



COVID-19

Hospital was always in control

Data shows COVID-19 hospitalizations at GRH never got out of hand

By Ronald Bond
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The number of COVID-19 cases in Union County has flatlined. The Center for Human Development Wednesday, July 29, reported an eighth consecutive day without any new cases, leaving the overall total since the start of the pandemic at 385, with the vast majority being counted in two days during mid-June’s breakout.

The number of individuals hospitalized at Grande Ronde Hospital has decreased as well.

While the exact number has not been reported — the hospital, per policy, does not disclose the reason for an individual’s hospitalization and Oregon Health Authority’s data is intentionally vague — data from the OHA during the last six weeks indicate the La Grande-based hospital was never close to overrun by patients with COVID-19, and never at one time had double-digit numbers of

See, **Hospital**/Page 5A

Surge in cases may keep kids out of school

By Jackson Hogan
EO Media Group

SALEM — To resume in-person school this fall, Oregon counties and the state as a whole must meet a low threshold of COVID-19 cases that only one county meets, according to a new mandate Gov. Kate Brown issued Tuesday.

The county in which a school district is located must meet these standards for three weeks in a row: 10 or fewer COVID-19 cases per 100,000 residents and 5% or less positive tests per week, according to Brown’s new mandate. The state also must have 5% or less positive tests as a whole, the new rule states.

The rule is slightly less strict for kindergarten through third grade classes, or rural school districts with fewer than 100 students. Those grades and school

See, **Cases**/Page 5A



La Grande historian Ronnie Allen looks through a sight tube that allows visitors to see the precise area Oregon Trail pioneers came down Lower Ladd Canyon Hill. Allen built the interpretive site near Hot Lake Lane, La Grande.

Staff photo by Dick Mason

Looking back in time

Oregon Trail site along Hot Lake Lane completed

By Dick Mason
The Observer

LA GRANDE — A four-inch steel sight tube is helping people on Hot Lake Lane look deep into the past.

The new immovable sight tube is making it easier for visitors to the Lower Ladd Canyon Oregon Trail interpretive site to see exactly what pioneers did at least 170 years ago.

The interpretive center is a mile from the base of Lower Ladd Canyon Hill along Hot Lake Lane. The sight tube has no magnifying glass, but people looking through it will instantly see this route, which Ronnie Allen identified. The La Grande historian created the lower canyon Oregon Trail site.

“The pioneers, after coming down the hill, walked directly to here (where the interpretive site is),” Allen said.

Looking through the tube, the scene reveals three pine trees, which were not present during the 1800s but today make it easy to identify the Lower Ladd Canyon Oregon Trail route.

Gail Carbiener, preservation officer



Staff photo by Dick Mason

The small tube at the new Lower Ladd Canyon Oregon Trail interpretive site lets visitors see where pioneers came down the Oregon Trail near La Grande.

for Oregon-California Trails Association, said the sight tube is a tremendous help to people stopping at the Oregon Trail center on Hot Lake Lane.

“When people are standing there they don’t know where to look. This shows them where to focus to see the Oregon

Trail,” said Carbiener, who lives in central Oregon.

Allen’s Oregon Trail site was officially completed Monday, July 27, and is filled with artifacts that will educate

See, **Trail**/Page 5A

Union considers contract with sheriff’s office

By Dick Mason
The Observer

UNION — Union’s law enforcement picture may be just three months from receiving a major boost.

The Union City Council voted Monday, July 27, to have the city continue negotiating a law enforcement contract with the Union County Sheriff’s Office. The contract would provide Union with a resident Union County Sheriff’s Office deputy. The deputy would work 30 hours a week in Union and 10 hours a week in other portions of the county.

Union did not renew its con-

BENEFIT OF A DEPUTY IN UNION

Union County Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen said having a deputy in Union will allow his agency to be more proactive.

The deputy will be able to establish relationships in the community people, he said, to make them feel more at ease coming forward with information that could help prevent problems. The deputy also could be proactive in stopping the distribution of illegal drugs, Rasmussen said, or helping in emergencies.

tract with the sheriff’s office four years ago. Since then, the city has received emergency service from the sheriff’s office and periodic patrols.

Funding to cover the position for four years would come from a \$125,000 Community Oriented Policing federal grant the Union

County Sheriff’s Office received, \$200,000 from the city of Union and \$35,000 from Union County, said Sheriff Boyd Rasmussen.

Union City Administrator Doug Wiggins said Tuesday the council appears willing to have the city pay the \$200,000.

“The council is on board with

it. A resident deputy for \$50,000 a year would be a good deal for the city,” Wiggins said.

Rasmussen said he believes it is possible Union will have a resident deputy working by October or November. The deputy, Wiggins said, would conduct regular patrols and enforce the city’s ordinances.

Union Mayor Leonard Flint is impressed with how smoothly negotiations between the city and the Union County Sheriff’s Office are going.

“It is very encouraging,” Flint said.

See, **Union**/Page 5A

INDEX

Business..... 1B	Dear Abby.... 8B	Opinion..... 4A
Classified..... 3B	Horoscope... 3B	Sports..... 7A
Comics..... 7B	Lottery..... 2A	Spiritual..... 6A
Crossword... 3B	Obituaries.... 3A	Sudoku..... 7B

WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

	Tonight 61 LOW Clear		Friday 99/60 Mostly sunny; hot
--	-----------------------------------	--	---

CONTACT US

541-963-3161	Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com . More contact info on Page 4A.
Issue 90	
3 sections, 20 pages	
La Grande, Oregon	



8 51153 00100 6