

KHKF-Issues and Programs- 4th Quarter 2022

1. ISSUE: Wallowa Storm Recovery

GUEST: Mayor Gary Hulse

DESCRIPTION:

WALLOWA – On August 11, 2022, the City of Wallowa was rocked by a devastating hailstorm that caused significant damage to homes, businesses, vehicles and infrastructure. Just over two months later, Wallowa is on a slow but steady path to recovery and a return to normal life. Mayor Gary Hulse recently provided several updates on the state of Wallowa and what assistance is still needed.

According to Hulse, the state government has confirmed that the two million dollars in emergency funding requested by Governor Kate Brown will be provided. However, this emergency funding will be distributed county wide rather than sent exclusively to Wallowa. Discussions are still underway at the state level to determine how much of the funding will support the city directly, with Mayor Hulse hoping that, “some of it passes through.” Wallowa also received relief funding through a variety of private donations. A city council meeting with the Blue Mountain Long Term Recovery Group, who are managing Wallowa’s relief funds, will be held today to discuss a dispensation plan for the private donations.

Funding isn’t the only state support Wallowa received, as Governor Kate Brown herself visited the city on October 7, speaking directly with Mayor Hulse and Wallowa County Commissioner Susan Roberts. The meeting, though brief, went well according to Hulse and may even mark the first time an Oregon Governor has visited Wallowa in person.

In terms of physical recovery, plenty of work remains. Contractors and support groups continue to arrive, assess damage and offer services, but more are still wanted. Mayor Hulse heavily emphasized the need for additional contractors to help in repairs. Hulse and the city council are also greatly concerned about the damages to windows, siding and insulation as Fall gets underway. With temperatures finally starting to drop, the need to secure homes against cold weather and precipitation are paramount. According to Hulse, it’s estimated that window replacements in Wallowa could still take upwards of ten additional weeks to complete, well after freezing conditions begin.

To assist in winter prep, 25 hay tarps were sent by Home Depot and The Red Cross, which arrived recently. These large tarps, along with other donated tarps and covers, will be distributed to the most damaged homes as insulation stop-gaps.

Wallowa has a long road ahead of it, but support is coming. Again, contractors are needed in numbers along with materials and coverings to assist in cold weather prep. Those capable of providing services or donations are encouraged to do so and may contact the city of Wallowa at 541-886-2422 or wallowa@eoni.com.

During this time, it's also asked by Wallowa that politics not be brought up in the recovery discussions if possible. As stated by Mayor Hulse, "I hope they keep politics out of this. We just want to recover."

TIME: KHKF MORNING NEWS 6:00AM-9:00AM Oct 18, 2022

2. ISSUE: Splash Pad in Baker City

GUEST: Penelope Simmons

DESCRIPTION:

BAKER CITY - Baker City Girl Scout Penelope Simmons is continuing to work on her Gold Project for Girl Scouts but needs community help. Simmons is working on getting a Splash Pad in Baker City at Central Park.

Simmons says this project idea was put into place because she and her family like to go to water parks and splash pads and this would give Baker City its own. "We always go other places to go to like a splash pad or a water park. And I know the pool considered getting one, but it would cost money and I wanted something that would be free for the community. And it would be some other water feature to play in other than the river because it would also be safer and cleaner."

Simmons, who has been in Girl Scouts for about 10 years says she has been working on this project for about two years now, but there is a long way to go to get it accomplished. "We have to have \$56,000 by November 1, for a down payment, and that is just for the sprinklers and that's half of it. The whole thing will cost about \$339,000. We are working with the Lions, they're helping us write grants and we have been getting donations at the Farmer's Market. The excavation has been donated by Steve Rich. The concrete has also been donated to us by RD Mac."

Simmons says if people want to donate to the Splash Pad Project, they can make donations at Community Bank through the Lions Splash Pad account.

TIME: KHKF MORNING NEWS 6:00AM-9:00AM Oct 26, 2022

3. ISSUE: Union County Farmers Merchant Banquet Award Winners

GUEST: Union County Chamber Director Scott Newman

DESCRIPTION:

UNION COUNTY - After a two-year break, the Union County Farmers Merchant Banquet was held this past weekend. This event celebrates the many accomplishments of

the farming community in Union County. Among the festivities was the announcement of seven awards:

2022 Good Steward Award #1 – Presented by the Union County Soil & Water Conservation District – Diane Kinsley

2022 Union County Young Farmer of The Year Presented by the Union County Farm Bureau – Max Nillson

2022 Ecological Restoration Award – Presented by the Grande Ronde Model Watershed - David Lowe

2022 Good Steward Award #2 - Presented by the Union County Soil & Water Conservation District – Robert & Wendy Langford

2022 Cattleman of the Year – Presented by The Union County Cattlemen’s Association – Jim Richards

2022 Ag Woman of the Year – Presented by Union County Ag Women – Deb Hansen

2022 Forest Steward of the Year – Presented by Oregon Department of Forestry – Jesse Reed

TIME: KHKF MORNING NEWS 6:00AM-9:00AM Nov 8, 2022

4. ISSUE: Local thrift store gives back
GUEST: Tina Richardson
DESCRIPTION:

LA GRANDE – There is a difference between giving to charity and being charitable. Both are admirable but have entirely different impacts on the community. Clothes and cans in donation bins can help those in need in a way that’s convenient for all involved. However, an honest human connection can make all the difference and turn an otherwise simple reprieve into a sense of genuine care and belonging. One Local shop owner is not only going above and beyond to help those in need but restoring a little bit of humanity along the way.

The story of Tina Richardson, owner of the Life’s Little Treasures Community Thrift Store, is one built on redemption and human decency. A former addict and homeless, Tina, “got the spark,” as she put it, while working a five-year community service stint for the Salvation Army. After finishing her community service, an opportunity came along when Tina’s sister, Becky, had the idea to set up a new thrift store in La Grande. When Becky and their business partner stepped down from the project, Tina took to the helm as

it was, “something I’ve wanted to do all my life.” Prior to getting started, Tina and Becky asked around their community to see if anyone would even be interested in a new thrift store. The word-of-mouth response was overwhelmingly positive and Life’s Little Treasures opened its doors in 2018.

Though not officially a non-profit, charity and a sense of community seemed to be ingrained into the store from the get-go. All items in Life’s Little Treasures’ inventory are donated. In fact, much of the store’s furnishings were donated by fellow community thrift store, Bugs and Butterflies. As Tina described:

“Jennifer from Bugs and Butterflies, a lot of these racks came from her. My sandwich board that goes outside was donated by her. Hangers, all donations. The only things that were bought by the store our first year were the front counter, my wonderful wood shelf and my two plastic and metal shelves.”

Of course, donations go out just as much as they come in. Throughout the four-and-a-half years of its existence, Life’s Little Treasures has built a reputation in the homeless and low-income communities as a place where people in need can find support. This altruistic image has gotten to the point where the Center for Human Development, and even local police, will contact Tina about specific persons and families that they’ve sent to her. As described by Tina:

“My biggest clientele when it comes to helping is the homeless, but I also help families rebuild their lives. Say, the CHD gets a hold of me and says they have a family that just got their children back and they have nothing. They can come in and we get them dishes and blankets and pillows and everything they need on an everyday basis. One of my biggest things to push is kids’ books. If I’m helping a family, I make sure the kids get those books.”

There are other facets to her charity work as well. Tina prepares monthly food bags to be distributed to the homeless community. Each bag is a little different, with some having mostly snacks and others plenty of toiletries, though most usually contain water, protein and hygiene supplies. For the holidays, Life’s Little Treasures gives away Christmas trees with decorations included. Various church groups have also partnered with the store to help manage food donations. One group will be giving away twenty hot meals on November 20 in Max square.

With so much giving to the community, it’s no surprise that some of them started giving back. While small favors like the parking lot being swept happen from time to time, it was the community’s efforts during the pandemic that exemplified what Life’s Little Treasures means to people. During COVID 19, Life’s Little Treasures faced financial difficulty, including debt, and the homeless community stepped up. As described by Tina:

“If it wasn’t for my community and the homeless, I wouldn’t be here. Without my customers, I couldn’t pay my bills. The homeless came and helped me with their stimulus checks, and the community came in when they could. I was pulled out of debt by my homeless community, and they also helped me pay up the next month’s bills as best they could.”

The story of Life’s Little Treasures is more than just sympathy for those less fortunate, but pure, unfiltered empathy and kindness based on years of lived experiences. Tina’s time on the streets and with the Salvation Army not only inspired her to help people, it showed her what a little bit of help can mean to people in practice. As best put by her:

“It took me twenty-one years to get to where I was but there’s always a window. There’s always a window of opportunity to better yourself. There’s nothing in this store that I would not help someone with, because at the end of the day, we’re all human beings and sometimes a little kindness is all someone needs.”

Life’s Little Treasures is located at 2203 Adams Ave, La Grande.

TIME: KHKF MORNING NEWS 6:00AM-9:00AM Nov 17, 2022

5. ISSUE: Baker City Jury Duty Scam
GUEST: Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash
DESCRIPTION:

BAKER CITY – (Release from the Baker County Sheriff’s Office) BCSO received a report of a jury duty scam circulating in Baker County. The scammer told the victim that he failed to appear on a jury duty summons and now had a warrant for his arrest. To rectify the warrant, the victim was instructed to withdraw cash from the ATM and purchase a Green Dot Prepaid VISA card and put it in the mail.

Law enforcement authorities will never contact members of the public by telephone to demand any form of payment, especially by purchasing a gift card, or to request personal or sensitive information. Any legitimate investigation or legal action will be done in person or by official letter.

Scams are becoming increasingly common, especially during the holidays. Here are a few tips to help you stay safe:

1. Never give out your personal or financial information over the phone.
2. Never purchase a gift card or complete a wire transfer to satisfy the scammer's demand for payment.

3. Don't panic. Scammers will try to convince you to act immediately and threaten you with arrest, revoking your driver's license or tell you your computer is about to be corrupted.
4. If you receive one of these calls, hang up.

You can report the scam directly to the Federal Trade Commission at <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/>.

Check out the video below to learn about how scammers try to get you to pay. This may help you spot a scam in the future!
<https://youtu.be/PbiXbIHsTqU>

TIME: KHKF MORNING NEWS 6:00AM-9:00AM Dec 1, 2022

6. ISSUE: Local non-profit feeds 120 people for Christmas
GUEST: Liz Meyer
DESCRIPTION:

LA GRANDE- 120 people were served at a complimentary Christmas Day Buffet offered by Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon.

This Christmas Buffet was held at the Presbyterian Friendship Center in La Grande and was made possible thanks to volunteers, monetary donations and food donations from the community. In addition, Community Kindness and Ron Wheeler, General Manager of Dining Services at Sodexo at Eastern Oregon University provided some of the food donations as well.

This is the second year that Community Kindness was able to provide this event for the community and was offered to those who were alone, homeless or had nowhere else to go. This lunch was a way for community members to come together and enjoy a meal and some Christmas cheer.

Liz Meyer with Community Kindness of Eastern Oregon said “we are so grateful and thankful to everyone in the community who donated money and food and time to make this another wonderful event. It is important to us. Our core value at Community Kindness is to serve our community through acts of Kindness, Integrity, and Love, and this is just another way that we have been able to do that.”

Community Kindness is a non-profit thrift store located at 1315 Adams Ave in La Grande, whose profits go right back into the community to help in a variety of ways. Learn more at <https://ckthriftstore.com/>

TIME: KHKF MORNING NEWS 6:00AM-9:00AM Dec 28, 2022