

RE-ELECT

BOYD RASMUSSEN

for

SHERIFF

Paid for by committee to Re-elect Boyd Rasmussen.

JD & Audrey Cant, Bill & Stacey Merrigan, Mary West

Oregon rancher shoots wolf chasing cattle

■ Wolf was not wearing a GPS collar

By George Plaven
EO Media Group

JOSEPH — A northeast Oregon rancher legally shot and killed a wolf caught in the act of chasing livestock on private property early in the morning on April 23, according to the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office and Oregon State Police.

Wolves injured two

calves in the same 600-acre pasture the previous day. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife confirmed both attacks, which were attributed to the Middle Fork pack.

The rancher, identified as Rawley Bigsby, initially called the sheriff's office April 22 to report the injured cattle about 10 miles north of Joseph. Chief Deputy Fred Steen arrived on the scene, and they found two calves with wounds and bite marks that appeared to be from wolves.

Both animals were taken to a veterinarian in Enterprise for treatment. Steen said one of the calves had a half-dollar sized hole through its left front leg. The other had a larger, fresher hole in its upper right hind leg along with multiple canine tooth scrapes and punctures above the hock. ODFW examined the wounds, and confirmed them as wolf predations.

Bigsby could not immediately be reached for comment, though Steen said the rancher also reported

hazing two wolves in a neighboring cattle pasture the night of April 21.

"He felt there was a pack of wolves nearby," Steen said. "It was concerning."

Steen told Bigsby to keep a close eye on his cattle, given the wolf activity. At about 5:30 a.m. April 23 — the following morning — Bigsby found a young female wolf about 60-70 yards away that was following a group of cow-calf pairs.

He shot at the wolf once and missed, though it was

not deterred.

Bigsby shot at the wolf again, this time killing it. He reported the incident to Steen and ODFW.

"At that time he had to protect his property," Steen said. "As it turned out, where the wolf was killed was almost exactly in the same place on that pasture where the owner had roped the first calf with a hole in its knee."

Steen said the wolf weighed about 70 pounds and was not wearing a

See, Wolf/Page 5A

COVID-19 by the numbers*

Worldwide cases: 3,442,234
Worldwide deaths: 239,740
U.S. cases: 1,122,486
U.S. deaths: 65,735
Oregon cases: 2,759
Oregon deaths: 109
Union County cases: 4
Union County deaths: 0
Wallowa County cases: 1
Wallowa County deaths: 0

**As of 1 p.m. Monday, May 4. Sources: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Oregon Health Authority*

Red tape clogs test pipeline

■ Oregon needs medical swabs to test for coronavirus

By Nick Budnick
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — If Oregon pandemic officials had a TV show these last two months, it could be called "In Search of Swabs" — and just about every episode would be deeply unsatisfying.

Public records show that over the last six weeks, state officials have battled repeated bureaucratic obstacles in trying to obtain swabs and other coronavirus testing supplies from the federal government and private manufacturers, contributing to Oregon's low per-capita testing rates.

Oregon's lack of success is highly significant. Gov. Kate Brown has made testing a central feature in her plans for reopening a state economy that has been battered by the pandemic.

To combat the problem, the state recently hired a new state testing director to focus on the problem. Meanwhile, Brown has asked hospitals around the state, which do the bulk of testing, to commit to contributing 18,000 tests per week to a statewide strategy to reopen the economy.

The success of those plans, Oregon Health

See, Testing/Page 5A

Cleanliness is next to healthiness at hospital

■ Grande Ronde Hospital amps up effort to curb coronavirus

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Grande Ronde Hospital and Clinics is relying on its standards and innovative technology to keep its facilities clean and free of the COVID-19 virus.

Edna Henderson, Grande Ronde's manager for central processing sterilization, said her department did not have to put new policies or procedures in place to deal with the pandemic.

"We were already doing things that meet and exceed the state and federal standards," Henderson said. "We have to be prepared for anything that could walk through those doors."

The Torch has become a key tool the hospital uses to clean.

The device is a high-intensity ultraviolet array that emits UV light for cleaning. The light disinfects all surfaces it touches. In 2019, the hospital had only two torches. Now it has more than six, including tabletop torches that cover smaller areas. Each torch costs approximately \$55,000.

Money for these additional lights came from the hospital foundation, which donors support.

"They cost so much, because they do so much," environmental services technician Todd Mathews said.

See, Hospital/Page 5A



Staff photo by Sabrina Thompson

The 6-foot tall "Torch" uses ultraviolet light to disinfect rooms throughout Grande Ronde Hospital. The light disinfects surfaces in 15 minutes.

"We were already doing things that meet and exceed the state and federal standards. We have to be prepared for anything that could walk through those doors."

Edna Henderson, Grande Ronde's manager for central processing sterilization

Forum airs GOP hopefuls

■ Candidates share visions for Oregon's 2nd Congressional District

By Kyle Spurr
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — Seven Republican candidates for Oregon's 2nd Congressional District came together Saturday for a virtual forum.

The candidates included Jason Atkinson, Cliff Bentz, Knute Buehler, Jimmy Crumpacker, Travis Fager, Justin Livingston and Jeff Smith.

Four other candidates did not participate: David Campbell, Glenn Carey Jr., Kenneth Mendenbach, and Mark Roberts.

A total of 16 candidates, five Democrats and 11 Republicans, are running for

See, Forum/Page 5A

INDEX

Classified..... 4B	Dear Abby 8B	Obituaries..... 3A
Comics..... 7B	Home 1B	Opinion..... 4A
Community .. 3A	Letters..... 4A	Sports 7A
Crossword 5B	Lottery..... 2A	State..... 6A

WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section



Tonight
43 LOW
A shower late



Wednesday
57/28
Rain and drizzle

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Issue 54
2 sections, 16 pages
La Grande, Oregon

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

THURSDAY

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