH — The Jingle thru Joseph Holiday Open House Party is set for Nov. 30 along Main Street in Joseph. The community is invited to visit local businesses between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. for an evening of holiday cheer, appetizers, beverages and specials. Participating businesses are Beecrowbee, Anton's Home & Hearth, Mad Mary's, The Peace Pipe, Heidi's Town Shoppe, Missy's Uptown Art, Copper Creek Mercantile, Tempting Teal Boutique, Phinney Gallery of Fine Art, Stewart Jones Design, Flannel Lantern, Rocking H Boutique and The Dog Spot.

On Stage plans open house to introduce team to community

LA GRANDE — On Stage Beauty Salon invites to community to a Winter Open House Dec. 1 at the salon, 207 Fir St., La Grande. Stop by between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. to meet the staff and enjoy specials, a raffle giveaway and refreshments.

OSU Ag Experiment Station is focus of Brown Bag

JOSEPH — Chad Mueller will present the program at the Dec. 4 Brown Bag at the Joseph Center, ADDRESS, Joseph. Mueller is the program coordinator and head adviser for the Oregon State University at Eastern Oregon University (OSU-EOU) program in agriculture and natural resources. OSU's Agricultural Experiment Station in Union was established in 1901, and the Hall Ranch added to the work in 1939. Oregon State University continues to carry out a vigorous research program. Mueller heads the OSU-EOU faculty members and conducts research. His speciality is beef cattle. Mueller will talk about the goings-on at Eastern and in Union, summer ag institutes and college majors. Brown Bags are free and open to the public. Call or email Rich Wandschneider for details: 541-432-0505; rich.wandschneider@gmail.com.

Union County FSA committee meets week

LA GRANDE — Union County Farm Service Agency committee's next meeting will begin at 9 a.m. Dec. 5. The Union County FSA office is at 1901 Adams Ave., Suite 5, La Grande. The office is staffed by Executive Director Justin Faulhaber; Erin Baremore, farm loan officer; and program technicians, Tara Hett and Kristen Kruse. The county committee is made up of Guy Weishaar, Pamela Glenn and Terry Puckett. For more information, call 541-963-4178.

Fall crop acreage reports due Dec. 15

LA GRANDE — In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Union County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by Dec. 15 for fall crops. Fall acreage reporting is applicable for Union County: for fall alfalfa seed, fall barley, fall canola, perennial forage, fall mint, onions (planted Aug. 15-Sept. 15), fall wheat and all other fall-seeded crops.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates: If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed. If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease, and appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office. If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing" or "seed," the acreage must be reported by July 15.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days

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Five plants to close and up to 14,000 employees laid off as the car company abandons its models and restructures to focus on autonomous and electric vehicles



In this Tuesday, June 15, 2010, file photo, workers at General Motors' Lordstown Assembly plant in Lordstown, Ohio, put the final touches on Chevy Cobalts. One of the last industrial anchors in what was once the heart of manufacturing in Ohio is now on life support after General Motors announced Monday it will stop small-car production at its Lordstown assembly plant and consider closing it for good.

GM LAYS OFF 14K WORKERS

By Tom Krisher
The Associated Press

DETROIT — General Motors will cut up to 14,000 workers in North America and put five plants up for possible closure as it abandons many of its car models and restructures to focus more on autonomous and electric vehicles, the automaker announced Monday.

The reductions could amount to as much as 8 percent of GM's global workforce of 180,000 employees.

The restructuring reflects changing North American auto markets as manufacturers continue to shift away from cars toward SUVs and trucks. In October, almost 65 percent of new vehicles sold in the U.S. were trucks or SUVs. That figure was about 50 percent cars just five years ago.

GM is shedding cars largely because it doesn't make money on them, Citi analyst Itay Michaeli wrote in a note to investors.

"We estimate sedans operate at a significant loss, hence the need for classic restructuring," he wrote.

Hours after the announcement, President Donald Trump said his administration and lawmakers were exerting "a lot of pressure" on GM. He said he told the company that the U.S. has done a lot for GM and that if its cars aren't selling, the company needs to produce ones that will.

Trump, who has made

bringing back auto jobs a big part of his appeal to Ohio and other Great Lakes states that are crucial to his re-election, also said he was being tough on General Motors CEO Mary Barra.

At a rally near GM's Lordstown, Ohio, plant last summer, Trump told people not to sell their homes because the jobs are "all coming back."

The layoffs come amid the backdrop of a trade war be-

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OTEC delivers 'benchmark' energy efficiency rebate check

Observer staff

LA GRANDE — According to a press release from Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative, two years of hard work by several organizations paid off Oct. 23, as OTEC, Bonneville Power Administration and Energy Smart Industrial presented Boise Cascade with an energy efficiency rebate check for nearly \$185,000 for an electrical energy efficiency custom project.

"(The project) was a really great effort that required cooperation from everybody," said Nosh Makujina, of Energy Smart Industrial. "It involved a lot of complex interactions and fine-tuning of (Boise Cascade's) system."

The energy efficiency custom project at Boise Cascade's La Grande facility included upgrading its kiln system controls and control system for five of its kilns to improve the lumber moisture sensing capabilities inside the kilns. The controls will automatically control the speed of the fan variable frequency drives (VFDs) based on moisture levels in the kilns. The project was fully completed in August 2018 and totaled more than \$263,000.

Boise Cascade representatives said the project is a win for the company because of the upgraded equipment, the work it saves employees and the payback in energy savings in a short

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Courtesy photo

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative, Bonneville Power Administration and Energy Smart Industrial presented Boise Cascade representatives with an energy efficiency rebate check for nearly \$185,000.

Winterizing the ranch — don't forget the hay

By Katy Nesbitt
For The Observer

ENTERPRISE — Cattle ranching on the east side of Oregon is big business, despite obvious challenges — rugged terrain, remote pastures and long winters — but the wide open spaces of the desert and the bunch grasses of the canyons and prairies draw out the pioneer spirit.

This truth is evident in multi-generational Eastern Oregon rancher Curt Martin. His cattle's summer range is in northern Malheur County, and they winter at his Powder River ranch.

When preparing for the transition to winter range, Martin said, "First and foremost I have my wintertime feeding areas and water systems up to snuff with systems insulated and ready for cold, sub-freezing temperatures."

Inclement weather is unavoidable in Eastern Oregon's colder months, and Tom Birkmaier of Joseph recommends having a "Plan B" when it comes to winter pasturing and watering sites.

"Weather dictates what you do," Birkmaier said. "What do you do if your water or ditches freeze up? Or you have your cows in a winter field and get

a week of rain? You don't want your cows tromping up your hay ground."

As cattle come off summer range, keeping their body condition depends on good winter feed. It takes a lot of grass to raise a herd, and Eastern Oregon ranchers know how to diversify their hay and alfalfa sources and their grazing range.

Willy Locke ranches in the Wallowa Valley and on the edge of the Zumwalt Prairie. In the fall, while his cattle are still on their summer range, he begins supplementing their grazing with five pounds of alfalfa per

head a day. The third week of October, he said, his steer calves are weaned and shipped to the auction yards.

"I sell my heavy steers and keep the heifer calves and small steers," Locke said.

The mother cows and smaller calves move into the valley the third week of November and stay there until the third week of April on leased pasture. Locke said in the winter he continues to add five pounds of alfalfa to the 20 pounds of grain hay he feeds each head a day.

In the Lower Wallowa Valley, See **Ranch** / Page 2B