

DAILY
PLANNER

TODAY

Today is Saturday, Nov. 7, the 312th day of 2020. There are 54 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT IN HISTORY

On Nov. 7, 1967, Carl Stokes was elected the first Black mayor of a major city — Cleveland, Ohio.

ON THIS DATE

In 1867, Nobel Prize-winning scientist Marie Curie was born in Warsaw.

In 1917, Russia's Bolshevik Revolution took place as forces led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin overthrew the provisional government of Alexander Kerensky.

In 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won an unprecedented fourth term in office, defeating Republican Thomas E. Dewey.

In 1962, Richard M. Nixon, having lost California's gubernatorial race, held what he called his "last press conference," telling reporters, "You won't have Nixon to kick around anymore."

In 1972, President Richard Nixon was re-elected in a landslide over Democrat George McGovern.

In 1973, Congress overrode President Richard Nixon's veto of the War Powers Act, which limits a chief executive's power to wage war without congressional approval.

In 1989, L. Douglas Wilder won the governor's race in Virginia, becoming the first elected Black governor in U.S. history; David N. Dinkins was elected New York City's first Black mayor.

In 2001, the Bush administration targeted Osama bin Laden's multi-million-dollar financial networks, closing businesses in four states, detaining U.S. suspects and urging allies to help choke off money supplies in 40 nations.

In 2009, in a victory for President Barack Obama, the Democratic-controlled House narrowly passed, 220-215, landmark health care legislation to expand coverage to tens of millions lacking it and place tough new restrictions on the insurance industry.

In 2013, shares of Twitter went on sale to the public for the first time; by the closing bell, the social network was valued at \$31 billion.

LOTTERY

Megabucks: \$4 million

14-32-37-38-39-44

Mega Millions: \$129 million

7-31-44-45-55 — 19 x3

Powerball: \$137 million

23-32-33-45-49 — PB-14 x2

Win for Life: Nov. 4

4-31-38-59

Pick 4: Nov. 5

• 1 p.m.: 6-1-9-1; • 4 p.m.: 8-7-9-2;

• 7 p.m.: 2-9-0-8; • 10 p.m.: 7-6-0-9

Pick 4: Nov. 4

• 1 p.m.: 1-6-2-8; • 4 p.m.: 5-4-8-3;

• 7 p.m.: 2-9-0-1; • 10 p.m.: 9-5-0-5

DELIVERY ISSUES?

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Ladd Canyon’s west entrance now has a third lane

By Dick Mason
The Observer

UNION COUNTY — The process of entering the west entrance of Ladd Canyon on Interstate 84 just became easier and safer for drivers.

A new 2-mile-long east-bound lane starting at Ladd Canyon’s west entrance opened Friday, Nov. 6, which will make it less difficult for motorists to cope with heavy truck traffic.

“I think it will be an incredible benefit,” said Oregon Department of Transportation spokesperson Tom Strandberg.

The section of freeway now consists of two new concrete lanes and a third with new asphalt. Cars are able to drive in all three lanes but trucks are restricted to the two concrete lanes. It was installed as part of the final phase of ODOT’s \$30 million Ladd Canyon Freight Improvement Project.

Ken Patterson, ODOT’s Region 5 manager, said the three-lane east setup will boost safety, giving car drivers a lane they can use to pass slower moving trucks and prevent them from being stuck between semis. Patterson said large semis sometimes roll at only 20 mph on the uphill passage.



Dick Mason/The Observer

Vehicles roll through the Ladd Canyon work zone Thursday, Nov. 5, 2020, on Interstate 84 south of La Grande. The Oregon Department of Transportation is finishing its improvements along the stretch of Ladd Canyon, including a new concrete lane for passenger vehicles.

The truck lanes are made out of concrete instead of asphalt because it will hold up better under the weight of heavier vehicles, Patterson said. He also noted concrete is less susceptible than asphalt to damage from vehicle chains.

The expanded space should reduce the number of times ODOT has to close I-84 through Ladd Canyon for semis blocking lanes after jackknifing. Patterson said if a truck crashes in the future on the three-lane road, traffic will be able to move around it while crews clear the wreck.

Ladd Canyon is the fourth site on Interstate 84 in Northeast Oregon where ODOT has installed a third lane. The others are Farewell Bend, Spring Creek and Cabbage Hill.

Patterson said road closures due to jackknifed trucks have fallen significantly at those three sites since adding the third lanes in the late 1990s.

“They have made a tremendous difference,” he said.

Reducing the number of times Ladd Canyon is closed will be a plus for the local economy. Patterson explained many people commute between La Grande and Baker City,

which means when Ladd Canyon is closed they cannot get to work.

Crews are finishing up some work in Ladd Canyon and lanes may be closed for short periods over the next week, said ODOT’s Mike Remily, manager of the Ladd Canyon Freight Improvement Project. Remily also said lane closures will be suspended when there is snowfall. He explained lane closures, which include setting up traffic cones, would interfere with snow removal.

The Ladd Canyon Freight Improvement Project started in April 2019. Crews that year widened the shoulders of the east- and westbound lanes of Interstate 84 for 10 miles between La Grande and Ladd Canyon, removed a bridge and installed a concrete box-like culvert large enough to accommodate semi trailers. Eliminating the bridge was beneficial because it tended to get icy, Patterson said.

First-year work also included changing the course of Ladd Canyon’s Brush Creek to make it possible for the third lane to be installed. Work on the second phase of the project started in April of this year.

EOU football players donate time putting together activity kits

By Sabrina Thompson
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon University football team partnered with the Greater Oregon STEM Hub to put together activity boxes for fourth-grade students in Union, Grant, Harney, Wallowa, Baker, Umatilla and Morrow counties, many of whom are participating in distance learning due to the pandemic.

The Oregon Community Foundation granted GO STEM \$19,950 to put together kits for every fourth-grade student in the region. The EOU student-athletes on Saturday, Oct. 31, put together 2,000 kits focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

“Our coach set up a community service event, and I saw I was scheduled for 10 a.m.,” EOU football player Dillon Holliday said. “When I got there, things were already moving pretty fast. Within five minutes I got to work. My job was putting pamphlets in the kits. Another guy was putting in a snack, and another



Eastern Oregon University/Contributed Photo

Eastern Oregon University football player Cade Reed helps build 2,000 STEM kits Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020, for a community service project. The kits contain one of three activities exploring science, technology, engineering and mathematics and will be distributed to fourth-grade students in Eastern Oregon.

put in more papers and instructions. By the end of our shift volunteering, we got a couple hundred boxes done with just our group.”

Student-athletes are required to work community service hours, and according to EOU spokesperson Vicky Hart, the football team is known for being involved in service activities.

“We hold ourselves to a high standard,” Holliday said. “The community supports us a lot, so we should be supporting the community too.”

The boxes contain one of three kits created by Pitsco Education, a com-

pany that specializes in engineering education for kindergarten through 12th grade. Kits had a sail car to learn about wind energy, paper straws and pipe cleaners for building a straw structure or a parachute-making kit. GO STEM Executive Director David Melville said fourth

graders will receive the kits because this grade has been the most vulnerable to falling behind through online education.

“Most schools have welcomed students back up to third grade, which means these fourth-grade students are still vulnerable to missing STEM opportunities in a virtual classroom,” Melville said.

The boxes also included a granola bar and goldfish crackers as a snack, because students who are learning from home may not have access to food as much as they had in school, according to Melville.

He said giving students access to science, technology, engineering and math projects and concepts at an early age is important because it can set a child up for success. Because COVID-19 and virtual learning has limited some STEM education, the kits they have put together can provide opportunities to expand learning.

“This is something the students can do at home and with their families,” Melville said.

Bare trees announce coming of winter



Phil Wright/The Observer

The trees along the Fourth Street side of Cook Memorial Library in downtown La Grande stand barren of leaves Thursday, Nov. 5, 2020. The National Weather Service has forecast chances of rain Saturday for La Grande, with that changing to a chance of snow Sunday and another chance of snow Monday night.

Wallowa County backs humane society, camping fee increase

By Bill Bradshaw
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Wallowa County threw its support behind two issues, Wednesday, Nov. 4, when the county commissioners agreed to issue letters asking for clarification on legal custody for the Wallowa County Humane Society and another supporting proposed fee increases at campgrounds.

Stuart Vencill, husband of humane society President Carol Vencill, asked the commissioners to send a letter that day to the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The deadline for submitting comments on the issue was Wednesday.

Vencill said the problem comes from the Legislature’s new rules on enforcement of rules governing animal shelters and the ODA’s repeated use of the term “legal custody” of animals in the care of shelters. The Legislature, in 2019, changed the recordkeeping requirements of “animal-rescue entities” from counties to the ODA under the state veterinarian.

“There are so many

vague areas there,” Vencill said. “We get an enormous amount of calls for lost and found animals, especially during the tourist season.”

The Wallowa County Humane Society is a non-profit but is not formally licensed, Vencill said.

“It appears we’ll have to become licensed,” he said.

Like many smaller, rural counties, Wallowa County has no animal shelter and relies on volunteers to foster animals until owners can be found.

“We try to temporarily provide care for them while we find the owner,” Vencill said.

He said he’s written to state Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, about the issue, and heard back from the senator’s office Tuesday, Nov. 3. Hansell said he’d look into the ramifications of the ODA’s new rules.

Vencill said he’s also been keeping Commissioner Todd Nash apprised of the situation and Nash had taken the lead on the issue for the commission.

“I know you’re aware that the county’s overrun with feral cats. Every one we can get spayed will cut

down on that problem,” Vencill said. “We’re very fortunate to have a generous community to support us and we appreciate your input as well.”

The commissioners voted to review Vencill’s letter and send it to the ODA.

The commissioners also agreed to send a letter to the U.S. Forest Service in support of proposed increases of campground fees in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

Commissioner Susan Roberts said the increase would be negligible, from about the current \$5 a day to about \$7 a day.

“I suggested they were asking too little,” she said.

The fee increase is to help cover the cost of upkeep of campsites.

In their letter, the commissioners wrote, “This year, visitors crowded Wallowa-Whitman National Forest recreation areas leaving wear and tear, trash, vandalism and human waste behind. We understand that your agency has budget challenges.”