

DAILY  
PLANNER

## TODAY

Today is Friday, July 26, the 207th day of 2019. There are 158 days left in the year.

## TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On July 26, 2016, Hillary Clinton became the first woman to be nominated for president by a major political party at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia.

## ON THIS DATE

In 1775, the Continental Congress established a Post Office and appointed Benjamin Franklin its Postmaster-General.

In 1863, Sam Houston, former president of the Republic of Texas, died in Huntsville at age 70.

In 1908, U.S. Attorney General Charles J. Bonaparte ordered creation of a force of special agents that was a forerunner of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In 1925, five days after the end of the Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee, prosecutor William Jennings Bryan died at age 65. (Although Bryan had won a conviction against John T. Scopes for teaching Darwin's Theory of Evolution, the verdict was later overturned.)

In 1953, Fidel Castro began his revolt against Fulgencio Batista with an unsuccessful attack on an army barracks in eastern Cuba. (Castro ousted Batista in 1959.)

In 1956, the Italian liner Andrea Doria sank off New England, some 11 hours after colliding with the Swedish liner Stockholm; at least 51 people died.

In 1986, Islamic radicals in Lebanon released the Rev. Lawrence Martin Jenco, an American hostage held for nearly 19 months. American statesman W. Averell Harriman died in Yorktown Heights, New York, at age 94.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In 2002, the Republican-led House voted, 295-132, to create an enormous Homeland Security Department in the biggest government reorganization in decades.

In 2006, in a dramatic turnaround from her first murder trial, Andrea Yates was found not guilty by reason of insanity by a Houston jury in the bathtub drownings of her five children; she was committed to a state mental hospital. (Yates had initially been found guilty of murder, but had her conviction overturned.)

## LOTTERY

**Megabucks:** \$1.0 million  
14-32-41-43-44-47

**Mega Millions:** \$40 million  
1-4-23-40-45-11-x2

**Powerball:** \$75 million  
22-29-35-53-56-PB 13-x2

**Win for Life:** July 24  
24-41-49-69

## Pick 4: July 25

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

## Pick 4: July 24

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

## 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

"Most human beings have an almost infinite capacity for taking things for granted."

— Aldous Huxley, English author (born this date in 1894, died in 1963)

## Fire danger 'creeping up' in the region

By Jayson Jacoby  
and Phil Wright  
EO Media Group

BAKER CITY — The fire season has been more fizzle than flame so far in Northeastern Oregon, but Joel McCraw doesn't expect the tranquility to last.

"Our fire danger ratings are starting to creep up with the hotter, drier weather," McCraw, a fire management officer for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest's Whitman District, said Monday afternoon.

July has been a bit cooler than usual. But Monday's high temperature of 97 at the Baker City Airport was the hottest this year, eclipsing Sunday's maximum of 95. And only a trace of rain has fallen at the airport during July.

Through Monday the average high temperature at the airport was 84.6 degrees. The long-term average high for July is 85.2. Last July the average high was 91.8, the second-hottest since record-keeping started at the airport in 1943.

Pendleton reached 95 on Monday, 4 degrees above normal, according to the National Weather Service. Fire agencies in the northeast portion of Umatilla County felt the heat as a grass fire took off Monday afternoon.

Dave Baty, chief of East Umatilla Fire & Rescue, said he revisited the site north of Helix and estimated the burn spanned 400 acres. It would have been worse, he said, if crews had not stopped it from crawling over a hill and into acres of wheat.

The Milton-Freewater Rural Fire Department hit the scene first Monday and at about 3:45 p.m. called for assistance. East Umatilla as well as Walla Walla Fire District crews answered. Baty said he found a perch on the fire's south flank and took command of the attack at that location.

Communications in that part of the county are sketchy, but between radios and cellphones he and others directed the effort and the crew contained the burn sometime around 8 p.m. He said a farmer used a disc harrow to cut a line that helped im-

mentally.

"I think everyone did a really great job," Baty said. "We had some people leave work and come out to the fire and help us put it out."

Baty said he was tired but not quite relaxing just yet. The National Weather Service issued a Red Flag Warning over much of Umatilla and Morrow counties.

Cool temperatures, combined with occasional rain and lingering snow at higher elevations, has kept fire danger measurements below average for much of the summer. But McCraw said that's beginning to change.

In the Central Blue Mountains zone, for instance, an area that includes much of the southern half of the Wallowa-Whitman, the energy release component — a computer model estimate of how much heat a fire would produce, based on the moisture content in various types of fuels — has stayed slightly below average for most of July.

Fire officials use that index, based on conditions from 1993 to 2015, to gauge how difficult it would be to douse a blaze. The index on Tuesday climbed to average for the date.

The index remains below average, however, for the Northern Blue Mountains, which includes parts of Union and Wallowa counties. For purposes of estimating fire danger, Northeastern Oregon is divided into six zones, and conditions are much less dangerous than they were a year ago across the region.

At the end of July in 2018 the energy release component ratings reached all-time record highs on much of the Wallowa-Whitman, ranging from 79 to 84. The ratings Tuesday among the six regions ranged from 60 to 67.

High fire danger doesn't always translate to a busy fire season, though.

Lightning is a key component as well, as it is the ignition source for more than half the fires in northeastern Oregon most years. In many years lightning starts 80 percent or more of the blazes on the Wallowa-Whitman.

The statistics this year reflect the generally benign conditions, McCraw said.

Through Monday, there were 12 lightning fires on the Wallowa-Whitman this year, and they burned 18 acres. The three human-caused fires on the forest burned just 1 acre.

"We've had a few storms come through that put down quite a bit of lightning," McCraw said, "but we're still pretty green and a little wet out there."

A recent lightning fire that burned about one-half acre near Highway 7 about 5 miles southeast of Sumpter illustrates the situation, he said. The lightning bolt actually hit about a week earlier, but the fire didn't produce much smoke until Sunday afternoon. Crews controlled the fire later that day.

McCraw said it's not uncommon for a lightning-sparked fire to smolder for a week or longer — especially when vegetation is still lush and the ground relatively moist — and then be fanned into flames on a hot, dry day. Fire managers call these blazes "holdovers."

"We've had holdovers take 10 or 14 days to show up," McCraw said.

## Public use restrictions on state, private and BLM land

Steve Meyer, wildland fire supervisor at the Oregon Department of Forestry's Baker City office, said the fire season has been atypically placid so far.

"Usually we're a lot drier than we are at this point," Meyer said Tuesday morning.

As of today, the Forestry Department, which is responsible for fires mainly on private and state land, had only one fire this year, a lightning blaze that burned just one-tenth of an acre.

But with the hot temperatures this week, Meyer said the fire danger will increase to high in Baker County on Friday, when the Forestry Department will cease issuing permits for outdoor burning in the county.

People using chain saws will have

to stop using them at noon each day, Meyer said.

"Fuels are drying out," he said. "We're definitely in fire season."

The Vale District of the BLM also announced more stringent public use restrictions that will take effect Monday, July 29. The BLM manages primarily lower-elevation rangeland where grasses and shrubs tend to dry earlier than forested areas.

Campfires will be banned across the Vale District, as will driving motor vehicles off designated roads.

Cooking stoves and heaters that burn liquid or bottled gas will still be allowed, but they must be used in an area at least 10 feet in diameter that's been cleared of flammable materials.

"The light fuels that characterize the rangeland in this area take very little time to dry out with wind and higher temperatures," Tracy Skerjanec, the Vale District's deputy fire management officer, said in a press release. "We've seen the moisture levels dropping significantly to warrant the additional restrictions."

## Lightning sparks fires on Umatilla

A series of thunderstorms last weekend sparked several fires on the Umatilla National Forest, including six on the Heppner Ranger District.

On Tuesday fire crews focused on the Bull Fire near Bull Prairie Lake, which was reported Monday afternoon and burned four acres.

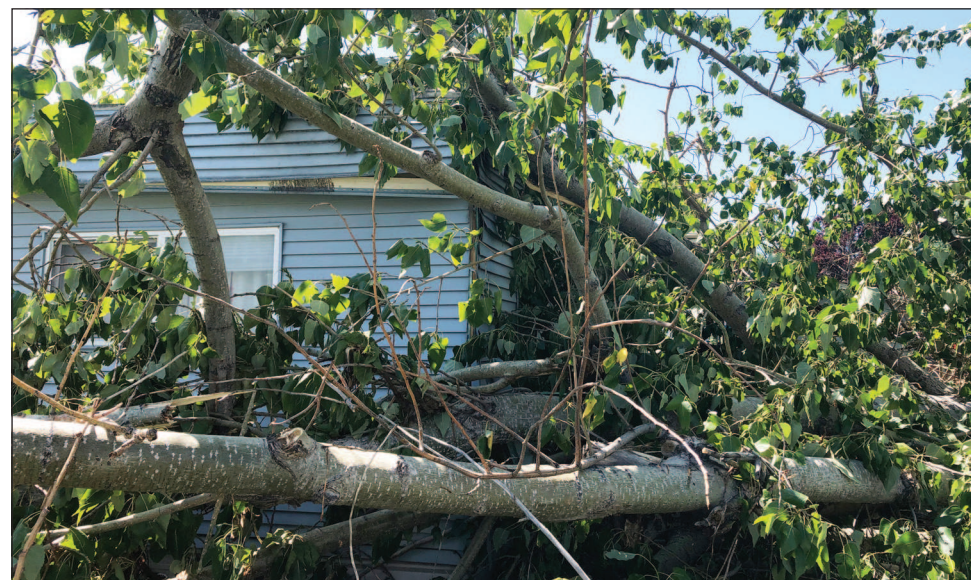
Fire crews contained a 5-acre fire near Rocky Flat on Monday.

The energy release component rating on Monday crept just above average in that part of the Blue Mountains.

With few fires in the region, and none of them requiring large numbers of firefighters, the Wallowa-Whitman has been able to temporarily assign two of its 20-member elite Hotshot crews to other areas, McCraw said.

The Union Hotshots have been working on fires in Alaska for close to two weeks, and the La Grande Hotshots are on a fire in Washington.

## Wind takes down trees Tuesday afternoon in Union County



Devi Mathson/The Observer

A storm Tuesday afternoon took down several trees in the Grande Ronde Valley, including at Sundowner Mobile Home Park in La Grande, above, and in Elgin, at right.



Lafá Moore photo

## Umatilla County Sheriff searching for home burglary suspect

EO Media Group staff

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office has asked for the public's help finding a burglary suspect.



Warren

The sheriff's office reported it has a warrant for the arrest of Amanda Marie Warren, 38, of Pendleton, who also uses the last name Hernandez, for a home burglary and eluding police.

The sheriff's office Wednesday at approximately 6 p.m. responded to a report of a theft at a residence on Birch

Creek Road northeast of Milton-Freewater. The victim, an elderly man, stated a woman he did know came to his home and asked to clean the place. He agreed, she cleaned the home, and left.

After she was gone, according to the sheriff's office, the victim discovered items missing, including his wallet and two firearms (a revolver and a semi-automatic pistol). The sheriff's office warned Warren may still possess the two guns. She also could be connected to an older white sedan.

Sheriff's Lt. Sterrin Holcomb said investigators

tied Warren to the crime but could not release more details because the case is active.

The sheriff's office also cautioned citizens, especially elderly who live alone, to be aware of how the suspect pulled off the crime and urged anyone having additional information to call detective Kacey Ward at 541-966-3638 or the 24-hour dispatch center at 541-966-3651 and reference case No. 19-1009. In case of an emergency, call 911. Anyone who knows of Warren's location should not approach her, the sheriff's office warned but call the dispatch or 911.

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More info: Cecelia@cnpa.com or call (916) 288-6011

2019 Union County Fair  
Entry Times

Noon-6 pm: **Sunday July 28th**  
Open class Photography, Canning, Home Crafts, Poetry, Textiles, Arts and Crafts

8 am-8 pm: **Monday July 29th**  
Open Class Photography, Canning, Home Crafts, Poetry, Textiles, Arts and Crafts, Land Products, Flower Entries, Baked Goods, All Quilts

8 am-Noon: **Tuesday July 30th**  
Open Class Canning, Home Crafts, Poetry, Textiles, Arts and Crafts, Land Products, Flower Entries

1 pm: Open Class Judging

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