

DAILY
PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Tuesday, July 21, the 203rd day of 2020. There are 163 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT

On July 21, 1925, the so-called "Monkey Trial" ended in Dayton, Tennessee, with John T. Scopes found guilty of violating state law for teaching Darwin's Theory of Evolution. (The conviction was later overturned on a technicality.)

ON THIS DATE

In 1796, Scottish poet Robert Burns died in Dumfries at age 37.

In 1861, during the Civil War, the first Battle of Bull Run was fought at Manassas, Virginia, resulting in a Confederate victory.

In 1944, American forces landed on Guam during World War II, capturing it from the Japanese some three weeks later. The Democratic National Convention in Chicago nominated Sen. Harry S. Truman to be vice president.

In 1969, Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin blasted off from the moon aboard the ascent stage of the lunar module for docking with the command module.

In 1980, draft registration began in the United States for 19- and 20-year-old men.

In 1990, a benefit concert took place in Germany at the site of the fallen Berlin Wall; the concert, which drew some 200,000 people, was headlined by Roger Waters, a founder of Pink Floyd. (The concert ended with the collapse of a mock Berlin Wall made of styrofoam.)

In 1998, astronaut Alan Shepard died in Monterey, California, at age 74; actor Robert Young died in Westlake Village, California, at age 91.

In 1999, Navy divers found and recovered the bodies of John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife, Carolyn, and sister-in-law, Lauren Bessette, in the wreckage of Kennedy's plane in the Atlantic Ocean off Martha's Vineyard.

In 2000, Special Counsel John C. Danforth concluded "with 100 percent certainty" that the federal government was innocent of wrongdoing in the siege that killed 80 members of the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas, in 1993.

In 2008, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, one of the world's top war crimes fugitives, was arrested in a Belgrade suburb by Serbian security forces. (He was sentenced by a U.N. court in 2019 to life imprisonment after being convicted of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.)

In 2009, prosecutors in Cambridge, Massachusetts, dropped a disorderly conduct charge against prominent Black scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr., who was arrested by a white officer at his home near Harvard University after a report of a break-in.

In 2011, the 30-year-old space shuttle program ended as Atlantis landed at Cape Canaveral, Florida, after the 135th shuttle flight.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$4.1 million
1-9-23-25-30-42

Mega Millions: \$101 million
12-13-21-46-57-21 x3

Powerball: \$97 million
13-16-32-58-59—PB-9 x2

Win for Life: July 18
3-4-65-72

Pick 4: July 19

• **1 p.m.:** 6-8-0-9; • **4 p.m.:** 5-3-6-3

• **7 p.m.:** 2-1-2-9; • **10 p.m.:** 9-7-2-2

Pick 4: July 18

• **1 p.m.:** 7-9-3-4; • **4 p.m.:** 8-1-0-3

• **7 p.m.:** 9-9-5-9; • **10 p.m.:** 3-4-1-8

Pick 4: July 17

• **1 p.m.:** 6-4-5-0; • **4 p.m.:** 9-1-5-9

• **7 p.m.:** 4-7-2-4; • **10 p.m.:** 7-6-4-5

DELIVERY ISSUES?

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Umatilla County seeks testing help

By Alex Castle

EO Media Group

UMATILLA COUNTY — Following a week of reporting 255 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 and the ninth death of a county resident who had tested positive for the virus, Umatilla County now sits atop the state with 151.2 cases per 10,000 residents, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

The county has reported 1,261 confirmed and presumptive cases of the virus as of Friday, July 17, and the Oregon Health Authority identified 629 of those cases within the Hermiston ZIP code, the most cases within a single ZIP code in the entire state.

As local and state officials try to figure out how to best stem the ongoing spread of the virus, Umatilla County has asked the state to help develop a free testing event targeted at residents who have struggled to get access to testing.

"We need to explore the idea of doing what we can to make testing more readily available, particularly to those people who may have some difficulty affording it," Umatilla County Commissioner George Murdock said at a county meeting Wednesday, July 15.

According to the Oregon Health Authority, Umatilla County residents have been tested at a rate of 911 people per 10,000, which is above the statewide average of 764.

But as Hermiston's cases have spiked the county to the top of the state, Umatilla County Public Health Director Joe Fiumara highlighted that many of the county's Hispanic and Latino residents live in that area and have been disproportionately affected by the virus. And



Contributed photo

A sign advertises drive-thru COVID-19 testing at Hermiston's Good Shepherd Health Care System campus on Monday, July 13. More than 150 people, both with and without symptoms of the virus, were tested at the event.

some have been unable to get tested when they've needed it.

"We've had reports from Hispanic individuals that it's taken them multiple attempts to get tested when they met all the criteria initially," Fiumara said. "It's just kind of exacerbating the inequities that we already knew were here."

Umatilla County Chair John Shafer said July 16 the county reached out to the Oregon Health Authority about acquiring state assistance to plan a testing event in the area.

A spokesperson with the Oregon Health Authority stated in a July 17 email the state was unaware of any testing events planned at this time.

Fiumara said he's less keen on the need for a large-scale testing event of those without symptoms. However, he is in favor of targeted solutions.

"It's about providing a mechanism for some of these workplaces and employers who tradition-

ally haven't maybe provided a lot of sick leave or have the money to make the changes to get by if their staff are to stay home," Fiumara said.

Good Shepherd Hospital in Hermiston held its first drive-thru testing event on July 13, where more than 150 people, both with and without symptoms, were tested. Caitlin Cozad, the hospital's marketing and communications director, stated in a July 14 email the hospital was hoping to host more testing events in the future as "resources and capacity allow."

But as testing ramps up in Umatilla County and all across the nation, both those things are starting to come in shorter and shorter supply.

"Many labs across the country are having difficulty keeping up with the specimens submitted," Cozad stated. "(Good Shepherd) has been contracted with Lab Corp, which is taking anywhere between two and 10 days

for COVID-19 test results."

On the other hand, Harry Geller, chief executive officer of St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton, said sample collection and testing turnaround time has yet to be significantly impacted by any shortages.

"Turnaround time is excellent, typically between under 24 hours up to 48 hours. Occasionally it exceeds 48 hours," he stated in a July 17 email.

St. Anthony Clinic has collected nearly 500 samples for COVID-19 tests as of July 17, according to Geller, and can collect up to 30 samples per day. However, the clinic is taking samples only for individuals who have symptoms or have been exposed to a known case of the virus.

Fiumara said he's started to hear reports of labs struggling to continue quick turnaround times, which complicates the health department's attempt to adequately evaluate and respond to case data.

North Powder shares school opening plan

By Dick Mason

The Observer

NORTH POWDER — North Powder School District Superintendent Lance Dixon said he believes students benefit most from learning at school with their classmates, not at home via distance education.

This is why Dixon has announced school in North Powder is set to begin Aug. 31 with all students attending in classrooms four days a week. The plan is designed to meet COVID-19 social distancing rules. Dixon said this is what parents desire for their sons and daughters.

"For the most part they want their kids back in school every day," said Dixon, whose school district has operated on a four-day week for at least the past three decades.

Should North Powder reopen its schools, it would be the first time for regular classes there since mid-March when Oregon closed all schools due to the coronavirus pandemic. Teachers taught the remainder of the 2019-20 school year via distance education.

While we cannot yet plan for school as normal, we have worked within the guidelines from the Oregon Department of Education to create a plan that gets us as close to a normal year as possible," Dixon told parents in a letter. "If the Oregon Department of Education requirements change, we will revise the plan accordingly."

Dixon said students need to get back to school for their own mental well-being.

"Their routine and extracurricular activities were taken away from them. We will create issues we have not seen yet (if



Contributed photo

The North Powder School District completed its new school and gym in 2019. The district plans to reopen its schools Aug. 31 with students attending classes four days a week and social distancing protocols in place.

students cannot soon return to school). Students need socialization," he said.

Dixon said that under the plan, elementary classes would be fairly traditional, while secondary classes, grades 6-12, would be taught in cohorts of 17-24 students. Dixon said North Powder is in a good position to offer on-site classes while conforming to social distancing rules. He explained the district's classrooms can accommodate up to 24 students and still meet social distancing rules, and all of North Powder's classes have about 25 students or fewer.

Instruction in all classes would be livestreamed on

the internet, allowing students who cannot attend to watch in real time at home or via archived video. Dixon said the livestreaming will be important because state rules will require students who miss school because of an illness to remain home longer than usual as a precaution.

Should the state make social distancing rules more stringent, the North Powder School District would activate a plan B reopening, with half of the students attending school on-site on alternative days during a four-day week. On the alternate days, students would attend classes via distance education, Dixon said. This would ultimately mean students would attend school two days a week and study at home two days.

The Oregon Department of Education is requiring all Oregon school districts to submit their reopening plans to it by Aug. 15. Dixon said the Union County Public Health Department too will review North Powder School District's reopening plan to determine whether it meets social distancing requirements.

NEWS BRIEFS

La Grande man dies in motorcycle crash

UNION — A multi-vehicle crash Sunday in Union County took the life of a La Grande man.

Oregon State Police reported Keith Walker, 62, was operating a Harley Davidson motorcycle and heading north on Highway 203 between Union and La Grande when at about 4 p.m. he entered the southbound lane and collided with a Ford F350 pickup and then a Toyota Camry.

State police troopers and emergency personnel from the Union County Sheriff's Office and Cove Fire Department responded to the scene at 4:09 p.m.

Walker sustained fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased. The drivers of the two vehicles did not suffer serious injuries, OSP reported, although the vehicles sustained damage.

The preliminary investigation did not reveal why Walker's motorcycle crossed into the oncoming traffic, according to the state police.

Small fire put out in La Grande garage

LA GRANDE — A small fire broke out in the garage Sunday evening at a duplex in La Grande at Second Street and Jefferson Avenue.

La Grande Fire Department Capt. Merle Laci said firefighters extinguished the flames soon after arriving on scene.

A neighbor called 911 at 6:18 p.m. after seeing smoke coming from the garage of the home at 2103 Second St. The La Grande Fire Department, Island City Fire Department, Union Ambulance and La Grande Police Department arrived within three or four minutes of the call.

"There was limited ventilation when we got to the scene so it was mostly smoke," Laci said. "Once we got the doors open there were some flames but a lot of yellow and white smoke."

It took the fire crew less than an hour to put out the blaze. Laci said there is some structural damage that the building's owner, Dennis Lewis, will assess.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. Sarah Reichhoff, who rents the duplex where the fire occurred, said she didn't see anything suspicious before the fire broke out.

"I was at home relaxing and I looked out my window and saw smoke and heard someone screaming," Reichhoff said.

Police seek source of bogus 911 call

LA GRANDE — A 911 caller who claimed he committed assault with a firearm sent police hustling Saturday to a La Grande neighborhood. But the call was bogus.

La Grande police in a press release reported the dispatch center on Saturday at 1:04 p.m. received a call on the police department business phone line from a male who claimed he committed an assault with a firearm inside a residence on the 2500 block of Locust Court. Due to the nature of the call and the caller's statements, a large number of law enforcement officers responded.

Crews closed several streets in the area during the response and investigation, according to the press release, and police set up a command post at 22nd Street and East H Avenue.

Officers contacted the residents where the crisis was reported to have occurred and found the report was false and everyone in the home was safe. La Grande police reported the residents had not called for help and had no knowledge of what the caller claimed.

— The Observer

Baker schools might start a week later

By Sam Anthony

EO Media Group

BAKER CITY — Baker School District Superintendent Mark Witty is proposing to start classes Sept. 8 rather than Aug. 31, as originally planned, to give teachers and staff an extra week to prepare for changes related to the pandemic.

And the district's athletic director told the school board during its meeting Thursday that fall sports schedules also likely

will have to be modified.

"Best case scenario, things will get moved back a little and we'll play locally," athletic director Buell Gonzales Jr. said. "But we might lose football completely."

Gonzales said the executive board of the Oregon School Activities Association, which governs high school athletics, will meet next week to discuss fall sports.

The board will meet July 30 at noon to discuss Wit-

ty's proposal to start classes on Sept. 8, the day after Labor Day. The district's plan calls for students in grades K-6 to attend classes in person four days per week as usual.

Students at Baker Middle School and Baker High School would be divided into two groups, with one group attending classes at the school 2 days per week while the other group attends the same classes online.

But Witty told the

board Thursday that he is preparing for the possibility that even that limited schedule of in-person classes won't be possible depending on the severity of the pandemic.

"Quite frankly, I think we have to realize that we might have to prepare for all-online this year at some point," Witty said.

The July 30 meeting will be devoted to the question of whether classes should start Sept. 8.

The board will also

meet on Aug. 13 to review a detailed reopening plan for the fall, including the schedule for all schools.

School districts must submit their reopening plans to the Oregon Department of Education by Aug. 15.

Although the district's goal is to have as many in-person classes as possible, Witty said some families have already told district officials that they plan to have their children take all classes online this fall.