

DAILY PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Thursday, April 9, the 100th day of 2020. There are 266 days left in the year.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$2.2 million
17-19-24-28-34-36
Mega Millions: \$136 million
25-33-43-51-68-20 x2
Powerball: \$190 million
8-31-39-40-43—PB-4 x3
Win for Life: April 6
39-42-46-68
Pick 4: April 7
• **1 p.m.:** 4-2-2-8; • **4 p.m.:** 0-9-9-4
• **7 p.m.:** 7-1-2-3; • **10 p.m.:** 6-9-4-8
Pick 4: April 6
• **1 p.m.:** 7-9-6-9 • **4 p.m.:** 9-7-1-3
• **7 p.m.:** 8-3-9-9 • **10 p.m.:** 1-2-8-4

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KINDNESS

Continued from Page 1A

many cases it is not because of mobility issues, Roberts said, but rather the fear of contracting the potentially deadly virus.

Many of those the new neighborhood watch organization is helping fall into this category, Roberts said. They include Jordan Hovingh and her daughter, Ella. The two have not been outside in four weeks because they share a genetic condition that compromises their immune systems. Roberts delivers groceries to the two several days a week. She places the food on their doorstep and then they bring it inside after sanitizing it. “We are so thankful,”

Hovingh said Wednesday morning after receiving bread and milk, for which she had electronically paid Roberts.

Some of neighborhood watch’s most heartwarming stories of outreach have unfolded after word was received of multiple La Grande families in need of food because of financial problems.

Neighborhood watch members in each case filled cars of food and drove them to the families’ houses.

“The outpouring was incredible,” Roberts said.

She said families provide very heartfelt thanks.

“The appreciation is huge,” Roberts said.

Neighborhood watch members found out about the families through the

watch’s La Grande Strong Facebook site. Linked to the site is a page that is part of La Grande Strong and is filled with reports of local random acts of kindness.

“We want to bring great acts of kindness to light,” Roberts said.

At the start of the Facebook page, Roberts writes of altruistic love, something she said members of the neighborhood watch are displaying.

“Selfless love means putting the needs, desires, and sometimes, the wants of the person you love ahead of your own.... Whether it hurts, is painful, or you get nothing out of it for yourself, loving someone selflessly means that you make decisions based not on what you want, but what is best

for the one you love,” Roberts said in a Facebook post.

The La Grande neighborhood watch will later be divided into a number of zones, each identified by a color. Members will be encouraged to get to know as many people as they can in their zone and be on the lookout for those who may need help.

La Grande Strong’s neighborhood watch and acts of kindness Facebook pages are places where everyone in La Grande can connect.

“We have created instant community for people,” said Roberts, who said she has received enormous help from her husband, Darwin.

The link to the neighborhood watch page is www.facebook.com/groups/204864584260514, and the link to the #LaGrandeStrong “Spread Kindness, Not Virus” Facebook page is www.facebook.com/groups/840884383054146.

The owner of Le Bebe Cakes Coffee Shop and Bakery, Roberts also is involved in community service activities outside of La Grande Strong. For example, she is one of the leaders of Kids Immediate Dinner Solutions, which is delivering free dinners to all youths age 12 and younger in Union County in April.

Roberts said reaching out to others is a joy for her and helps her deal with the anxiety everyone is facing during the COVID-19 crisis.

OPINIONS

Continued from Page 1A

gesting that COVID-19 does not have a natural origin,” the statement says. “Conspiracy theories do nothing but create fear, rumors and prejudice that jeopardize our global collaboration in the fight against the virus.”

In addition to her unfounded theory, Wright said business restrictions and stay home orders need to be lifted in Oregon because the economic impacts are too severe, and claimed the elevated news coverage of the pandemic is an attempt by newspapers and the media to make money.

“If they hadn’t made such a big deal about it in the newspaper, I don’t think anyone would have gotten as concerned about it as they are now,” she said. “But hey, you’ve got to sell papers and keep your numbers up.”

Wright’s claims again ignore reality, considering publications across the country, including EO Media Group, have announced layoffs and cutbacks due to a decrease in revenue during the pandemic.

Wright said she’s “mixed” on whether the coronavirus does pose a public health risk, but said she’s refused to change her lifestyle because of the virus.

“I was never totally convinced that we needed to stay home and do nothing, and I’m still not convinced that staying home and doing nothing is the right thing to do,” she said. “I happen to be one of these people that believe if you’re going to get it then you’re going to get it. I may be a fool. I don’t know.”

All three legislative districts in Northeast Oregon — House District 57, House District 58 and Senate District 29 — are unusually competitive this year, with candidates in every Republican and Democratic primary.

All the remaining candidates shared their thoughts on how they’ve been dealing with COVID-19 both as residents and politicians.

Senate District 29

The incumbent in the race for the Oregon Senate’s 29th District, Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, has a unique perspective on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hansell was hospitalized on March 29 at St. Mary Media Center in Walla Walla after experiencing pain in his left lung while breathing and a slight fever. Though doctors eventually identified blood clots in his lungs as the source, he first had to go through the hospital’s COVID-19 protocols.

“What it did for me was see the protocols that were in place and gave me a sense of security that our medical professionals have responded appropriately,” he said of his experience in the hospital last week.

After seeing directly how a hospital was responding to the pandemic and state projections now indicating Oregon’s hospitals have enough beds for a

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Mar 20, 2020 11:56:11

“... if this had never been plastered all over the nightly news we wouldn't have had this world panic and paranoia.”

No I won't Jordi. I took Journalism in school and I learned how to spin news and trust me if this had never been plastered all over the nightly news we wouldn't have had this world panic and paranoia. One of the things you should be asking Jordi is How did it show up in China first? Did they develop it as a Biological Warfare Weapon or did somebody else develop it and smuggle some of it into China so they could play with it? Didn't you smell a rat when CDC said they didn't have a treatment for it only what it does to some people's lungs? They didn't know how you caught it either so they said stay home. I'm over 60 and I've

barbara92801 (a regular here) Joined: Feb 20, 2011 Posts: 1777

Mar 20, 2020 12:11:55

“... it was smuggled into China by a woman from the United States.”

Fortunate1 stop and think just a minute about this. If it hadn't been on the news 24/7 for weeks now would be in such a panic? No. I am not one to get alarmed easily and I think that the Governor and for that matter all Governors are getting panic struck. Here's at least 2 questions you should be asking our senators 1- Where did this bug come from? Aha you say China. Well isn't it amazing that a level 4 Biological Warfare lab is right outside the epicenter of the disease in Wuhan China. It's name is Wuji Pharma Tech. Inc. 6666 Gaoxin Road East Lake High Tech Development Zone. 430075. China. I learned this from vats

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Mar 20, 2020 13:00:00

“... our government knew that a vial of their precious biological warfare missing...”

Mossstitch I am sad also but for another reason I am sad that we knew about this virus as early as 2 years ago and have done nothing to develop a vaccine or treatment protocol for it. I am also VERY mad that our government knew that a vial of their precious Biological Warfare stuff missing and they said NOTHING until some of their nasty experiment got out and killed thousands... Somebody needs to be held accountable for this and if it was indeed China who let it out then they need to be taken to the UN and to World Court.

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Mar 20, 2020 17:16:15

“Somehow the SARS virus was altered so that we have what they call COVID-19.”

I just got a call from a vet who has contacts in Europe and his contact told him that a university in Switzerland has identified the parent virus of this bug as SARS. Somehow the SARS virus was altered so that we have what they call Covid-19. He also said it was being tested as a Biological Warfare agent when a vial of it got stolen and taken to China. Until we force DOD into telling us what they actually know about all of this we have to rely on sources who know letting the rest of us know so we can spread the word. His source also didn't know if the bug was made in the lab at Detrick or at Ft. Huachuca. Fort Huachuca has

Graphic by Andy Nicolais/EO Media Group

surge of cases, Hansell said he’d like to see hospitals be able to accept elective and nonemergency surgery patients once again.

While lifting these restrictions would allow more people to receive medical care, Hansell was concerned about the financial impact the restrictions are having.

“Like any other business they’ve got to have the income to pay the bills,” he said.

Hansell was released from the hospital April 1 and said he is recovering at home.

Garison Lee Alger, a Pendleton carpenter who is challenging Hansell in the Republican primary, has been checking up on relatives to make sure they get what they need during the stay home order.

Alger said it’s important for the government to take action now to prevent more drastic measures in the future, and the state’s order tasks residents with slowing the spread.

“It’s on us, to a certain extent, to make sure we’re not passing it to one another,” he said. “I think it’s a good idea to make sure that large gatherings aren’t taking place and it’s not becoming a widespread thing. I think maybe a little bit of extra panic has set in, but it’s to be expected when something out of the ordinary happens.”

Alger said he still needs to talk to constituents about Eastern Oregon’s specific needs, but he’d like to see a relief package target small business owners and farmers.

Mildred O’Callaghan of

Joseph is the lone Democrat running for Senate District 29. Campaigning has been a bit tough with social distancing in place.

“Well, we haven’t been able to hold anything,” she said. “We’re trying to do virtual meetings.”

O’Callaghan said her campaign also is relying on the tradition of letters to the editor, and as a former precinct person, she is making use of voter lists to call Democrats. She also described Gov. Kate Brown’s response to the pandemic as “spot-on.”

“I think she’s been ahead of the game,” O’Callaghan said.

If the Legislature convenes for a special session, she said unemployment funding should be a top priority. Walla County relies on tourism spending, but the “stay home, save lives” campaign to curb the spread of the coronavirus means those tourists will be staying home, and local businesses are looking at taking a serious financial hit.

House District 58

Wright will have to advance past an opponent in the Democratic primary and win a general election to share her views in the Legislature.

Not much has changed in the day-to-day life of Bobby Levy since the arrival of COVID-19.

The Republican can-

didate for District 58 has started avoiding the crowds at grocery stores, but it’s easy for Levy to stay socially distant when her days are spent delivering lambs on her family farm near Echo.

“I think everyone should take it serious,” she said. “My personal opinion is I believe that everyone in Eastern Oregon is taking it serious.”

Levy said she would like to see the Legislature meet sooner rather than later to approve an economic relief package for Oregonians. She wanted the package to include delays on the corporate activities tax and an increase to the gas tax for at least a year.

“We have people who are basically running their businesses on a shoestring, and then they have to be hit with the CAT tax,” she said. “And they have to pay it whether they’re doing well or not.”

A second Republican in the race, Mike Nelson of Elgin, dropped out.

The other Democrat in the District 58 race, Portland State University student Nolan Bylenga, made an early return home to Pendleton once the university moved all its classes online.

Bylenga said he disagrees with people who say residents should continue going about their daily lives despite the stay home order. “When all the legisla-

tors, both Republicans and Democrats, the president, as well as our Democratic governor, are taking steps to protect people’s lives, we shouldn’t oppose that,” he said.

Bylenga said he’s been thinking about the government’s economic relief lately, especially since the federal stimulus package’s direct payments to residents excludes dependents and college students like him.

He would like the state to look at relief for those caught in the loophole as well as for small businesses, noting Barreto Manufacturing, the La Grande company owned by outgoing state Rep. Greg Barreto, recently laid off two-thirds of its workforce.

House District 57

The incumbent in the race for the Oregon House’s 57th District, Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, commended the governor on her handling of the COVID-19 outbreak in the state and said while the pair don’t always agree, his support was behind her at this point in time.

“As of right now I have no criticism of the governor — I would throw her accolades for the heavy lifting that she is doing and we need to sustain her at this point in time as she’s making those decisions,” said Smith. “I can share with you why I don’t always agree with her on certain policy issues, but she has Oregon’s best interest in mind and she would never make decisions to knowingly hurt the state of Oregon.”

Smith stressed the importance of social distancing and, when possible, supporting local businesses so the framework for Oregon’s economy continues to exist when things get moving again. Smith said he has been reaching out to local businesses and talking to neighbors and friends about how they are being impacted by the virus.

“I think, right now, people understand that this is a pandemic, we need to take it serious. No one person caused this, and we’re all in this together,” he said.

Smith said one of the primary goals of the special session will be determining exactly how money flows into the state as well as complying with any strings or regulations on

how money is used. Smith cited his experience in past recessions and special sessions saying the key is to be as informed as possible in order to react as appropriately as possible.

“Right now, there is a tremendous amount of information on the virus floating around and some of it is accurate and some of it is inaccurate,” he said. “What we need to be doing as a Legislature is making sure that the right messages are being sent out and we are taking the right actions.”

Roland Ruhe, a contender from Irrigon for the Oregon House District 57 seat, said he agrees with the decisions the governor has made, but acknowledged they cause hardship for many people, including himself and his family. Ruhe, a Democrat, said he has seen a drop in his construction business, as well as that of his wife’s, who works as a beautician.

“I agree with the efforts and the steps that are being made,” he said. “It’s such a fine line that is being walked here that there is never going to be a perfect solution that is going to be equal amongst everybody.”

Despite his agreement with the steps being taken to counteract the spread of the novel coronavirus, Ruhe said he is worried about the impacts of closures and shutdowns on the economy both now and in the future, something he hopes a special session will help resolve.

“It doesn’t matter if we become healthy as a society if we are crippled as a system,” he said. “I am concerned with our economic stability in the short run, let alone the long run, and I would hope that would be a high concern for our officials at that special session.”

Ruhe said he doesn’t necessarily see a better solution to what has been done, but hopes people are able to take the issue seriously and react accordingly so recovery can begin sooner rather than later.

“I think people need to take this serious and do their part,” he said. “The only thing you can control is your response.”

East Oregonian reporter Ben Lonergan and La Grande Observer editor Phil Wright contributed to this report.

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