

COVID-19 by the numbers*

Worldwide cases: 13,616,593
Worldwide deaths: 585,727
U.S. cases: 3,555,877
U.S. deaths: 137,864
Total U.S. tests: 46,551,605
Oregon cases: 13,802
Oregon active cases: 10,359

Oregon deaths: 254
Total Oregon tests: 323,478 (4% positive)
Union County cases: 379
Union County active cases: 331
Union County deaths: 2
Total Union County tests:

2,356 (15% positive)
Wallowa County cases: 15
Wallowa County active cases: 14
Wallowa County deaths: 0
Total Wallowa County tests: 544 (3% positive)

**As of 2 p.m. Friday, July 17. Sources: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Military Department.*

CONCERT

Continued from Page 1A

Nights series across the U.S. and Canada. The La Grande Drive-in will be one of only three sites in Oregon to show the concert. The others are in Milton-Freewater and Newberg, the sites of Oregon’s two other commercial drive-in theaters. The La Grande Drive-in’s capacity for the concert will be 300 vehicles. This is the total it can accommodate and still meet social distancing standards in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, said drive-in manager Patty Johnson. Spectators will be allowed to watch the concert outside only if they sit in lawn chairs that are touching their vehicles. Tickets to the show are \$114.99 per vehicle and must be purchased



EO Media Group file photo

Blake Shelton performs in Pendleton at the 2018 Pendleton Whisky Music Fest. Locals can watch a recording of a concert of the popular county music singer and television personality at the La Grande Drive-in the evening of July 25.

in advance via ticket-master.com. The maximum number of people allowed per vehicle will be six and all must have legal seat belts. Gates at the La Grande Drive-in will open at 6:30 p.m. and the concert will start at 9:30 p.m.

The concert was filmed especially for drive-in theaters. The series it is kicking off, Johnson said, is in response to the strong reception received for Garth Brooks’ June 27 drive-in concert, which was shown at drive-in theaters across the nation. Shelton has had numerous hit records during his career and won many honors. The People’s Choice Awards in November named him the Favorite Country Artist. He also won Single of the Year at the Country Music Association Awards for his song “God’s Country.” The entertainer also is well known as a successful coach on the television series “The Voice,” an American singing competition series. “This is such a great way to enjoy music with your family and friends and stay safe,” Shelton said of the

drive-in concert on his website, blakeshelton.com. Shelton also wrote he will perform his older hits, sic as “Austin,” as well as newer songs. The concert also includes guest performances by fellow music stars Gwen Stefani and Trace Adkins. The La Grande Drive-in in the past has shown events other than movies. For example, the drive-in during its inaugural year of 1951 showed a film of a boxing match between featherweight world champion Sandy Saddler and challenger Willie Pep. The La Grande Drive-in opened for its 2020 season May 15. The opening was about a month later than normal because of the pandemic. The drive-in now is the only movie theater operating in Union County, due to the coronavirus.

TRENDS

Continued from Page 1A

Thursday, of 1.4 cases per day. In the last week, there have been just 10 cases, and two days have had none reported. The county’s trend has been a stark contrast to the rest of the state, which bot-tomed out at an average of about 33 cases per day in late May — a time when it seemed the worst of the pandemic in Oregon was passed. Since then, the seven-day average has been on the rise, and Thursday, thanks to the highest one-day total reported in the state of 437, reached 377 new daily cases.

The positive test rate in Oregon also has been on the rise. Thursday it moved above 4%, and the weekly positive rate has increased each week during the last two months according to OHA, from just 1.6% during the week ending May 22 to 5.8% during the week ending July 12. The weekly rate has been above the state average the last four weeks, indicating the increase in cases is likely to continue. As of Thursday, the state had administered approximately 318,200 tests, 2,305 of which were done in Union County. Brogoitti said one of the reasons Union County is seeing smaller numbers than elsewhere in the state might be because people are more spread out and able to properly social distance.

“The places where we are really seeing an increase in numbers are places where spread is more likely to occur due to not being able to social distance due to condensed populations,” Brogoitti said. “And those areas where people cannot take the needed precautions.” She added, however, the virus is unpredictable, and a lack of a large uptick in the last week does not mean new cases will not spike again. The largest increase in the county came from the outbreak June 15 and 16. Since that outbreak, several places have experienced community spread of the virus, but with fewer infected. Brogoitti said it is unlikely any of the new cases are directly connected to any particular outbreak, such as occurred in June at the Lighthouse Pentecostal Church, Island City. Brogoitti said the data now show a majority of cases are not connected to other cases.

Observer reporter Ronald Bond contributed to this report.

Chamber, city officials have KN95 masks to distribute to small businesses

The Observer

LA GRANDE — KN95 masks are available to small businesses within the La Grande city limits. In conjunction with the Union County Board of Commissioners, Union County Incident Command and the city of La Grande, the Union County Chamber of Commerce received a shipment of 2,000 KN95 masks to distribute to small businesses within the La Grande city limits. Businesses with less than 50 employees are eligible to receive these mask — free — for their

employees, customers and clients. The masks will aid businesses in compliance with Oregon’s face covering regulations as well as to further promote the health, safety and well-being of fellow citizens and patrons, according to a press release from the chamber. “We understand the financial and social difficulty the new requirements can be to the businesses and citizens within our communities,” chamber Executive Director Suzannah Moore-Hemann said of the new regulations.

“We’re incredibly grateful the Union County Incident Command identified the Chamber as an outlet to aid in getting masks out to the business and economic environment.” Masks are available by calling 541-963-8588 or emailing info@VisitUnion-County.org to arrange for pickup or delivery. “During these unprecedented and challenging times, it is so uplifting to work together to support and promote the businesses and communities within and throughout the county,” Moore-Hemann added.

COMPLAINTS

Continued from Page 1A

company normally gets roughly 2,000 complaints annually. One of the complaints against Outdoors RV on June 15 claimed an employee was told not to speak about being exposed to a family member who had tested positive for COVID-19. Northwood declined to comment on the allegation. An allegation against Umpqua Holdings in La Grande claimed employees were concerned after another employee showed up with COVID-19-like symptoms. The Union County complaints were reported between June 15 and July 2. The majority of the complaints submitted to OSHA were related to mask-wearing or social-distancing mandates that Gov. Kate Brown put in place for workers in mid-June.



Observer file photo

Northwood Investments, the parent company to both Outdoors RV and Northwood Manufacturing, has been the cite of a workplace outbreak of COVID-19. Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Division has received three COVID-19 workplace complaints against the La Grande company. Two complaints also stated an employee was not providing hand sanitizer at rest rooms or break rooms, and another said an employee was not frequently cleaning or sanitizing commonly touched areas.

Wal-Mart in Island City, Miller’s Home Center in La Grande, Tri County

Equipment in La Grande, Boise Cascade in Elgin and CJ’s Country Store in North Powder are the other businesses that saw complaints filed with OSHA.

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