

DAILY  
PLANNER

## TODAY

Today is Tuesday, Nov. 17, the 322nd day of 2020. There are 44 days left in the year.

## TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT IN HISTORY

On Nov. 17, 1800, Congress held its first session in the partially completed U.S. Capitol building.

## ON THIS DATE

In 1558, Elizabeth I acceded to the English throne upon the death of her half-sister, Queen Mary, beginning a 44-year reign.

In 1869, the Suez Canal opened in Egypt.

In 1889, the Union Pacific Railroad Co. began direct, daily railroad service between Chicago and Portland, Oregon, as well as Chicago and San Francisco.

In 1917, French sculptor Auguste Rodin died in Meudon at age 77.

In 1970, the Soviet Union landed an unmanned, remote-controlled vehicle on the moon, the Lunokhod 1.

In 1973, President Richard Nixon told Associated Press editors: "People have got to know whether or not their president is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook."

In 1979, Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini ordered the release of 13 Black and/or female American hostages being held in Tehran.

In 1997, 62 people were killed when militants opened fire at a temple in Luxor, Egypt; the attackers were killed by police.

In 2003, Arnold Schwarzenegger was sworn in as the 38th governor of California.

## LOTTERY

**Megabucks:** \$4.4 million  
**19-22-25-26-28-41**  
**Mega Millions:** \$165 million  
**6-7-14-28-59-7 x2**  
**Powerball:** \$168 million  
**7-15-18-32-45 — PB-20 x2**  
**Win for Life:** Nov. 14  
**12-22-51-56**  
**Pick 4:** Nov. 15  
• **1 p.m.:** 0-0-8-5; • **4 p.m.:** 0-7-9-8;  
• **7 p.m.:** 9-2-6-0; • **10 p.m.:** 9-6-3-5  
**Pick 4:** Nov. 14  
• **1 p.m.:** 5-3-5-5; • **4 p.m.:** 8-6-1-7;  
• **7 p.m.:** 4-6-5-2; • **10 p.m.:** 1-8-1-5  
**Pick 4:** Nov. 13  
• **1 p.m.:** 0-9-2-4; • **4 p.m.:** 3-2-8-8;  
• **7 p.m.:** 0-6-5-2; • **10 p.m.:** 2-9-4-0

## DELIVERY ISSUES?

If you have any problems receiving your Observer, please call 541-963-3161.

## Annual Veterans Day meal adapts to pandemic

By Dick Mason  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — A cherished local military tradition did a temporary about-face on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of the annual La Grande Veterans Day parade. Nevertheless, the parade's spirit remained alive thanks to American Legion Auxiliary Unit 43 of La Grande.

The auxiliary, which has 132 members, all women, served spaghetti lunches to veterans and the public at the site of the American Legion Hall, 301 Fir St., for at least the fifth straight year on Wednesday. The auxiliary added to its growing tradition with a twist — serving the meals in takeout boxes in the parking lot of the American Legion Hall, another move to meet requirements to help stop the spread of the virus.

The auxiliary gave out about 80 lunches, which featured a large helping of spaghetti and included garlic bread and cookies.

"Everything was homemade," said Maggie LaMont, American Legion



Misty Dean, right, and Catie Johnson, members of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 43 of La Grande, prepare takeout spaghetti lunches for veterans and the public on Veterans Day, Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2020.

Auxiliary Unit 43 president.

Kathi Karnowski, membership chair of the unit, said serving the meal was a way of keeping the Veterans Day parade, which had been conducted annually for many decades, on the forefront of people's minds.

"We were trying to keep

it alive for next year," she said.

The meals were again free to all veterans and members of the auxiliary. For everyone else the cost was \$5 per meal.

The auxiliary began serving the post-parade lunches about five years ago. Prior to that, the meals

were cooked and prepared under the direction of American Legion Post 43 with help from its auxiliary.

"We took over for them because we wanted them to enjoy Veterans Day instead of having to work," Karnowski said.

She said the members of the La Grande auxiliary

have developed a remarkable camaraderie through projects such as the spaghetti feed.

"We have become like sisters," she said.

Karnowski said she would not have known three-fourths of them if she was not in the auxiliary.

"Our paths would not have crossed," she said.

The path Unit 43 has cut in Union County runs deep, for it was granted its charter in 1923.

Karnowski said being able to provide grab-and-go meals to veterans was fulfilling Wednesday, but she liked it better when the lunches were served and shared in the Legion Hall. The auxiliary member explained she enjoyed getting more of an opportunity to talk to the veterans there.

She added that dining at the Legion Hall gives veterans — especially those who have no family members here — a time and place to tell stories and share their histories with others.

Still, she said Wednesday's event was one to cherish.

"Everybody did a good job," she said, "and it was such a fun event."

## Train whistle triggered wild celebration at end of WWI

By Dick Mason  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Train whistles are rarely heard today in La Grande after its state-approved quiet zone took effect Dec. 27, 2019.

The relative sounds of silence at La Grande's Union Pacific Railroad depot today are a stark contrast to the evening of Nov. 11, 1918. That is when train operators at La Grande's depot led what was undoubtedly one of the loudest celebrations in this community's history — triggered by the signing of the Armistice, ending

World War I.

The celebration started at 7 p.m., 16 hours after the Armistice became official. Up until that point, things had been quiet as word spread of the peace agreement.

"When news first trickled over the wires it may have been surprising to some that there was no wild outburst. There was just a great big thankful spirit of rejoicing born which grew and grew and grew and throbbed in the thankful tidings of the atmosphere during the day as the tidal wave spread

from person to person," a story in the Nov. 12, 1918, Observer stated.

A little past 7 p.m., this pent-up exuberance was released in La Grande's freight yard as a locomotive whistle started the celebration. Another locomotive whistle sounded and then many others. Suddenly the town was "in a fervor of excitement," according to The Observer article.

Soon the streets were filled with people, including those from nearby communities and the "evening was given up in unpremeditated

rejoicing." The magnitude of the celebration was uncommon.

"Probably no such other joyous festival will ever be witnessed ... until our boys have landed safe at home again," The Observer stated.

It was not known who to give credit for the celebration.

"That is rather immaterial, but at any rate the whistles have blown and the way cleared for the celebration as a result of the enterprise and a number of patriotic and foremost citizens," The Observer reported.

At least 15 million people lost their lives in World War I, including more than 110,000 Americans.

And at least 15 officers and enlisted men from Union County died while serving in the Armed Forces during World War I, according to information from the website genealogytrails.com. This total was 17 for Wallowa County and 34 in Baker County.

The celebration of the end of the war was dampened only by the remembrance of the men who wouldn't be coming home.



Flames burst from the windows of a vacant home Saturday, Nov. 14, 2020, that burned outside Elgin.

## Elgin house fire under investigation

Authorities working to determine cause

By Kaleb Lay  
The Observer

ELGIN — A fire Saturday, Nov. 14, burned through a vacant structure off Highway 82 outside Elgin. The blaze drew resources from Elgin, Imbler and Island City's rural fire departments.

Kevin Silvernail, chief of the Elgin Rural Fire Department, confirmed no

one was inside and there were no injuries.

"We put it out," Silvernail said. "We had it knocked down within about a half an hour (and) we had about two-and-a-half hours of mopping up and investigating."

The Elgin Rural Fire Protection received the call of the fire at 9:35 a.m. Saturday and responded shortly thereafter. More than a dozen firefighters, three fire engines and three water tenders were

deployed to the scene.

Silvernail said law enforcement had characterized the circumstances surrounding the fire as "suspicious," but the cause proved to be undeterminable, as the damage from the fire left little evidence.

The Union County Sheriff's Office reported a deputy is investigating the fire alongside the Oregon State Police Arson Unit, but the sheriff's office did not characterize the case or comment further.

## Electric car chargers popping up around Wallowa County

By Katy Nesbitt  
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Electric vehicle chargers are popping up around Wallowa County making it easier to own a zero emission, low-energy and low cost car in rural Eastern Oregon.

Matt King, Renewable Energy Program Manager at Community Solutions, Inc., said new electric vehicle chargers were paid for through grants and most are available to the public.

Pacific Power grants for electric vehicle projects are to non-residential customers, like Wallowa Resources and its subsidiary, Community Solutions.

In Oregon funding awards can cover up to 100% of the eligible costs of studying, planning, promoting or deploying electric transportation technology and projects.

"Wallowa Resources/CSI managed the electric vehicle grant that funded 70% of the cost of those chargers," King said.



Katy Nesbitt/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

Electric vehicle chargers are popping up all over Wallowa County, such as this one in front of the Doug McDaniels Stewardship Center in Enterprise.

Chargers funded, in part, by Pacific Power are at Mt. View Motel and RV Park, Five Peaks RV Park, the Bronze Antler Bed and Breakfast in Joseph, Wallowa Lake State Park and Park by the River in the Wallowa Lake village and Wallowa Resources and Enterprise Electric in Enterprise.

Forth Mobility Fund

of Portland funded workplace chargers at Moonshine Glass and Wallowa County Fairgrounds Cloverleaf Hall.

The Fund's philanthropic mission is to demonstrate how electric vehicles and other smart transportation choices can improve environmental quality and strengthen the economy.

King said the city of Joseph is considering installing a charger at the city lot on the Imnaha Highway.

"I think we now have more chargers than electric vehicles in the county," King said.

Electric vehicle chargers benefit visitors, as well, who may travel hundreds of miles and want the security of a map of available outlets.

"We can tell people, 'Come visit Wallowa County with your electric car — we are open for business,'" King said. "While your car charges at Enterprise Electric, you can have a beer at Terminal Gravity."

## DOC accepts less-than-ideal offer from community colleges

By Antonio Sierra  
East Oregonian

SALEM — Blue Mountain Community College, Pendleton, and several other community colleges seemingly saved their prison education programs from the chopping block. But it could come at a steep expense.

On Thursday, Nov. 12, the Oregon Department of Corrections sent out word to stakeholders that it was accepting an offer from the Oregon Community Colleges Association to retain

contracted adult education services within the state prison system.

But BMCC President Dennis Bailey-Fougner said the deal still would result in cuts at Blue Mountain's Corrections Education program, which offers GED classes and other adult education courses at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution in Pendleton, Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla and Powder River Correctional Facility in Baker City.

Bailey-Fougner said the

association, negotiating on behalf of BMCC and five other community colleges across the state, gave the department three options.

The state prison system chose Option 1, which would reduce BMCC's allocation from \$3 million per year to about \$1.25 million annually. Bailey-Fougner said the deal would result in cutting 8-9 positions from the 27 staff that work for the program, among other service reductions.

The other two options represented proposals with

higher funding amounts and were considered more feasible by the colleges.

Bailey-Fougner said both sides will meet again this week and his hope is the colleges will be able to negotiate further and hammer out other details on working conditions, class sizes and how the new contract will be administered.

The Department of Corrections accepting an offer made by the state's community colleges represents a change in tactics from the state's prison system.

DOC told community colleges over the summer that it intended to end its contracts with them in favor of moving the majority of its educational programs in-house, a move representatives said would save the department money and offer more consistency to inmates across the system.

Even as the colleges made some concessions, the department rejected an October offer and made plans to move ahead with transitioning education operations internally.

State Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, and Sen. Michael Dembrow, a Portland Democrat who chairs the Senate Committee on Education, met with representatives from the corrections department and the colleges. Dembrow and Bailey-Fougner credited the meeting with breaking the ice, leading to DOC accepting the Nov. 6 offer. But the ball is back in the colleges' court as BMCC looks to avoid further cuts in a year where it's already laid off several employees.