



SPORTS

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Trump Impeachment Merkley: Unique week in D.C.

■ Oregon senator sheds light on impeachment experience

By Jade McDowell
EO Media Group

WASHINGTON — It has been a unique and interesting week for Sen. Jeff Merkley.

The Democratic senator from Oregon spoke with reporters via conference call Thursday morning to pull back the curtain on what it is like being a senator during an impeachment trial. Senators have been asked to absorb hours of detailed, complex presentations so far.

“I know I’ve taken over 50 pages of notes trying to track and understand the arguments put forward,” Merkley said after the first day of arguments.

Under rules voted on in the Senate, each side has a total of 24 hours spread over three days to make their opening arguments. The House impeachment managers acting as prosecutors made their arguments Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. President Donald Trump’s lawyers started their arguments on Saturday and resumed them on Monday.

Some watchers of the proceedings have criticized senators they’ve caught doodling, reading books, playing with fidget spinners or nodding off. Sen. Rand Paul, R-Kentucky, was reportedly working on a crossword puzzle at his desk on Thursday. But Merkley told reporters that despite the long hours, he felt senators from both parties had been “pretty attentive.”

“You may have half a dozen people standing up to stretch on the Republican side and half a dozen on the Democratic side,” he said. “I don’t think you would sense a difference in terms of attention.”

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Merkley

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Eagle Cap Extreme

Women get ‘Extreme’

Iditarod qualifier sees record number of racers, half were women



Ellen Morris Bishop/EO Media Group

Jane Devlin’s team takes the first uphill pull of the 100-mile race during the Eagle Cap Extreme in Wallowa County. Racers came from across the western U.S. and Europe and half of the 40 entrants were women. More than half of the finishers were women. And it was the first time in Eagle Cap Extreme history that women claimed the top two spots in the challenging 200-mile race.

By Ellen Morris Bishop, EO Media Group

JOSEPH — The 16th annual Eagle Cap Extreme Sled Dog Race in Wallowa County lived up to its name this year with a record number of racers.

Racers came from across the western U.S. and Europe. Half of the 40 entrants were women. More than half of the finishers were women. And it was the first time in Eagle Cap Extreme history that women claimed the top two spots in the challenging 200-mile race.

Gabe Dunford of Darby, Montana, crossed the finish line first in the premier 200-miler. She was third in the race in 2019, but this was her year to take home the top trophy and \$1,700 in prize money.

Even though Dunford paused to put two tired dogs on her sled rather than have them run the last few miles, her time of 32 hours, 10 seconds was close to a record for the event and qualified her

to compete in this year’s Iditarod.

Josi Thyr, of Olney, Montana, crossed the finish line just 11 minutes after Dunford.

“I could see Josie’s lights behind me,” Dunford said. “And I thought to myself, ‘I haven’t trained this hard and come this far to lose the race.’”

She didn’t. Hometown hero Morgan Anderson finished fifth in a starting field of 12 in the 200-mile race. She competed in the Eagle Cap Extreme three times previously. Now a sophomore at Montana State University majoring in wildlife biology, Anderson said she hopes to run the 200 — and its 29,381 feet of total

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Ellen Morris Bishop/EO Media Group

Elgin third-grade students Trevor Ewing, left, and Ethan Arnold score an autograph from musher Meghan Forrey on their poster at this year’s Eagle Cap Extreme Sled Dog Race in Wallowa County. Forrey took second place in the 100-mile race.

“I could see Josie’s lights behind me. And I thought to myself, ‘I haven’t trained this hard and come this far to lose the race.’”

— Gabe Dunford, of Darby, Montana, on her first-place finish in the 200-mile race

La Grande

New YFC building nearing completion

■ New Youth for Christ facility may open by June

By Dick Mason
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Twelve years ago Kevin Rainey, executive director of Eastern Oregon Youth for Christ, had a dream, one which may soon be realized.

Construction of a new J House building for Eastern Oregon Youth for Christ, which serves Union County, may be just four months from completion, said Rainey, who has been YFC’s executive director since 2006.

“We hope to be in the building by June,” he said.

The new structure at Second Street and J Avenue across from La Grande High School will replace the old J House building, which was at the same location before its demolition in December of 2018 to create room for the new facility. The home had housed YFC, which is open to youths age 11-19, since 1990.

“I knew that we needed more space for our kids,” Rainey said.

The new J House will definitely provide additional elbow room, with 6,100 square feet of space, slightly more than six times the space the old J House had. The building’s exterior and much of its framing is complete. Rainey said

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Staff photo by Dick Mason

Kevin Rainey, executive director of Eastern Oregon Youth for Christ, stands near the organization’s new building at Second Street and J Avenue across from La Grande High School. The facility could open this June.

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