

# THE OBSERVER

SERVING UNION AND WALLOWA COUNTIES SINCE 1896

## Weekend Edition

SATURDAY-MONDAY • June 20, 2020 • \$1.50 Good day to our valued subscriber Charles Sarrett of La Grande

### COVID-19 by the numbers\*

Worldwide cases: 8,385,440	26,400,497	Union County cases: 253	Wallowa County active cases: 6
Worldwide deaths: 450,686	Oregon cases: 6,572	Union County active cases: 246	Wallowa County deaths: 0
U.S. cases: 2,178,710	Oregon active cases: 3,851	Union County deaths: 0	Total Wallowa County tests: 345
U.S. deaths: 118,365	Oregon deaths: 188	Total Union County tests: 1,187	*As of 4 p.m. Friday, June 19.
Total U.S. tests:	Total Oregon tests: 193,689	Wallowa County cases: 7	

Sources: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Military Department.



Workers prepare to conduct a swab test for COVID-19 during Thursday's drive-through testing clinic at the the Union County Fairgrounds, La Grande. The clinic conducted approximately 400 tests Thursday. The local incident management team estimated the clinic could conduct as many as 500 tests Friday.

## Union County COVID-19 testing underway as case total tops 250

Increased testing may show spread of virus

By Sabrina Thompson  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Union County added six more cases of COVID-19, the Center for Human Development announced Friday, increasing the total in the county to 253.

Two days of drive-through testing could reveal how far the disease has spread in the community.

The Union County Incident Management Team coordinated a drive-through testing clinic Thursday and Friday at the Union County Fairgrounds, La Grande. The team partnered with the Center for Human Development's public health department, which oversees public health in the county, and the sheriff's office

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COVID-19 cases jump in Wallowa County, 5A  
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Drivers line up Thursday morning to check in at the testing clinic at the Union County Fairgrounds. Residents of Union County were able to make an appointment to get tested for COVID-19 Thursday and Friday at the drive-through clinic.

## This year's Pendleton Round-Up canceled

By Antonio Sierra  
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — For the first time since World War II, the Round-Up, a rodeo so ingrained into Pendleton history that it's become synonymous with the city, will not hold its annual event.

The last two times the Round-Up took a year off from activities — 1942 and 1943 — the U.S. and the rest of the globe was gripped by war. More than 75 years later, the boards of directors for the Round-Up and Happy Canyon began meeting in March after Gov. Kate Brown said any large events needed to either be canceled or significantly modified to meet social distancing rules.

According to a press release, the boards went as far as to draft and submit a "comprehensive operational plan" that outlined the group's "safety protocols" to the governor's office. But as it became clear that the Round-Up and Happy Canyon wouldn't be able to operate with all of its usual traditions, both boards agreed it was time to look ahead to 2021.

2020 was supposed to be a watershed year for the Round-Up. The association was making plans for the rodeo's 110th anniversary, which would be marked in part by the opening of a brand new facility to house the Round-Up's growing retail, ticketing and administrative operations.

Although still a non-profit that largely relies on 1,500 volunteers to coordinate and execute rodeo week, the Round-Up has also turned into a multi-million-dollar operation.

Without the ability to put on a four-day rodeo, the association is set up to take a financial hit.

In tax forms covering

daunting. Shutting down the rodeo and all its accompanying events for the year didn't come from a lack of trying.

"Our original plan was the show was going to go on as planned," Reay said.

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## Churches scale back service plans, extend grace

Local church leaders don't hold animosity toward Lighthouse

By Ronald Bond  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The COVID-19 outbreak at Lighthouse Pentecostal Church in Island City led to several churches making the decision to close their

doors and resume online-only services just a couple of weeks after getting the OK to reopen.

Meanwhile, other churches pushed pause on the steps they were taking toward reopening.

While there is frustration among local congregations, church leaders are not aiming animosity at the church health officials reported is responsible for the spike that made Union County the state's

COVID-19 hotbed.

Pastors in the region said they are heartbroken about the Lighthouse outbreak, which has at least 236 COVID-19 cases tied to it, and hope it doesn't put a stain on all churches in the Grande Ronde Valley.

"Some of the concern initially was just for most of us being very connected with the non-churched crowd. This is where our mission field is to bring the gospel to those who

don't yet know Jesus," said Tanner Sheahan, pastor of Christ Church, La Grande. "Seeing the reaction is concerning."

Sheahan said he has noticed the recent outbreak has caused anger at churches as a whole, and that concerns the pastor.

"It was all plural, and there was the assumption that we don't care about our community," he said. "I don't want to put that on Lighthouse Church either.

I'm not saying they don't care about the city."

Lighthouse may, in fact, be in the minority of churches that elected to open early. Sheahan noted the majority of pastors he knows kept their churches closed while the state implemented rules to reduce gathering sizes. His own congregation, which uses hq in downtown La Grande as its

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### WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

	Tonight		Sunday
	56 LOW		75/48
	Mostly cloudy		Clouds and sun

### CONTACT US

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