

DAILY
PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Monday, Dec. 16, the 350th day of 2019. There are 15 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On Dec. 16, 1773, the Boston Tea Party took place as American colonists boarded a British ship and dumped more than 300 chests of tea into Boston Harbor to protest tea taxes.

ON THIS DATE

In 1653, Oliver Cromwell became lord protector of England, Scotland and Ireland.

In 1859, Wilhelm Grimm, the younger of the story-writing Brothers Grimm, died in Berlin at age 73.

In 1905, the entertainment trade publication Variety came out with its first weekly issue.

In 1907, 16 U.S. Navy battleships, which came to be known as the “Great White Fleet,” set sail on a 14-month round-the-world voyage to demonstrate American sea power.

In 1944, the World War II Battle of the Bulge began as German forces launched a surprise attack against Allied forces through the Ardennes Forest in Belgium and Luxembourg (the Allies were eventually able to turn the Germans back).

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman proclaimed a national state of emergency in order to fight “world conquest by Communist imperialism.”

In 1960, 134 people were killed when a United Air Lines DC-8 and a TWA Super Constellation collided over New York City.

In 1982, Environmental Protection Agency head Anne M. Gorsuch became the first Cabinet-level officer to be cited for contempt of Congress for refusing to submit documents requested by a congressional committee.

In 1985, at services in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, President Ronald Reagan and his wife, Nancy, offered condolences to families of 248 soldiers killed in the crash of a chartered plane in Newfoundland.

In 1991, the U.N. General Assembly rescinded its 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism by a vote of 111-25.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$74 million
4-5-6-26-37-45

Mega Millions: \$372 million
17-21-29-39-56-22-x3

Powerball: \$160 million
3-6-12-32-64-PB 19-x3

Win for Life: Dec. 14
4-29-47-66

Pick 4: Dec. 15
• 1 p.m.: 5-1-3-9
• 4 p.m.: 0-0-7-2
• 7 p.m.: 8-5-5-9
• 10 p.m.: 7-9-9-9

Pick 4: Dec. 14
• 1 p.m.: 2-1-4-2
• 4 p.m.: 6-6-4-1
• 7 p.m.: 1-5-1-7
• 10 p.m.: 7-8-3-9

Pick 4: Dec. 13
• 1 p.m.: 0-9-0-7
• 4 p.m.: 8-4-8-7
• 7 p.m.: 9-9-0-4
• 10 p.m.: 9-1-1-7

ROAD REPORT

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

NEWSPAPER LATE?

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

“It’s discouraging to think how many people are shocked by honesty and how few by deceit”
— Sir Noel Coward, English actor, playwright, composer (born this date, 1899; died in 1973)



Staff photo by Dick Mason

Jon Loudon, a firefighter for the La Grande Rural Fire Department, and Island City Elementary student Solomon Hibbert examine a Nerf toy at Walmart. The two were participating in Friday’s Shop with a Firefighter.

A ride to remember

Students travel in style as part of annual Shop with a Firefighter event

By Dick Mason
The Observer

ISLAND CITY — Ten Island City Elementary students stepped out of their classrooms Friday morning for a day of double delights — a ride in a fire truck and a shopping spree.

The children went shopping for Christmas presents for their families with firefighters from the La Grande Rural Fire Department. Each child selected \$100 worth of Christmas gifts at Walmart, paid for by the annual Shop with a Firefighter program.

The shopping spree program was again a hit with students.

“It is fun to see kids so happy,” said Bailey Blagg, a firefighter with department.

Solomon Hibbert was among the exuberant students.

“It is definitely cool,” the Island City student said.

The children picked out presents for their parents, brothers and sisters and

other relatives. The gifts they chose for those in their age range included toys, gift cards, video game accessories and even an electronic lizard. Tools, baking pans, perfume and blankets were among the items selected for their parents.

Each child was accompanied by one or two firefighters, who kept track of what was chosen for which family member. The information they recorded will be used by the firefighters when they wrap the presents for the children they accompanied and place cards on each package identifying who the gift is for.

The shopping sprees the children went on revealed their selfless natures. The children were so caught up in picking out presented for family members that they sometimes had to be reminded to choose a present for themselves.

“Let’s find something for you,” firefighter Jon Loudon told a child he was

with near the end of the event.

Dena Tams, secretary at Island City Elementary, is impressed by how much her school’s students enjoy reaching out each Christmas season during the Shop with a Firefighter.

“It is a chance for them to give back. That is so special. They love that,” Tams said.

The school selected all the children for Shop with a Firefighter. They were recommended as those who would benefit the most from additional holiday spirit and cheer, said Anthony Swales, a captain and emergency medical technician with the fire department.

The children even got to ride in fire engines and support vehicles from their school to Walmart and back. That experience was a thrill for some students, based on how excited they appeared Friday for their return trip to the school.

“For the kids it is an

added bonus,” Swales said.

Tams agrees.

“Riding in the trucks is so huge,” Tams said.

Shop with a Firefighter is funded by local donations and money raised from the La Grande Rural Fire Department’s annual breakfast at Hog Wild Days in June. Major donations to the program made this year include \$750 from Certified Personnel, \$125 from Oregon Trail Transport and \$125 from Loveland Funeral Chapel.

All of the presents the children bought Friday will be delivered to their families after they are wrapped. Each set of presents will be accompanied by a gift card for a family dinner from Grocery Outlet in Island City. The dinners were made possible by money from the Shop with a Firefighter program and donations from Grocery Outlet.

BRIEFLY

Nominate your favorite waterway for Wild and Scenic Act protection

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden continues to take nominations from Oregonians for rivers in the state for the national Wild and Scenic Rivers list.

“Whether you are a whitewater rafter, an angler or simply an Oregonian who believes strongly in protecting the river or stream that provides safe drinking water to your community, I want to hear from you,” Wyden wrote in an open letter to Oregonians seeking river nominations. “Now is your chance, once again, to speak up for your favorite rivers and highlight the outstanding values that make each river worthy of protection.”

Oregon has 2,173 miles of designated rivers in the Wild and Scenic River system, although this remains a fraction of the state’s 110,994 miles of major rivers and streams.

Outdoor recreation in Oregon, much of it centered on rivers and streams, supports 172,000 jobs in Oregon and generates \$16.4 billion in economic activity statewide. Oregon’s rivers also are important sources of drinking water, as well as habitats for fish and other wildlife.

All Oregonians will have an opportunity to nominate their favorite streams and rivers for inclusion in the bill to assure future Oregonians can enjoy them as well. To help your favorite waterway get protection, send the following information to Wyden:

1. Your name and where you are from.
2. The stream or streams you think deserve protection.
3. Why you think it deserves protection.

You can email your suggestions to: rivers@wyden.senate.gov. Nominations are due Jan. 20, 2020.

— Observer staff

Hopkins speaks on Vietnam

By Gerald Hopkins
For the Observer

LA GRANDE — Doran Hopkins, a retired Air Force colonel, was the guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Union County Retired Educators. In his talk, “Reflections of Vietnam,” Hopkins spoke about his experiences of military life and told a story of his service during the Vietnam War.

As a young man of 24, Hopkins was notified he would be sent on a mission and he could not disclose the details to anyone, including his family. Leaving his wife, Fran, and young son, Frank, Hopkins was flown to Bangkok, Thailand, and taken to the top floor of a tourist hotel in a secured setting. Asked if he had identification of any kind, he responded he did not. However, when his wallet was searched, the staff found a picture of the soldier and his wife. The staff tore the photograph and handed his wife’s half back to Hopkins.

In great secrecy, Hopkins was shipped to Vientiane, Laos, where he served as a liaison between troops in Vietnam and air reconnaissance with military operations tracking the Ho Chi Minh Trail. He was also responsible for payroll and supplies



Photo submitted by Gerald Hopkins
Doran Hopkins was the guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Union County Retired Educators.

needed by the troops.

Hopkins recalled meeting with three prisoners of war released as propaganda by the Vietnamese government. Two were ranking officers and one was a private who had fallen overboard during an attack and been captured by the Vietnamese. Hopkins noted the private, held as a prisoner in the “Hanoi Hilton,” told his captors he did not know how to read or write. The Vietnamese described him as one of the “dumbest” Americans they had seen. However, the private, who was isolated in

a cell during his captivity, recorded the names of more than 250 military by using a code on his cell walls, intelligence he was able to share upon his release.

“He was a real hero,” Hopkins said.

Editors Note: Gerald and Doran Hopkins are brothers.

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