

# Smith

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the purposes of employment.” In a declaration in support of the motion, Smith’s attorney said his client has no criminal history except for a reckless endangering conviction in 2008, the current allegations do not involve firearms and Smith’s employment requires he carry firearms while on the job. Ladd Dobler opposed the motion. A hearing on a motion in the case is scheduled for Feb. 6.

Smith was arrested Sept. 9, but he had already been placed on administrative leave Aug. 9 for an unrelated issue, Wright said. Grant County District Attorney Jim Carpenter said Smith had been placed on leave “for issues related to the performance of his duties as a sheriff’s deputy.”

While on administrative leave from Aug. 9 to Dec. 16, Smith continued to earn county wages and benefits, costing the county between \$5,785 and \$7,290 per month depending on insurance options, totaling about \$23,000-29,000.

Another sheriff’s office employee, Deputy Abigail Mobley, is still employed by the county after being placed on administrative leave March 18. Grant County officials have declined to discuss the circumstances surrounding the leave or to provide documents requested by the Eagle, stating the information was part of a “pending criminal investigation being conducted by a third-party state agency.” The Oregon Department of Justice confirmed an investigation involving Mobley was still ongoing in December, but Communications Director Kristina Edmunson has not responded to an email from the Eagle sent Jan. 3.

Mobley’s wages and benefits cost the county between \$5,600 and \$7,100 per month, so more than nine months of administrative leave has cost the county between \$53,000 and \$67,500.

In other sheriff’s office news, Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer met with Wright and the Grant County Court members in executive session at a special meeting Jan. 3 to consider the employment of a public officer. Following the executive session, the court agreed “to formulate a reply denying the grievance” filed by an unnamed person “based on lack of specificity and the absence of relevant facts.” The court asked Palmer to ensure representatives of the county’s insurance agency received copies of the letter.

# Eclipse

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done by 7:30 a.m.,” Brandon said. “Once everything was set up, we did some test runs to make sure everything was aligned, and once the eclipse was over, we had to keep the telescope covered.”

Brandon said recording the eclipse required some precise movement and timing since the direct sunlight would destroy the camera’s sensors if not quickly covered. Along with recording the eclipse, the team also measured the ground and air temperature before, during and after the eclipse.

The team spent 50 hours practicing for the moment of the eclipse so everything felt normal the day of the event, Brandon said. “It felt normal until the eclipse actually happened,” Donovan Smith said. “Once it started getting dark, I started getting excited. When it actually happened, it’s like you get goosebumps, and it’s crazy. Like a black hole in space. It was thrilling.”

The team collaborated with the National Solar Observatory for this project, Sonna Smith said. The data collected helped study the inner corona and coronal mass injections from the sun during the



Contributed photo

**Form left Tom Schad, an astronomer from the National Solar Observatory that helped the team, Grant Union student Gage Brandon, Grant Union science teacher Sonna Smith, Grant Union graduate Declan Jensen and Anthony Allen on the day of the eclipse in 2017.**

solar eclipse. The sun’s corona is difficult to study, according to the article the team was published in, but the eclipse gave a rare opportunity to capture footage for research.

Citizen CATE provided everything needed for the experiment to the team, Sonna Smith said. The equipment consisted of a telescope and filters, telescope mount and tracking drive, CMOS camera, hardware and software and a laptop.

The equipment is still on campus for staff and students to use. There was a glitch that affects the tracking system of the tele-

scope, but the telescope is still usable.

Currently, Donovan Smith and Brandon are enrolled in an online college-level astronomy class through Brigham Young University, which is one of several opportunities that have arisen since the eclipse.

Being published in a science publication provided a benefit as well. Donovan Smith and Brandon plan to use this experience in future applications for work or college.

In the summer, Sonna Smith will have the opportunity to go to the solar observatory in Hawaii

# Unity

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Kate Kondayen, deputy communications director for Gov. Kate Brown, said the governor is focused on an economy-wide strategy with enforceable carbon limits. Kondayen said Brown plans to “ensure the bill protects jobs and livelihoods in rural communities” while still achieving state emissions goals.

“Doing nothing is not an option,” said Kondayen.

Although Timber Unity formed to protest HB 2020, the movement has ballooned into something bigger.

“The movement is shifting,” said Lardy, the spokesman. “We’re fighting overregulation. We’re fighting laws that kill jobs and communities. It’s not just about cap and trade anymore.”

The movement bears resemblance to the “yellow vests” in France, a grassroots citizens’ campaign that started as a fuel tax protest and has morphed into a nationwide anti-government movement aimed at economic justice for the working-class.

Timber Unity also echoed a global trend. In what experts have dubbed the Global Protest Wave of 2019, demonstrations erupted in the Arab world, France, Catalonia, Hong Kong, Latin America and beyond. According to the United Nations, demonstrators around the world sought autonomy, freedom from political corruption and economic fairness.

As Timber Unity’s ranks swell in 2020, its leaders say they are determined to keep protests peaceful.

“I’m an Army wife. I stood up for Gov. Brown when she walked into our caucus room,” said Julie Parrish, a former state legislator and current board member for Timber Unity. “It’s about respect.

If any policymaker will speak with us, we’ll take the meeting.”

The movement’s success, said Parrish, also depends on how protesters treat one another. Parrish said the Timber Unity movement is far from homogenous.

“We’re a voting bloc of over 50,000 people now, and we’re not all politically the same,” said Parrish. “I don’t own a gun or hunt or fish. Some people are pro-choice, some pro-life. Some are hell-bent on electing Trump, and others would never vote for him.”

She laughed. “It makes managing the dialog interesting sometimes. But we’re trying to focus on common ground — economic issues.”

Timber Unity’s financial muscle comes from its donors, both through direct giving and in-kind donations.

The group filed as a 501 C (6) membership-based nonprofit, and also runs the Timber Unity Political Action Committee, or

where Tom Schad, an astronomer from the National Solar Observatory that helped the team, is located to see all of the tools and equipment used there.

“For me, science is real life, and unfortunately, when you teach, you don’t always expose students to that portion of it, and they think it’s just memorizing things,” said Sonna Smith. “Did it (the experiment) go without any glitches? No. The first couple of times we tried to practice, and it was really rough, and they sent people over to help us out. Sometimes we do something, and it’s a complete failure as far as getting it right in the moment, but it doesn’t mean you fail. You build on it and do something else.”

Sonna Smith added it is important for students to jump at any opportunity available, even if it’s outside their comfort zone. She said, even if a student didn’t enjoy the experience, at least they would know that. Brandon concurred.

“I would like other people to know that the universe is a lot bigger than they think, and astronomy is something that many people can find themselves interested in and captivated by,” Donovan Smith said. “Take a look at astronomy, and you might find something cool.”

TUPAC. Since its genesis June 6, 2019, TUPAC has brought in over \$177,000.

TUPAC has been criticized for its partisan and special-interest donors, such as Andrew Miller, a prominent timber executive.

Timber Unity’s leaders, however, say they’re undaunted by criticisms. Parrish said the organization will extend its reach by helping plant local chapters across Oregon, California and Washington.

Timber Unity, said Parrish, also plans to host training sessions and teach civic engagement workshops.

On Wednesday, Jan. 15, at 11 a.m., board member Angelita Sanchez will discuss upcoming carbon regulations at the Northwest Ag Show at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem.

“You can only tax people so much,” said Lardy. “It all started with a rally, and we’re doing it again.”

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Hello Grant County,  
I hope you all had a nice Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

We would like to welcome some new members to the Chamber – Les Schwab Tire Center, Belly Acres Twisted Stitchery, Belly Acres Ranch, The Canyon House, LL., Grant County Heating & Cooling, and The Strawberry Mountain Quilt Guild.

We have just started a new Business of the Month program. At our meeting each month, the board will choose a new Business of the month. That business will be featured on our Facebook page and as a complimentary sponsor of our newsletter.

December’s Business of the Month is Grant-Harney County CASA. Executive Director Hannah Hinnman was recently on Coffee Time sharing information about the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program.

It might seem early, but we are busy getting ready for the upcoming tourist season. We are looking forward to a busy season and it will be here before we know it!

Our Marketing committee is working with a couple of consultants we just hired to develop a new logo and brand for Grant County. We are really excited to get this done!

I have recently been contacted by several folks who are looking into renting a room or their house on Air BnB or VRBO. They might even have camp spots or an RV available to rent.

Please be aware that there is a process you must follow. First of all, you must register with the Grant County Chamber of Commerce, as we administer the Transient Room Tax for Grant County. The Transient Lodging Tax was approved by Grant County voters on May 15, 1990. So, the 8% Transient room Tax has been in effect since then.

After you register, you have to start collecting and paying the tax. The State of Oregon also has a tax, so you need to register with them as well. We can tell you how to do that.

Taxes are due the 15th of the month following the end of each quarter. So, April 15th, July 15th, October 15th and January 15th.

Failure to remit the tax could result in penalties and interest. Noncompliance of the Ordinance may also lead to the operator having to pay all the administrator’s costs to bring you into compliance and the placement of a lien.

There is a misconception that Air BnB pays the tax in Grant County. This is not true! They do not!

The Transient Room Tax Ordinance, The Registration Form, The Tax filing sheet, and some other information can be found on our website: www.gcoregonlive.com on the first page under “Recent News”. If you have questions, please call us at 541-575-0547. We would be glad to help you through the process. It really is pretty easy!

If we see you listed on Air BnB or VRBO, or even Facebook, and you aren’t registered, we will be contacting you.

So, if you know of anyone who is thinking about renting something to guests, please share this information. We would appreciate it!

The January Chamber meeting is going to be Thursday, January 16th. The board meets at the Chamber office at 10:30 Am for their business meeting and the no-host luncheon is at noon at the Outpost Restaurant. This month’s Guest speaker will be Kathy Cancilla, the Accreditation Coordinator for the Grant county Health Department.

We hope to see you at the luncheon!  
Tammy Bremner, Manager  
Grant County Chamber of Commerce

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**Mission**  
Grant Harney County CASA's mission is to train and support volunteers who will provide all abused and neglected children in Grant and Harney Counties a voice in juvenile court, and to educate the community regarding its responsibility for abused and neglected children.

**Vision**  
Our vision is of a world where every abused or neglected child is given the opportunity to thrive in a safe and loving home. Grant-Harney County CASA engages and trains community volunteers to speak for abused/neglected children in court and beyond, to become experts on the children’s needs, and to ensure their voices are heard.

**BUSINESS OF THE MONTH**  
**CASA Court Appointed Advocates for Children**