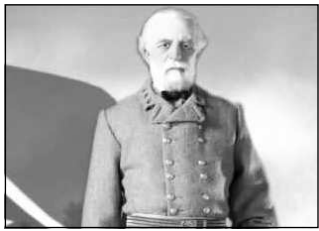


## DAILY PLANNER

### TODAY

Today is Wednesday, April 10, the 100th day of 2019. There are 265 days left in the year.



### TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On April 10, 1865, Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, a day after surrendering the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House, said farewell to his men, praising them for their "unsurpassed courage and fortitude."

### ON THIS DATE

In 1866, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was incorporated.

In 1912, the British liner RMS Titanic set sail from Southampton, England, on its ill-fated maiden voyage.

In 1916, the Professional Golfers' Association of America was founded in New York.

In 1925, the F. Scott Fitzgerald novel "The Great Gatsby" was first published by Scribner's of New York.

In 1932, German President Paul Von Hindenburg was re-elected in a runoff, with Adolf Hitler coming in second.

In 1947, Brooklyn Dodgers President Branch Rickey purchased the contract of Jackie Robinson from the Montreal Royals.

In 1962, Stuart Sutcliffe, the Beatles' original bass player, died in Hamburg, West Germany, at age 21.

In 1968, "In the Heat of the Night" won best picture of 1967 at the 40th Academy Awards; one of its stars, Rod Steiger, was named best actor while Katharine Hepburn was honored as best actress for "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner."

### LOTTERY

**Megabucks:** \$1 million  
13-24-29-30-37-47

**Mega Millions:** \$140 million  
11-22-34-44-58-9-x2

**Powerball:** \$84 million  
15-33-43-59-60-PB 8-x3

**Win for Life:** April 8  
11-19-50-52

### Pick 4:

April 9  
• 1 p.m.: 1-5-2-4  
• 4 p.m.: 9-6-4-5  
• 7 p.m.: 3-6-4-7  
• 10 p.m.: 7-6-7-0

### Pick 4:

April 8  
• 1 p.m.: 6-9-1-7  
• 4 p.m.: 8-6-7-7  
• 7 p.m.: 6-0-8-4  
• 10 p.m.: 8-9-3-5

### 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 please call 541-963-3161.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Work is something you can count on, a trusted, lifelong friend who never deserts you."

— Margaret Bourke-White,  
American photojournalist  
(1904-1971)

## TRAINS

Continued from Page 1A

pastor of La Grande's Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, with launching the effort to create a Quiet Zone about 20 years ago.

Albrecht, who left La Grande almost 15 years ago and is now the chaplain of a hospital in Honolulu, Hawaii, said he is delighted to learn that the City of La Grande's application was approved.

"It is a great feeling. I'm so happy that people kept on working on it after I left. It would not have happened without them," said Albrecht, who frequently makes return visits to La Grande and dislikes the sound of train horn blasts.

Business owners who are grateful a Quiet Zone appears to be in La Grande's future include Ed Straight and his wife, Debbie, who own the Orchard Motel on Adams Avenue. Ed Straight said travelers stopping in La Grande for the first time are bothered most by the train horns.

"Some customers tell us, 'I can't hear myself think' (because of the horn blasts)," Ed Straight said.

He said once someone was signing in as a guest but then heard the sound of a passing train's horn and decided to continue on to Baker City rather than spend the night in La Grande.

Straight said the train horns annoyed him when he first moved to La Grande in 1990, but he has long since become accustomed to them.

"I don't hear them anymore," he said.

Rich Pogue, manager of the Travelodge, also on Adams Avenue, also said customers complain about the train horn blasts.

"Some tell us that it seemed like trains were running all night long," Pogue said.

Like Straight, he said he is used to the sound of the trains. Pogue said it makes him feel nostalgic when he hears train horns in the distance, noting that the railroad played a big role in La Grande's development.

Karin Tsiatsos, owner of The Landing Hotel on Adams Avenue, was encouraged to learn that downtown La Grande may become a Quiet Zone.

"We have been dying to hear this news," she said.

According to Tsiatsos, 15 to 20 percent of her guests complain about the train horns. This has inspired her to place ear plugs in the rooms of her guests.

Justin Rock, a member of the La Grande City Council, is among those opposed to the creation of a Quiet Zone. Rock said he objects to it because the City of La Grande will have to spend at least \$200,000 to take steps like installing safety devices.



Observer file photo

La Grande has been approved to establish a Quiet Zone in town. The Quiet Zone could be in place in as little as six months.

"I can think of a lot of other things I'd rather have the money spent on," Rock said, adding that he feels street maintenance would be a better use of the money.

The railroad crossing devices the City of La Grande will have to install before it can become a Quiet Zone include narrow concrete medians placed down the middle of the street near the railroad crossing gates. The medians will prevent drivers from attempting to beat an approaching train by crossing over into the oncoming lane of traffic and driving around the crossing gate, according to a news release from the City of La Grande.

Currently the locomotive engineer of each train passing through La Grande is

required to blast its horn a total of 15 times, three before each of the city's five main crossings at Fir, Greenwood, Cherry and Willow streets, and H Avenue.

The creation of a Quiet Zone does not mean the sound of train horns will never be heard again in La Grande. Clements explained that train operators would still be allowed to sound their horns if they see a vehicle or a person obstructing railroad tracks within the city limits.

Clements said Lia Spiegel and Michael Jennings of La Grande deserve a lion's share of the credit for their work toward acquiring approval for the Quiet Zone. The two led a group of citizens who approached the La Grande City Council in January of

2015 with a proposal for establishing a Quiet Zone. City Manager Robert Strope then set up a Quiet Zone Committee. Strope lauded the efforts of the committee in the city's news release.

"Without the tireless efforts of the committee, particularly Lia Spiegel and Michael Jennings, we never would have received the approval from the Federal Railroad Administration to move forward," he said in the news release.

Strope also noted retired City of La Grande Public Works Director Norm Paulus did important work on technical issues during the approval process.

Clements said it may be possible to have a Quiet Zone in place in as soon as six months. ■

## LGCC

Continued from Page 1A

it comes from and how cities and counties in Oregon must follow the state's comprehensive plan when building their own.

"A comprehensive plan tells the story and the vision of a community," Stenbeck said. "It's a document on what you want to do in the city, and (it) is important to the development of a community."

Overall, a comprehensive plan outlines how the available land and space in a community may be used efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of its citizens. Zoning rules and standards then serve as the guidelines to follow for implementing the vision of the comprehensive plan, according to La Grande City Planner Mike Boquist.

Boquist said while La Grande's comprehensive plan was created in the 1990s, some of its goals — such as the recommendations for floodplains and hazardous areas — have no need for revisions because they cover subjects that rarely change. However, with more fluid goals, the city planner said it's important for the council to update the plan to match their vision.

"As things change, we need to focus on those goals," Boquist said. "Economic development, parks and housing have changed, so we need to update (them)."

To understand the housing needs in La Grande, the city is currently commissioning a housing study, according to Boquist. The city planner said the most recent housing

analysis was performed in 2000. He mentioned that even though it's good practice to hold a study every decade or so, La Grande's slow growth means it isn't necessary to have them so often.

"From a housing standpoint, La Grande has been consistent over the past 20 years," he said. "There's actually a surplus in residential vacant territory in La Grande, but our latest driver has been a challenge with affordable housing."

Boquist, while referencing a map of the city on his computer screen, pointed to "a couple hundred" acres of vacant houses and farmland within the city limits that are zoned for multi-family housing (apartments, duplexes). These areas, however, are far from city services and commercial centers — it's even a long walk to the transit system from these empty farmlands. Boquist said this poses a problem when considering where to build multi-family homes, so the city may explore some zoning changes.

"We're doing well with available land. It just matters if it's zoned properly," he said. "Most of our current housing is single-family, and we have almost none for multi-family. We might need to consider rezoning to allow for apartments and triplexes (to be built closer to services)."

While La Grande's housing study is in its final draft phase, Boquist said he had the chance to review it Tuesday morning.

"The study is finding every category of housing has a need, but it's greater with rentals and multi-family homes," he said. "There's a sort of a trickle-down effect. Because of the

shortage of (higher-end) housing, we have people settling for less because they can't find what they want."

Boquist further explained this theory: Because a person or family who can afford a higher priced home can't find luxury homes or land to build on, they settle for a lower priced house. This pushes people of the income bracket who could afford that house out of the market and so on, until there is hardly any affordable housing left.

"There are people living in RVs and campers or couch-surfing, and they're technically considered homeless because they are not able to find affordable housing," he said.

Once the housing analysis is finalized, the city council will use it to inform its revisions for the housing goals of its comprehensive plan, according to Boquist.

In addition to housing, the city council is looking into updating its visions for economic development and parks master planning.

Economic development under a comprehensive plan mainly focuses on "how much land you have and how much land is needed" for businesses to move in and grow, according to Stenbeck.

Boquist said at the city council's yearly resolution retreat at the beginning of this year, some council members noted they would like to update the city's economic vision, as La Grande's current economic development plan was created 10 years ago. Some of those goals include nurturing entrepreneurial growth within the city and encouraging outside businesses to move in.

But because La Grande has seen relatively little growth during the past 20 years Boquist has lived in the area, he said the city will always have to make a conscious effort if it wants to expand.

"We have to make growth happen if we want it to happen," he said. "We're always exploring new ways to grow."

As for the parks master plan goal, La Grande Parks & Recreation Director Stu Spence said he hopes the city can take this opportunity during their comprehensive plan revisions to include a more detailed master plan than what is currently in place.

"We don't have a full version of a master plan," he said. "A real master plan is getting community input and then giving them what they need."

The current parks master plan, which was created in 2012, is more like an "inventory" of the parks in La Grande and what equipment resides in them, according to Boquist. Spence said while this version is helpful, his master plan would include "priorities, timelines and benchmarks for staff to implement the plan based on community input."

Spence said he would like the city to hire a consultant to perform a parks analysis and community outreach, but he noted the cost to do so would either have to come from grant money or the city's general fund.

Boquist said the city will most likely send its revised comprehensive plan to the state in August this year, and he expects the approval process to be complete as early as January of 2020. ■

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