

DAILY PLANNER

TODAY
Today is Wednesday, April 17, the 107th day of 2019. There are 258 days left in the year.



TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On April 17, 1972, the Boston Marathon allowed women to compete for the first time; Nina Kuscsik was the first officially recognized women's champion, with a time of 3:10:26.

ON THIS DATE

In 1492, a contract was signed by Christopher Columbus and a representative of Spain's King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, giving Columbus a commission to seek a westward ocean passage to Asia.

In 1521, Martin Luther went before the Diet of Worms to face charges stemming from his religious writings. (Luther was later declared an outlaw by Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.)

In 1861, the Virginia State Convention voted to secede from the Union.

In 1924, the motion picture studio Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer was founded, the result of a merger of Metro Pictures, Goldwyn Pictures and the Louis B. Mayer Co.

In 1961, some 1,500 CIA-trained Cuban exiles launched the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in an attempt to topple Fidel Castro, whose forces crushed the incursion by the third day.

In 1970, Apollo 13 astronauts James A. Lovell, Fred W. Haise and Jack Swigert splashed down safely in the Pacific, four days after a ruptured oxygen tank crippled their spacecraft while en route to the moon.

LOTTERY
Megabucks: \$1.6 million
26-29-32-35-37-38

Mega Millions: \$175 million
11-29-34-48-54-10-x2

Powerball: \$118 million
4-17-26-32-49-PB 10-x4

Win for Life: April 15
13-18-32-39

Pick 4: April 16
• 1 p.m.: 5-6-0-5
• 4 p.m.: 7-5-1-8
• 7 p.m.: 4-3-0-6
• 10 p.m.: 8-3-5-6

Pick 4: April 15
• 1 p.m.: 1-0-1-4
• 4 p.m.: 1-1-9-1
• 7 p.m.: 9-7-0-7
• 10 p.m.: 6-0-0-5

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

"I think America is richer in intelligence than any other country in the world; and that its intelligence is more scattered than in any country of the world"

— Will Durant, *American historian (1885-1981)*

IMPACT

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Harris and all Impact 100 members, nearly all women, each donate at least \$100 a year to the organization. Any member is eligible to attend the annual Impact 100 meeting and help determine how the money raised will be distributed.

This year, those whom Impact 100 reached out to included:

- a woman battling serious health problems who was provided \$2,450 for dental work
- a single father of young children who received \$1,200 for dentures
- a mother who received \$700 to help pay legal fees that in turn will make her eligible to receive a driver's license
- a high school student who received \$2,000 for dental work
- a new adult care home that was given \$1,000 for renovations to improve handicapped access
- a family struggling to afford housing was given \$650 that will allow them



Dick Mason/The Observer

Impact 100 members Sherlyn Roberts, left, and Joni Lequerica discuss their organization's plans for reaching out to the community.

to move into an apartment

- a family in need will receive \$250 for funeral expenses

Much of the dental work funded in part by Impact 100 will be done by local dentists who will provide discounts, said Patty O'Reilly, an Impact 100 member.

Impact 100 has given

the Union County community \$266,171 since it was founded in 2003.

Carol Lauritzen of La Grande, a longtime member of Impact 100, said the organization's success is a tribute to the generous spirit shared by so many in Union County who make the Grande Ronde Valley a better place for everyone.

SESSION

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decrease anywhere from \$800,000 to \$1 million per fiscal year.

Strope said this sharp decline in ending cash specifically for the 2020-2021 fiscal year is due to multiple factors, but he described the two most "volatile" as a 10% jump in Public Employees Retirement System fees that year and an assumed 10% increase in health care costs for city employees each year.

Because of these projected increased costs regarding aspects of the city's payroll, Strope urged the city council not to hire any new employees, even though it might seem tempting as the city currently holds more than \$280,000 in unexpected funds from the 2017-2018 fiscal year to push toward future expenditures and add to the general fund.

"It's important to avoid making continuing money decisions without looking to the future," Strope said. "Adding staff, without looking beyond this fiscal year, would be irresponsible of us. We wouldn't want to hire staff with the projections we have because we'd be out of money by 2023, and we'd have to lay off staff in a few years."

When the budget committee and city council merged to become the fiscal committee in 2015, they made a number of recommendations to address the city's long-term financial situation, including the goal not to reduce any current services or staff positions, according to the provided packet.

Strope said while the city has successfully retained staff positions, hired another full-time human resources representative and even created a new position at the police department, the amount of workload has increased since this goal was set, meaning the city's quality of service has declined.

While the Cook Memorial Library roof replacement, which is estimated to cost the city about \$325,000, is included in the 2019-2023

budget projections, the cost for a new station for the La Grande Police Department is not, according to Strope.

Because the current building — which houses both LGPD and the Union County Sheriff's Office — meets neither department's needs, Strope said, for the past 11 years the city has been looking to either find or build a police station on its own or to combine effort with the county for a new building.

"We talked about whether or not it would make sense to relocate the police department into downtown because the facility itself really doesn't fit our current needs as a department," he said. "There's merit to having the sheriff and police department in the same building because there's better communication, they work together a lot, and they have the ability to share resources."

In order to build a new station, however, Strope said the city must find about \$200,000 separate from the rent they pay for their current building to get started on its share of what would be a roughly \$4 million project. He said, considering the projected budget, the city is "at least three years away from a window" of opportunity before it can begin to think about having the funds to back up the construction of a new police station.

"Looking at these numbers, we'd have to find \$200,000 of continuing funds to service the debt (of the building), and I don't see that on the horizon," the city manager said. "If you want to (make capital improvements), you have to have the hard conversations. There are only two options I know of: You have to cut things or look for more money."

Strope said the purpose of having this projected budget meeting was to update city council and budget committee members on the fiscal outlook of the next five years, and was not intended to serve as a forum for discussing the 2019-2020 fiscal year's budget.

Those meetings will take place during the city's budget hearings set for May 6-9.

"This meeting gives the budget committee and the city council a preview of what's coming so they can make better short-term and long-term decisions," Strope said. ■

"If you support people in need, you support the whole community," she said.

The objective of Impact 100 is to provide people dealt difficult blows the assistance they need to get back on their feet.

"These are people who just need a little step up. Just a little generosity can make such a difference in their lives," said O'Reilly, who conducted the annual meeting with the help of her daughter, Katie.

Impact 100 member Carol Campbell said the organization's annual meetings heighten awareness of people in the community who need help, because the organization is full of people "who have their ears to the ground."

Andrea Waldrop, also an Impact 100 member, agrees, noting the meetings cause the group to be extra aware of the well-being and needs of people around them. Waldrop said it is inspiring to see how people dealing with struggles are impacted by the organization.

Evidence of the differ-

ence Impact 100 makes is apparent by what members see and what they do not see.

"We never see people come back (for additional assistance)," Waldrop said.

There is one exception, though.

"Some people (who have received assistance) come back as members," O'Reilly said.

People who receive help from Impact 100 are nominated at the organization's annual meeting by members and non-members.

Impact 100's annual meetings are always held in mid-April. Anyone interested in joining Impact 100 can do so by making donations at Community Bank or by calling O'Reilly at 541-910-4920. ■

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Park and Dam Access Trail Closed

The public campground at the Wallowa Falls Hydroelectric Project, known as Pacific Park, located at the south terminus of the Wallowa Lake Highway (OR St. Hwy 351) will be closed to all public use for the 2019 and 2020 recreation seasons.

Under the new Federal Energy Regulatory Commission operating license for the Project, PacifiCorp is required to reconstruct the powerhouse tailrace, which runs through the park, to protect threatened bull trout. The work will also include stabilization of the west bank of the West Fork Wallowa River adjacent to the campground. Visitors and residents in the area should note that an increase in traffic and heavy equipment operation is expected in the vicinity due to the construction project. PacifiCorp plans to re-open Pacific Park for the 2021 recreation season. Additionally the access trail to the Wallowa Falls Dam on the Upper East Fork Wallowa River will be closed for dam upgrades beginning June 1 through August 31. The USDA-Forest Service-East Fork Trail will remain open providing access to Aneroid Basin. If you have any questions regarding the Wallowa Falls Hydroelectric Project or the closure of Pacific Park and the dam access road, please email recreation@pacificorp.com or leave a message on our recreation phone line at 503-813-6666.

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