

DAILY PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Monday, Sept. 23, the 266th day of 2019. There are 99 days left in the year.



TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On Sept. 23, 2005, Hurricane Rita, down to Category 3, steamed toward refinery towns along the Texas-Louisiana coast, creating havoc even before it arrived; levee breaks caused new flooding in New Orleans, and 23 people were killed when a bus carrying nursing-home evacuees caught fire in Texas.

ON THIS DATE

In 1806, the Lewis and Clark expedition returned to St. Louis more than two years after setting out for the Pacific Northwest.

In 1949, President Harry S. Truman announced there was evidence the Soviet Union had recently conducted a nuclear test explosion.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$2.2 million
9-13-18-28-35-42

Mega Millions: \$227 million
23-24-42-48-53-22-x2

Powerball: \$40 million
1-9-22-36-68-22-x2

Win for Life: Sept. 21
38-57-58-74

Pick 4: Sept. 22
• 1 p.m.: 3-5-5-4
• 4 p.m.: 5-5-1-2
• 7 p.m.: 4-8-1-6
• 10 p.m.: 8-3-6-4

Pick 4: Sept. 21
• 1 p.m.: 2-7-1-2
• 4 p.m.: 2-8-6-7
• 7 p.m.: 0-4-6-8
• 10 p.m.: 2-1-0-7

Pick 4: Sept. 20
• 1 p.m.: 1-4-1-6
• 4 p.m.: 4-1-5-1
• 7 p.m.: 1-2-4-1
• 10 p.m.: 2-6-7-0

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.

CORRECTION

In the Page A4 MyVoice "Oregon has opportunity to be a national leader in health care reform," published Wednesday, Sept. 18, by Dwight Dill misstated his current occupation. Dill retired in 2018 and is no longer the mental health director at the Center for Human Development.

On page 1A "New housing to cater to seniors," published Wednesday Sept. 16, by Sabrina Thompson, incorrectly stated the timeline for completion. The correct timeline will have the first home move in ready by mid-2020.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"I cannot endure to waste anything as precious as autumn sunshine by staying in the house."

— Nathaniel Hawthorne,

Former governor said new approach needed

By **Kathy Aney**
EO Media Group

HERMISTON — Former Gov. John Kitzhaber started his keynote speech at Thursday's health care summit in Hermiston with a personal story.

He told of his early years as a 27-year-old Roseburg emergency room doctor fresh out of medical school and awed by the responsibility of caring for people who arrived at the hospital injured, sick, confused or frightened. Occasionally, patients died.

"When I was unable to save a life, I walked across the hall to a small room where people waited for news of their loved ones," he said. "It seemed like a long, lonely journey across 30 feet of tile floor."

In those days, he treated each individual patient without regard to cost, viewing death as the enemy and treating people as individuals. In 1978, he was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives where he was forced to look at health care



Kathy Aney/EO Media Group

Former Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber chats with Chuck Hoffmann after speaking about health care delivery in Oregon on Thursday at the EOCCO Clinician & Staff Summit in Hermiston.

from a different angle.

"I came face-to-face with a fundamental contradiction," he said. "As a legislator, I couldn't ignore the cost."

Kitzhaber's keynote speech this week came midway through the 2019 Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization Clinician & Staff Summit at the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center. Clinicians, health care administrators

and policy makers sitting at white, linen-covered tables listened to Kitzhaber's thoughts on national and state health care reform.

Kitzhaber said he believes we are thinking about health care all wrong on the national level.

"For decades, we've been asking the wrong question. We've been asking about the subsidies and who pays," he said. "Instead we should be

asking, 'Why does health care cost so much in the first place?'"

He said price points in the U.S. are higher than most anywhere else in the world. "Why?" he asked the group.

Kitzhaber ticked off several reasons. Private equity investors are buying up the most profitable parts of the system, driving up costs. Insurance companies have cut eligibility and lowered reimbursement rates. The national debt increases to pay for hikes in Medicare and Medicaid costs.

"The insured uninsured" have \$5,000 deductibles and "don't really have insurance at all," he quipped. "Cost shifting is the way we avoid confronting reality."

One way out, he said, is funding health care from a specific pot of money indexed to a sustainable growth rate.

"That's exactly what we're trying to do in Oregon with the CCOs," Kitzhaber said.

In 2009, as a state senator, Kitzhaber helped pioneer the Oregon Health Plan. He later helped birth the state's

system of 15 coordinated care organizations, locally governed networks of health care providers who deliver care to the state's most vulnerable residents. The idea is to focus on prevention to get people healthy, reduce visits to expensive emergency rooms and lower costs. The EOCCO serves Umatilla, Morrow and 10 other Eastern Oregon counties.

During the first five years, some CCOs performed better than others, but the state saved more than \$1 billion. There were bumps, too, including the Cover Oregon disaster, and the state's Affordable Care Act insurance exchange website designed by Oracle Corp., which failed spectacularly.

Kitzhaber is unhappy with recent reforms to Oregon health care, which he called CCO 2.0. Last week, he sent a letter to Gov. Kate Brown, House Speaker Tina Kotek and Senate President Peter Courtney to weigh in on two developments he considers especially worrisome.



EO Media Group file photo

A 2015 overhead shot of Pambrun Vineyard in Milton-Freewater provides a view of the Willamette Valley Vineyards-owned property. Willamette is partnering with the city of Milton-Freewater to house a wine production facility project.

Milton-Freewater receives grant for shared wine facility

■ City wants to promote the region's top quality wines with Made in Oregon labels

By **Katy Nesbitt**
For EO Media Group

MILTON-FREEWATER — With an eye to bringing more attention to wine made in Milton-Freewater, the small Umatilla County community has hired a California firm to determine if a shared production and tasting facility would benefit the local wine industry.

City Manager Linda Hall said the city received \$230,000 from Business Oregon's Strategic Reserve Grant Fund to hire a firm to complete a market assessment and the design feasibility. She said the idea is for the facility to operate as a co-op by several of the area's vintners.

"That is a special niche that Oregon has over Washington. We can have multiple tasting rooms in the same facility," Hall said. "We want to help our agriculture-based economy and make it possible for those who produce wine and grapes in the Rocks District of Milton-Freewater to get the recognition they deserve."

Hall credited the city's partnership with Wallowa Valley Vineyards, a winery that owns 36 acres in Milton-

Freewater's Rocks District, a designated American Viticultural Area.

"We've had this vision for close to 10 years and have been trying to turn it into a reality for a long time," Hall said.

Willamette Valley Vineyard's farm in Milton-Freewater has the space to house the proposed facility and Business Oregon, and according to Christine Clair, the winery's director, Business Oregon prefers to invest in projects that has private business involvement.

"The facility would be a huge help building a destination and cluster of wineries in Milton-Freewater, a really special wine growing area," she said.

It's the cobble-strewn soil that makes it such a special wine growing area, Clair said. The only area with a similar soil type, she said, is in France.

"The special cobblestones right at the soil are good for the vines and Syrah grows exceptionally well in this," Clair said. "For the Walla Walla Valley, some of the highest-scored wine comes from this appellation."

Notice

Recently, Avista requested an increase in natural gas rates for our customers in Oregon. We know you care about your energy costs, so we think it's important to share this news with you.

On Sept. 11, 2019, Avista filed an updated Purchased Gas Cost Adjustment (PGA) request with the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (PUC) asking for an overall increase of 4.7 percent in natural gas rates.

If this increase is approved, Avista's natural gas revenues would increase by approximately \$4.0 million. PGAs are filed each year to balance the actual cost of wholesale natural gas purchased by Avista to serve customers with the amount included in rates. This includes the natural gas commodity cost as well as the cost to transport natural gas on interstate pipelines to Avista's local distribution system. This rate adjustment is driven primarily by higher wholesale natural gas prices in the 2018-2019 winter season, which were caused, in part, by a Canadian pipeline disruption that restricted natural gas flows into the Pacific Northwest, combined with colder weather later in the heating season. Avista's request, if approved by the PUC, would go into effect on Nov. 1, 2019.

On July 31, 2019, Avista also proposed four other rate adjustments related to demand side management program funding, intervenor funding, recovering costs associated with residential bank fees and decoupling, which would also go into effect on Nov. 1, 2019, if approved. These filings have no impact on Avista's earnings.

The bottom line

If all requests, including the PGA, are approved and you are an Avista natural gas customer using an average of 46 therms per month, you could expect your bill to increase by \$5.16, or 10.7 percent, for a revised monthly bill of \$53.27 beginning Nov. 1, 2019. All other customer groups receiving firm natural gas service from Avista would also see increases.

For more information

Copies of our filings are available at www.myavista.com/rates, or you can review the filings by visiting our headquarters at: 1411 E. Mission, Spokane, WA 99252 (800) 227-9187

You can also view copies of the filing at one of our district offices located at:
580 Business Park Drive, Medford, OR 97504
2825 Dakota Court, Klamath Falls, OR 97603
10201 "F" Street, La Grande, OR 97850
1404 Green Siding Road, Roseburg, OR 97471

This announcement is to provide you with general information about Avista's rate request and its effect on customers. The calculations and statements in this announcement are not binding on the PUC. For more information about the filing or for information about the time and place of any hearing, contact the PUC at: Public Utility Commission of Oregon 201 High Street SE, Ste. 100 Salem, OR 97301 (800) 522-2404, www.puc.state.or.us

This notice contains forward-looking statements regarding the company's current expectations. Forward-looking statements are all statements other than historical facts. Such statements speak only as of the date of the notice and are subject to a variety of risks and uncertainties, many of which are beyond the company's control, which could cause actual results to differ materially from the expectations. These risks and uncertainties include, in addition to those discussed herein, all of the factors discussed in the company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended Dec. 31, 2018 and the Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2019.

AVISTA



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