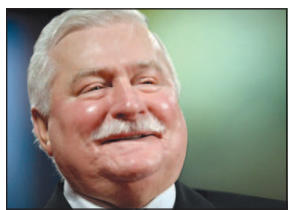


## DAILY PLANNER

### TODAY

Today is Friday, Oct. 5, the 278th day of 2018. There are 87 days left in the year.



### TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On Oct. 5, 1983, Solidarity founder Lech Walesa (lek vah-wen'-sah) was named winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

### ON THIS DATE

In 1829, the 21st president of the United States, Chester Alan Arthur, was born in North Fairfield, Vermont.

In 1931, Clyde Pangborn and Hugh Herndon completed the first non-stop flight across the Pacific Ocean, arriving in Washington state some 41 hours after leaving Japan.

In 1947, President Harry S. Truman delivered the first televised White House address as he spoke on the world food crisis.

In 1953, Earl Warren was sworn in as the 14th chief justice of the United States, succeeding Fred M. Vinson.

In 1958, racially-segregated Clinton High School in Clinton, Tennessee, was mostly leveled by an early morning bombing.

In 1969, the British TV comedy program "Monty Python's Flying Circus" made its debut on BBC 1.

In 1984, the space shuttle Challenger blasted off from the Kennedy Space Center on an 8-day mission; the crew included Kathryn D. Sullivan, who became the first American woman to walk in space, and Marc Garneau, the first Canadian astronaut.

In 1988, Democrat Lloyd Bentsen lambasted Republican Dan Quayle during their vice presidential debate, telling Quayle, "Senator, you're no Jack Kennedy."

In 2011, Apple founder Steve Jobs, 56, died in Palo Alto, California.

### LOTTERY

**Megabucks:** \$79 million  
1-14-40-43-45-47

**Mega Millions:** \$420 million  
2-22-29-31-34-1-x3

**Powerball:** \$253 million  
41-53-59-63-66-PB 3-x3

**Win for Life:** Oct. 3  
3-51-68-75

**Pick 4:** Oct. 4  
• 1 p.m.: 2-5-2-0  
• 4 p.m.: 4-7-2-3  
• 7 p.m.: 1-4-4-9  
• 10 p.m.: 0-4-3-7  
**Pick 4:** Oct. 3  
• 1 p.m.: 5-8-9-1  
• 4 p.m.: 5-4-6-4  
• 7 p.m.: 7-1-7-4  
• 10 p.m.: 0-8-8-8

### ROAD REPORT

Numbers to call:  
• Inside Oregon: 800-977-6368.  
• Outside Oregon: 503-588-2941.

### NEWSPAPER LATE?

Every effort is made to deliver your Observer in a timely manner. Occasionally conditions exist that make delivery more difficult.

If you are not on a motor route, delivery should be before 5:30 p.m. If you do not receive your paper by 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, please call 541-963-3161 by 6 p.m.

If your delivery is by motor carrier, delivery should be by 6 p.m. For calls after 6, please call 541-975-1690, leave your name, address and phone number. Your paper will be delivered the next business day.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The usefulness of a meeting is in inverse proportion to the attendance."  
— Lane Kirkland, American labor leader (1922-1999).

# Lack of lightning key in quiet fire season

By Jayson Jacoby  
WesCom News Service

Northeastern Oregon suffered from smoke this summer but pretty much missed out on the fire.

This corner of the state, the site of more than a dozen major blazes over the past few decades, was something of an eye in the fiery storm that engulfed much of the West.

While fires were scorching tens of thousands of acres elsewhere in Oregon, and in the neighboring states of Idaho, Washington and California, Northeastern Oregon's drought-desiccated forests and rangelands burned only in a figurative sense as an August heatwave broke temperature records.

Although the situation is a bit more complicated, local fire managers say the explanation for the comparatively quiet 2018 fire season can be distilled to a single factor

Lightning. Or rather, a lack of lightning.

"We had a few storms that came through but there wasn't a lot of lightning compared with past seasons," said Steve Meyer, wildland fire supervisor at the Oregon Department of Forestry's Baker City office. "That was definitely the biggest thing, the lack of widespread lightning."

It was big because lightning sparks more wildfires than any other source, including people, in Northeast Oregon.

In some years lightning is the culprit in 80 percent or more of blazes.

Lightning-sparked fires are especially common on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, with an annual average of 71 over the past 10 years.

Lightning has started more than 100 fires on the forest in 15 separate years since 1972.

But 2018 was an anomaly. With the risk of lightning almost over for the season, there have been 26 lightning fires on the Wallowa-Whitman this year.

That's the fewest in any year since at least 1972. The previous low point was 33 fires in 2016.

The 2017 fire season was more typical, with 91 lightning fires.

The unusual scarcity of lightning was a welcome respite, said Willy Crippen, fire management officer for the Burnt-Powder Fire Zone, which takes in much of the southern half of the Wallowa-Whitman.

"We've been pretty beat up the past couple of years," Crippen said.

Although Crippen agrees with Meyer that the lack of lightning was the most important factor in keeping the 2018 fire season at bay, it wasn't the only one.

Crippen said it was also vital to have what fire managers call "initial attack" resources — those that respond

first to a new blaze — available nearby, and in particular airplanes and helicopters.

"We did have some really successful initial attacks on the few lightning fires we had," Crippen said. "Our goal, ultimately, is that 98 percent of initial attacks are successful."

Success, in this case, means that the fire is contained — but not necessarily extinguished — after the first period of firefighting.

This year the initial attack crews were successful with every lightning blaze on the Wallowa-Whitman, Crippen said.

Although the rash of large fires across the West for much of the summer depleted the number of crews available, Crippen said that didn't have an effect on the aircraft available for initial attack in Northeast Oregon.

The reason, he said, is that a few helicopters or single-engine air tankers are much more valuable for initial attack than for working on a massive fire.

"In that case, one more helicopter isn't going to make the difference," Crippen said.

But having a helicopter arrive within 30 minutes after a fire is reported can potentially prevent a small blaze from becoming a big one, he said.

And that potential was considerable this summer.

Crippen said indexes that measure how fast a fire would likely spread reached all-time

## Plenty Of Smoke, But Few Local Fires

Although dense wildfire smoke clogged Baker Valley and other parts of Northeastern Oregon at times this summer, the culprits, in most cases, were not local fires but blazes elsewhere in Oregon, California, Washington or British Columbia. Below is a comparison of wildfire statistics for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest:

YEAR	WILDFIRES		TOTAL ACRES
	LIGHTNING	HUMAN	
2018	26	11	21.5
2017	91	20	4,498
2016	33	29	28,614
2015	63	23	50,248
2014	99	15	55,914
2013	124	16	929
2012	42	40	70,738
2011	61	20	9,233

record highs on some days in July and August.

The temperature topped 100 degrees on three days in July at the Baker City Airport, and on three others during August.

The August heat wave was the most severe on record at the airport, with all-time records set on consecutive days — 108 on Aug. 9 and 109 on Aug. 10.

Meanwhile the absence of thunderstorms, though it limited the number of lightning fires, also eliminated the major source of summer rainfall for the region.

The persistent hot, dry weather had fire crews ready for what could have been a combustible situa-

tion, Meyer said.

"Definitely a lot of the summer we were kind of on pins and needles," he said. "The fuels were definitely ready to burn, and we did set some records with fire indexes."

The Oregon Department of Forestry, which mainly is responsible for fires on state and some private land, had a fire season that was closer to average than was for the Wallowa-Whitman.

The agency responded to 74 fires across the region, one more than the 10-year average.

The Forestry Department's Baker District was the exception, however, with just seven fires that combined burned less than 1 acre.

# Measure 106 fight presents conflicting views of abortion

By Jade McDowell  
East Oregonian

Abortion will be on the Oregon ballot in November with Measure 106, which would ban the state from using taxpayer money for abortions.

Currently, Oregon taxpayers are on the hook for abortions for women on the Oregon Health Plan, Oregon's version of Medicaid for people in poverty. According to The Oregonian, a public records request revealed during 2015-2016 the Oregon Health Plan paid \$2.4 million for 3,769 abortions.

Measure 106 would no longer allow state tax revenue to go toward funding abortions except in cases of rape, incest, ectopic pregnancies or when a qualified physician determines the mother will be seriously harmed or killed by continuing the pregnancy. It would

affect the Oregon Health Plan and state employees who receive their health insurance through the state. Depending on how the law is interpreted, it could also affect coverage for public employees such as teachers.

Supporters of the measure say no one should be forced by the government to pay for something they find morally reprehensible. Peggy Willis, a member of Pendleton's Right to Life chapter, believes "in life from the time of conception until natural death."

"I believe life is a God-given gift, and it isn't up to anybody to pull the plug," she said.

To her, and many more like her around the state, abortion is taking an innocent life. Willis said while there are some cases where a woman's life is in danger, in many cases women don't want to have a

baby because it would be "inconvenient" or they don't want to raise a child with a disability like Down Syndrome.

The idea of any of her taxes funding abortion is difficult for her to think about.

"I do not believe we should have to pay to kill a baby," she said.

Deanna Leonard of Hermon's Right to Life group said she feels Measure 106 is not extreme. Instead, she said, it protects Oregonians' rights not to pay for something they find "horrific."

"People can still get an abortion for any reason they choose. They just can't do it with my tax money," she said.

Opponents of Measure 106 take a different view. They say Measure 106 is a "backdoor ban on abortion" that blocks access to medical care for low-income women.

An Do, communications director for the anti-106 coalition No Cuts to Care, said the measure would essentially create two categories of access to "the full spectrum of reproductive care" based on a woman's income level. She said women who are on the Oregon Health Plan often have the biggest barriers to accessing health care, and the measure could put an abortion out of their reach.

"A right is not a right unless you can afford to access it," she said.

Measure 106 would be a step in the opposite direction for Oregon, she said, which has a long history of protecting abortion access.

The state has no laws requiring waiting periods, ultrasounds, counseling, parental permission or other requirements often imposed by states,

and does not ban late-term abortions provided after the fetus would be viable outside the womb. Last year, the legislature passed the Reproductive Health Equity Act, which requires all insurance plans in Oregon to fully cover the cost of abortions with no co-pay.

Do said restrictions on abortion access take away a woman's right to choose when to start a family.

"Abortion is a really personal, serious medical decision that should be kept between a woman and her doctor," Do said.

Previous ballot measures attempting to place limits on abortion have failed, but Do said the coalition of organizations against Measure 106 will not be complacent in fighting the proposed constitutional amendment all the way to Election Day.

# City council votes to increase garbage service fee

By Cherise Kaechele  
The Observer

The City of La Grande approved a rate hike for garbage service after Waste-Pro Manager Darin Larvik reported the service is operating at a loss.

Larvik told the city council on Wednesday night that China's decision to no longer accept recycling materials has impacted them in a big way.

As of Jan. 1, China, once

the world's largest importer of recycled paper and plastics, banned the import of various types of plastics and unsorted paper.

The majority of recycled materials from Oregon went to China. The ban has caused recycling processors to struggle to find places that will pay for their mixed paper and plastic.

The state gave permission to companies like Waste-Pro to "landfill" the recycled ma-

terials for the period of time needed to figure out where to send the recyclables. Larvik said they kept the recycled goods for as long as possible but eventually were forced to throw them away.

"We kept holding on (to the recyclables) to see what the

end result would be," he told the councilors. "China isn't

going to take them. I'm

See LGCC / Page 5A

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