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in Sports



RE-ELECT **BOYD RASMUSSEN** for **SHERIFF**

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THE OBSERVER

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Weekend Edition

SATURDAY-MONDAY • April 18, 2020 • \$1.50 Good day to our valued subscriber Arthur Greer of La Grande

Slowing coronavirus is slowing real estate market

■ Less buying, less selling and more precautions

By Sabrina Thompson, Ronald Bond and Ellen Morris Bishop
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — The efforts to clamp down on the COVID-19 outbreak also are reaching the housing market. People who were about to sell their homes are taking down “for sale” signs, and people who are looking to move are taking extra precautions in house hunting.

John Howard, principal real estate broker for John Howard and Associates, La Grande, said COVID-19 is slowing down business. The real estate company remains operational but closed the La Grande office to the public.

“It certainly has changed things,” Howard said, “and we are adapting to the changes in the real estate community.”

One major change, Howard said, is not as many people are selling their homes. Potential sellers with underlying health conditions don’t want to expose themselves to the virus, and others have taken their homes off the market because their financial situation



Staff photo by Phil Wright

There are numerous homes for sale in La Grande. Local real estate agents and brokers say the efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 is leading to a slower market and changes in how they show homes.

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Eastern Oregon Livestock Show is a no-go

■ Directors cancel event due to coronavirus, plan return in 2021

By Dick Mason
The Observer

UNION — The 113th Eastern Oregon Livestock Show in Union will not run this year.

The organization’s board of directors voted unanimously Tuesday to cancel the annual livestock show because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It was a heartbreaking decision to have to make,” said Joann Hefner, secretary-treasurer for the Livestock Show.

Protecting people from COVID-19 was the determining factor in the board’s decision.

“We had health and safety in mind,” Hefner said.

The organization in a statement on its Facebook page explained the directors were monitoring the



EO Media Group file photo

Springfield’s Jesse Tennent tries to outrun Leapfrog during the first freestyle bullfighting competition at the 2019 Eastern Oregon Livestock Show. The event was to take place for the 113th straight year, but the fallout from COVID-19 led to the cancellation of the show.

COVID-19 outbreak and did not have any other choice.

“We want everyone to stay healthy and safe,” according to the statement, “so please continue to practice social distancing when

possible.”

The rodeo and related events were set to run June 8-14. But the annual EOLS 4-H and FFA livestock auction could go online later this spring.

“Currently, the livestock auction committee, 4-H leaders, and FFA advisors are working tirelessly towards a plan for all the 4-H and FFA livestock exhibitors,” according to the statement. “The youth is our top priority and, as always, we want to see them succeed.”

The auction annually raises thousands of dollars for the youth of northeast Oregon. The board has not made decisions regarding the possibility of a video auction, but Hefner said the hope is an online auction would occur around the date of the event had there not been a pandemic.

The show is the largest rodeo in the northeast corner of Oregon and has run each year since its inception in 1908.

The organization in the statement also thanked volunteers, sponsors, community members and others for their support and declared the event will return in June 2021.

By the numbers*

Worldwide cases: 2,078,605
Worldwide deaths: 139,515
U.S. cases: 661,712
U.S. deaths: 33,049
Oregon cases: 1,785
Oregon deaths: 70
Union County cases: 4
Union County deaths: 0
Wallowa County cases: 1
Wallowa County deaths: 0

*As of 12:30 p.m. Friday April 17. Sources: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Oregon Health Authority

Sen. Wyden touts national vote-by-mail system

■ COVID-19 creates new relevance for senator’s ballot pitch

By Antonio Sierra
EO Media Group

WASHINGTON — As more than a dozen states postponed their primaries to prevent further spread of COVID-19, Oregon Secretary of State Bev Clarno has been resolute in maintaining Oregon’s May 19 primary.



Wyden

“Because Oregon votes by mail we do not have to be concerned about social distancing issues at polling places that so many other states are struggling with,” she said in a March 19 statement. “Many states are looking to implement our vote-by-mail system as a safer way to conduct elections in November.”

When Oregon voters approved vote by mail for all federal, state and local elections in 2000, they unwittingly created a voting system that could withstand a pandemic.

Interest in vote by mail has grown over the past few months, but U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, has been trying to get a national mail-in ballot system for nearly two decades.

While Wyden has long promoted vote by mail as a way to ensure elections were both accessible and secure, he’s now highlighting a new sense of urgency with the onset of the novel coronavirus.

“I think now, a lot of officials, Democrats and Republicans at the local level, are seeing that, given the health care challenges of our times, it may come down in the fall — pray that it’s not the worst case

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Tips for parents helping with distance learning

By Dick Mason
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Less can be more.

Local educators are encouraging parents to remember the essence of these seemingly contradictory words as they help their sons and daughters with distance learning during the COVID-19 crisis.

The art of distance education is on the forefront of the minds of many parents as they help their children with school work after Gov. Kate Brown closed all schools in Oregon

due to the pandemic. As of April 13, all public schools in Oregon are required to offer distance learning for students during the closures.

Parents are advised to study subjects for short periods rather than extended ones, according to La Grande High School assistant principal Brett Smith. The educator explained students, especially younger ones, learn best when they focus on subjects for 15-20 minutes and then do something refreshing, such as enjoy a short walk before resuming to their studies.

“Take brain breaks,” Smith said. Island City Elementary School principal John Tolan agreed that shorter study segments work best and stepping away from work periodically is important when students get anxious because of the challenging nature of their curriculum.

“If work gets frustrating, take a break and cool down,” Tolan said.

Educators also emphasize the importance of establishing structure and routine.

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

Tonight
40 LOW
Partly cloudy

Sunday
59/33
Partly sunny

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Issue 47
2 sections, 14 pages
La Grande, Oregon

Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com.
More contact info on Page 4A.



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TUESDAY AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY

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