

DAILY
PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Thursday, April 30, the 121st day of 2020. There are 245 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On April 30, 1945, as Soviet troops approached his Berlin bunker, Adolf Hitler committed suicide along with his wife of one day, Eva Braun.

ON THIS DATE

In 1789, George Washington took the oath of office in New York as the first president of the United States.

In 1803, the United States purchased the Louisiana Territory from France for 60 million francs, the equivalent of about \$15 million.

In 1970, President Richard M. Nixon announced the U.S. was sending troops into Cambodia, an action that sparked widespread protest.

In 1975, the Vietnam War ended as the South Vietnamese capital of Saigon fell to Communist forces.

In 2004, Arabs expressed outrage at graphic photographs of naked Iraqi prisoners being humiliated by U.S. military police; President George W. Bush condemned the mistreatment of prisoners, saying "that's not the way we do things in America."

Lottery

Megabucks: \$3.7 million
16-19-39-42-42-45

Mega Millions: \$186 million
13-19-53-54-63-17 x3

Powerball: \$43 million
1-3-21-47-57—PB-18 x2

Win for Life: April 27
23-35-61-72

Pick 4: April 28

• **1 p.m.:** 3-9-0-9

• **4 p.m.:** 1-8-7-2

• **7 p.m.:** 3-5-3-4

• **10 p.m.:** 9-7-5-6

Pick 4: April 27

• **1 p.m.:** 4-0-9-8

• **4 p.m.:** 3-3-3-6

• **7 p.m.:** 0-7-3-0

• **10 p.m.:** 3-9-5-8

DELIVERY ISSUES?

If you have any problems receiving your Observer, call the office at 541-963-3161.

TODAY'S QUOTE

"There's a difference between a philosophy and a bumper sticker."

— Charles M. Schulz, American cartoonist (1922-2000)

Local national forests offer free firewood for personal use

By Dick Mason
The Observer

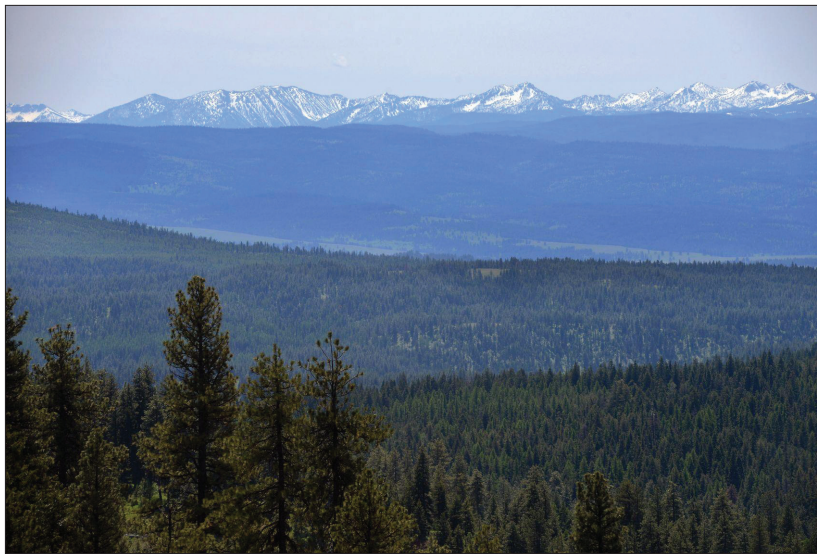
LA GRANDE — People will be allowed to cut and remove firewood for free in two Northeast Oregon national forests beginning Friday.

The Wallowa-Whitman and the Umatilla national forests will begin providing authorization for free personal-use firewood cutting for up to four cords of wood. The Forest Service's standard charge to cut a cord of wood for personal use in the Umatilla or Wallowa-Whitman national forests is \$5 a cord with a required minimum purchase of four cords.

"This is not a huge cost, but we realize that folks are hurting and we want to eliminate this cost. That is our guiding light. There are a lot of people experiencing challenging times now," said Travis Mason-Bushman, a public affairs officer for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

The free firewood will be available through June 1.

A cord of cut wood is 128 cubic feet, which is 4 feet high by 4 feet wide by 8 feet long.



EO Media Group file photo

The Wallowa-Whitman and the Umatilla national forests will begin providing authorization for free personal-use firewood cutting beginning Friday.

For an electronic authorization packet for the Wallowa-Whitman, send an email to SM.FS. wwnf-webmail@usda.gov with the subject: "Firewood Authorization." Include your name and city of residence in the email, and National Forest staff will reply with an

authorization form and 2020 firewood guide in PDF format.

An authorization packet for the Umatilla National Forest may be requested electronically by sending an email to r6_umatilla_public_inquiries@fs.fed.us. A Forest employee will assist individuals

with completing proper documentation to receive the electronic authorization packet.

Forest users also can obtain free firewood cutting authorization packets from several local businesses. Authorization packets are available for the Umatilla National Forest from stores including Elgin Food Town, Athena Convenience Store, Zip Zone 2 in Milton-Free-water and Rhode's Supply in Ukiah.

Free firewood cutting authorization packets for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest can be obtained at businesses including The Dollar Stretcher in Enterprise, the Sports Corral in Joseph and D&B Supply in Baker City.

Authorization packets are limited to one per person and only to those age 18 and older.

Wallowa-Whitman National Forest officials urge the public to plan ahead and contact their local Ranger District prior to starting their trip, according to the news release.

Many forest roads are still not accessible due to mud and snow.

Oregon begins furloughing workers, slow bounce back expected

By Andrew Selsky
Associated Press

SALEM — Facing steep budget shortfalls, the state of Oregon has taken its first steps in furloughing workers in order to save money, among the few states in America to do so to date.

A state economist predicted Oregon's leaders will have to grapple with "balancing limited revenues with increased need for programs to help Oregonians" impacted by the economic shutdown to stem the coronavirus pandemic.

"Things won't bounce back overnight" after the restrictions are lifted, Josh Lehner, who is helping produce Oregon's economic and revenue forecast, said on a webcast Friday.

Labor Commissioner Val Hoyle announced late Monday that managers in the agency she directs, the Bureau of Labor and Industries, must take one unpaid furlough day per month through June 2021, the end of the budget cycle.

"The coronavirus pandemic has

collapsed our economy," Hoyle said. "This is the Bureau of Labor and Industries' first step toward dealing with the significant budget shortfalls that our state will likely be facing."

The quarterly economic and revenue forecast, due on May 20, that Lehner is busy working on will indicate how much expected revenue has shrunk amid massive layoffs of workers who are no longer contributing state income taxes into the common pot. Personal income taxes account for 80% of the state's general and lottery fund revenues, according to Lehner.

Liz Merah, a spokeswoman for Gov. Kate Brown, said furloughs, reducing services and supplies, and hiring freezes are all being explored as options at the state level. Meanwhile, the governor's office has directed agencies to slow non-critical spending, including holding non-critical positions vacant, Merah said.

On the plus side, Oregon has \$2.74 billion in reserves, composed

of \$1.15 billion in a general fund ending balance and \$1.58 billion in the reserve fund, he said. Also, revenue is expected, for the first time, from a corporate activity tax that took effect on Jan. 1 and which applies to taxable commercial activity in excess of \$1 million.

An initial bounce back in the economy is expected in the summer and into fall as restrictions begin to be lifted, Lehner said in the webcast. For example, bars and restaurants will be going from no jobs to having skeleton crews, and then having one-third to one-half of normal staff levels as a next step.

But economic growth won't really take off until after a COVID-19 vaccine or some other treatment is developed, or in a worst-case scenario some type of herd immunity develops, Lehner said. On the other hand, massive amounts of firm failures would permanently damage the economy, he said. Federal bailouts are helping mitigate that.

There have been seven additional deaths from COVID-19 and 61 new cases, the Oregon Health Authority reported Wednesday. Of more than 54,000 tests, 2,446 have come back positive for the coronavirus in the state. The death total reached 101 on Wednesday.

Facing pressure to balance their budgets amid declining revenue, some other states have already dipped into their rainy day funds.

In addition, Michigan has furloughed about 3,000 of roughly 48,000 workers who must miss 10 straight days of work. Pennsylvania laid off or temporarily stopped paying 16,500 state employees, according to Pew Charitable Trusts.

Several states, including Indiana, Maryland and Tennessee have announced hiring freezes. But many have not gone as far as furloughing state workers.

As for Oregon, "after the May budget forecast, we will have more information about the extent of future budget cuts," Hoyle said.

Movement to change Idaho border working in Grant County

By Steven Mitchell
EO Media Group

JOHN DAY — A separatist group seeking to move Oregon's border to create "Greater Idaho" is collecting signatures to have the proposal on the ballot for November's general election in Grant County.

County Clerk Brenda Percy said the petitioners must submit 231 valid signatures from active Grant County registered voters. The deadline to submit is Aug. 5.

The petition is about the "Greater Idaho" effort, a movement that advocates for the adjustment of the state boundaries of Idaho, California and Oregon, thereby increasing the size of Idaho to encompass several rural counties that are in California and Oregon. Grant County is one of the 19 Oregon counties the group seeks to have moved into the jurisdiction of the state of Idaho.

The petition mandates the Grant County Court hold three meetings a year for the specific purpose of discussing the merit of promoting the relocation of the Idaho border to encompass Grant County within the state of Idaho.

Greater Idaho spokesman Mike McCarter said the movement's purpose is to preserve rural values.

According to the group's press release, although few people are collecting signatures in traditional ways because of social distancing, petitions are available for online and at certain locations.

"The deadline for our petition effort is Aug. 5, so

"Rural counties have become increasingly outraged by laws coming out of the Oregon Legislature that threaten our livelihoods, our industries, our wallet, our gun rights, and our values. We tried voting those legislators out but rural Oregon is outnumbered, and our voices are now ignored. This is our last resort."

Mike McCarter, Greater Idaho spokesman

coronavirus is not enough to make us give up," McCarter said. "You can still download and print the petition from GreaterIdaho.org or pick one up at an essential business that has them."

McCarter continued to voice his frustrations in a press release: "Rural counties have become increasingly outraged by laws coming out of the Oregon Legislature that threaten our livelihoods, our industries, our wallet, our gun rights, and our values. We tried voting those legislators out but rural Oregon is outnumbered, and our voices are now ignored. This is our last resort."

RE-ELECT BOYD RASMUSSEN for SHERIFF

"Without reservation and with great enthusiasm, we support Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen for re-election as Union County Sheriff. It is his achievements as Sheriff combined with the integrity of his character that motivate our endorsement. He has a proven track record of success and professionalism and we will be best served by electing him". Jim and Rita McMahan

"I have known Boyd for many years. He has done an outstanding job as Union County Sheriff. He is honest, hard working and will continue to do a great job when re-elected as our Sheriff." Greg Baretto

"I have had the privilege of working with Boyd as he and his office have provided Law Enforcement services for Elgin. He is a hardworking man of honesty, integrity & faith." Allan Duffy Mayor - City of Elgin

WE SUPPORT SHERIFF BOYD RASMUSSEN

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Fred Alexis
Walt and Linda Anderson
Katherine Austin
Martha J. Bailey
Greg Barreto
Greg M. Baxter
Sharon Beck
Dan Bellmore
Wes and Teri Berry
Austin & Jeana Bingaman
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Wade and Angie Bingaman
Julie Bodfish
Jack and Jennifer Boyd
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Betty Bronson
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Paid for by the Committee to Re-Elect Boyd Rasmussen Sheriff, Rita McMahan, Treasurer, 62436 Mink, Summerville