

DAILY
PLANNER

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Thursday, March 19, the 79th day of 2020. There are 287 days left in the year. Spring arrives at 8:50 p.m. PST, the earliest the vernal equinox has occurred in 124 years.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On March 19, 1966, the Texas Western Miners defeated the heavily favored Kentucky Wildcats, 72-65, to win the NCAA Championship played in College Park, Maryland; making the contest especially noteworthy was that Texas Western became the first basketball team to start five black players in a national title game as it faced an all-white Kentucky squad.

ON THIS DATE

In 1931, Nevada Gov. Fred B. Balzar signed a measure legalizing casino gambling.

In 1977, the series finale of "Mary Tyler Moore" aired on CBS-TV, ending the situation comedy's seven-season run.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$6.1 million
13-19-23-24-25-38

Mega Millions: \$96 million
20-27-28-58-59-25 x3

Powerball: \$130 million
9-23-26-30-32—PB-8 x3

Win for Life: March 16
6-19-25-53

Pick 4: March 17

• 1 p.m.: 4-0-0-7

• 4 p.m.: 8-0-3-8

• 7 p.m.: 7-5-1-5

• 10 p.m.: 8-0-7-9

Pick 4: March 16

• 1 p.m.: 3-4-8-5

• 4 p.m.: 1-2-6-6

• 7 p.m.: 9-6-9-1

• 10 p.m.: 6-1-8-2

DELIVERY ISSUES?

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The heaviest baggage for a traveler is an empty purse."
— German proverb

Center active again for coronavirus crisis

■ Joint Information Center opens for Union, Wallowa and Baker counties

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The dormant NE Oregon Joint Information Center in La Grande is up and running again.

Emergency managers from Union, Wallowa and Baker counties brought together certain employees to work phones and help consolidate information about the novel coronavirus from the makeshift center operating in office space near the Union County Administration Office at 1106 K. Ave. Law enforcement, fire departments, medical providers, emergency managers and state and local agencies will use the center to coordinate communication.

Center manager Jamie Knight explained having a central point of information can mitigate the spread of fear and misinformation.



Staff photo by Sabrina Thompson

Emergency managers for Union, Baker and Wallowa counties have activated the NE Oregon Joint Information Center near the Union County Administration Office, La Grande, to help coordinate and distribute information about the coronavirus pandemic.

"Everyone is taking this matter very seriously," Knight said. "We are trying to provide the best information possible in a timely manner."

Emergency managers

organized the center in 2017 to track and manage information about the solar eclipse. The office space and its phone lines went quiet from then until Tuesday.

"If you don't hear anything from JIC, it is a really good day," Knight said.

The center will provide information to the public on Facebook with a daily summary plus additional posts

as necessary. The center's focus is to provide information to Union, Wallowa and Baker counties, none of which has confirmed cases of COVID-19.

The information center also will use email to share information with county commissioners, health care organizations and news outlets.

Knight said the center gathers and disseminates information from official organizations. The emergency managers for the three counties participate in a coordination call each morning to discuss updates, and the center gets that information as well. The public can expect the NE Oregon Joint Information Center to report on county and local school closures and COVID-19 cases if they appear in the tri-county area.

"We are trying to come together as one voice," Knight said. "We are a group of small communities, utilizing the strength of (the joint information center) to spread the same message across all of the counties."

Union County declares emergency

By Dick Mason
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Union County Board of Commissioners on Wednesday declared a state of emergency.

The commissioners voted 3-0 to pass a resolution declaring an emergency as a local response to the outbreak of COVID-19.

J.B. Brock, Union County emergency services manager, said the resolution will help the county to respond faster to situations related to the new coronavirus.

It will give the county the authority to take certain steps, such as like drawing money from a

variety of funds for the purchase of protective equipment and the like.

The declaration also provides the county the authority to take steps such as bypassing the bidding process if a contractor needs to be hired for an urgent project.

Commissioner Donna Beverage said the emergency declaration will make it easier for the county to help those in need of assistance.

"It will unleash opportunities for us to help," Beverage said, noting that local business owners are among those who could be assisted by the county.

Brock told the com-

missioners before their vote that everyone needs to help each other to survive the COVID-19 crisis.

"We need to be taking care of each other as a community," Brock said.

"We need to be checking in our neighbors, to call them or knock on their doors to see what they need."

Paul Anderes, chairman of the county board, encouraged anyone from Union, Wallowa or Baker counties who needs help during the COVID-19 crisis to visit the NE Oregon Joint Information Center on Facebook to find resources.

Rainbow Rebellion



Photo by Ben Lonergan/EO Media Group

Bar customers depart the Rainbow Cafe shortly before 5 p.m. on Tuesday. The cash-only bar downtown Pendleton throws the biggest St. Patrick's Day party in the town, and patron in past years fill the place to capacity. The bar chose to flout a state order banning on-site consumption of food and drink at restaurants and bars as long as possible before choosing to close in light of possible criminal charges.

Eastern Oregon students leading school district's effort to cut energy use



Umatilla School District Superintendent Heidi Sipe accepts a check from Energy Trust of Oregon

Students in eastern Oregon are learning energy management skills through a hands-on program that prepares them for jobs in the future economy and helps their school district save thousands of dollars per year.

In the Umatilla School District, students take an active role in making their schools more energy efficient. The students are part of the district's energy team, which works with Energy Trust of Oregon, a nonprofit created to make sure Oregonians have access to clean, affordable energy and renewable power.

Through an effort called Strategic Energy Management, Energy Trust provides energy coaches who work with Umatilla students and staff to find no-cost or low-cost ways to cut energy usage. Eastern Oregon customers of Pacific Power, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista can access these energy coaches and the Strategic Energy Management effort.

The students are working on other major efficiency improve-

ments as well. With an approved \$10 million bond measure, plus \$70,000 in incentives from Energy Trust, the Umatilla School District recently completed renovations and energy upgrades at each of its three schools.

These upgrades are now saving the school district an estimated \$30,000 per year in energy costs. And because students are leading the energy efficiency work, the superintendent says they get to weigh in on where the dollars go.

"If funds can be freed up from energy expenditures and invested in learning, that's a huge gain for students."

— Heidi Sipe, Umatilla School District Superintendent.

"We're always looking for ways to increase opportunities for learning," said Heidi Sipe, the district superintendent. "Energy efficiency dovetails with this objective and if funds can be freed up from energy expenditures and invested in learning, that's a huge gain for students."

Students and teachers are realizing that these improvements reach beyond savings. For example, the new heating and cooling systems and new LED lighting create a more comfortable learning environment.

To see more ways energy efficiency and renewable energy are creating better futures and communities across Oregon, visit energitrust.org/this-is-oregon.

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