

# THE OBSERVER

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## Weekend Edition

SATURDAY-MONDAY • November 28, 2020 • \$1.50 Good day to our valued subscriber Mary Lu Pierce of La Grande

COVID-19

### Union County death toll increases

Union County recorded 85 new cases between Nov. 22-27 after gaining 107 the week before

By Kaleb Lay  
The Observer

UNION COUNTY — The week of the Thanksgiving holiday proved tragic for the Union County community and for the state of Oregon as a whole. COVID-19 continued its rapid November spread, and Oregon surpassed a number of grim milestones, prompting Gov. Kate Brown to effectively extend restrictions on social activity across much of the state.

Death toll rises

COVID-19 claimed the lives of three Union County residents during Thanksgiving week, according to reports from the Oregon Health Authority. The first was an 89-year-old man who died Monday, Nov. 23. The second was an 87-year-old woman who tested positive on Nov. 4 and died Tuesday at her residence. The third also was an 87-year-old woman who tested positive on Nov. 17 and died Tuesday at her residence.

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### Gov. Brown to loosen Oregon's restrictions

Bars and restaurants can open for outdoor dining next week

By Aimee Green  
The Oregonian/OregonLive

SALEM — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced Wednesday, Nov. 25, that she's loosening many restrictions she placed just a week ago on bars, restaurants, gyms, stores and religious organizations in order to stem the unprecedented, out-of-control spread of COVID-19.

Starting Thursday, Dec. 3,

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# Hunting with Heroes

La Grande veteran given a memorable hunting trip

By Dick Mason  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Nicolina Anderson of La Grande recently enjoyed one of the most exciting hunting experiences of her life — downing a branch antlered bull elk from about 450 yards in southeast Wyoming with her Tikka 308 bolt-action rifle.

Adrenaline coursed through her veins. "I was shaking so much that I could not hold my binoculars still (to get a better view of the elk)," said Anderson, who had to switch to a mounted spotting scope.

Anderson's mid-October adventure was about to get more interesting, though a bit more interesting than she and her guides may have wanted.

Anderson was with a Hunting with Heroes party. The program provides free guided hunts in Wyoming for disabled veterans. Anderson suffered a serious abdominal injury while serving in the U.S. Army.

A rugged and thick draw separated the group from the bull Anderson had shot and it was too late in the day for her group to hike across it, gut the elk and pack it out. They had no choice but to return to their cabin.

When the hunters arrived to get the elk not long after sunrise the next day, they knew something was wrong, for the elk had already been partially gutted and dragged several feet. "Some of its organs were gone," Anderson said.

The members of the hunting party quickly determined a female cougar with a kitten had ripped into the elk. The cougars' tracks looked fresh, and steam still rose from the freshly opened carcass, indicating the mountain lions had been present minutes earlier.

Anderson and her party, which included guides Jeff Grende of North Powder, feared the two cougars might return for the elk.

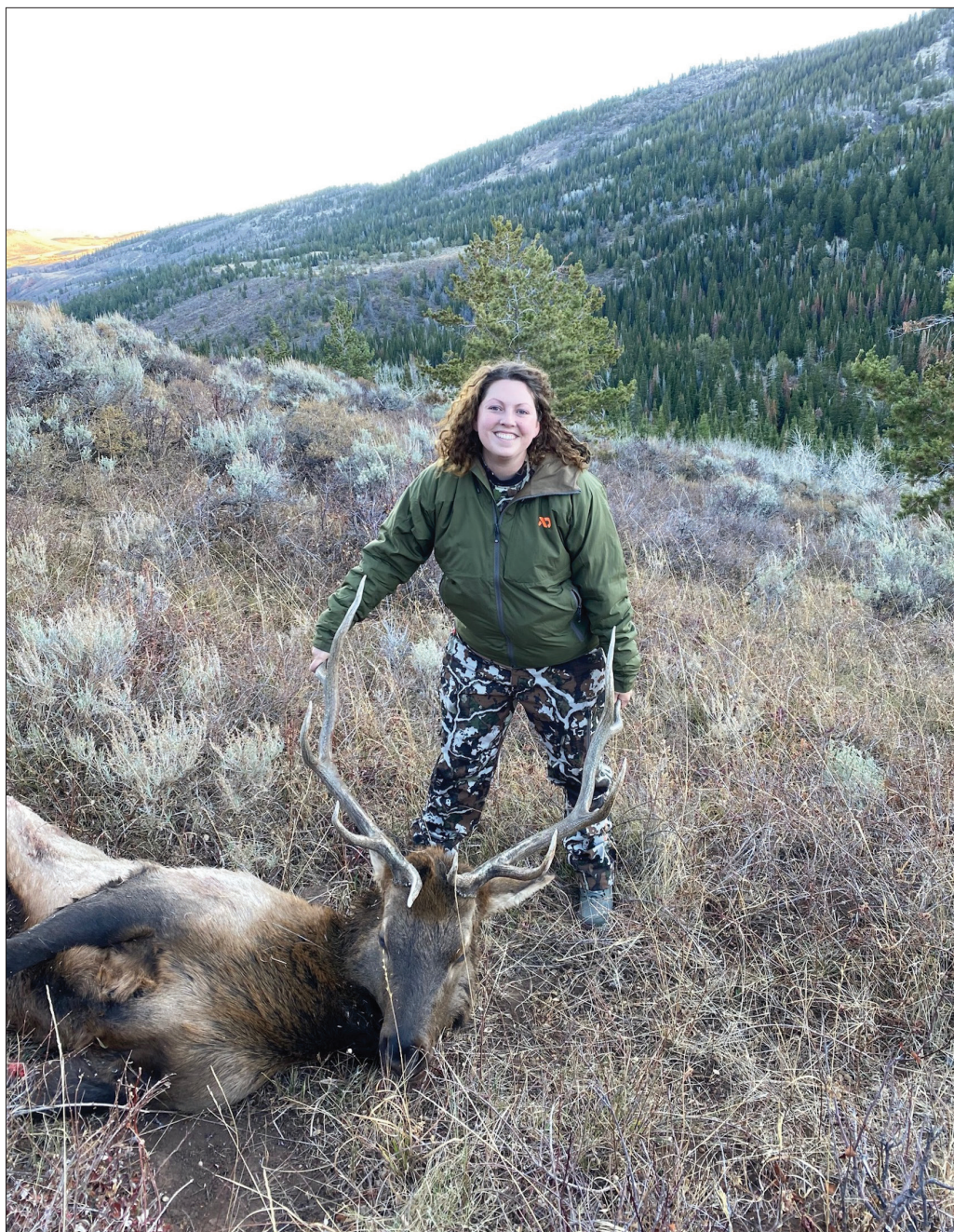
"We had someone on point (with a pistol watching for the cougars)," said Grende, who has been volunteering as a guide for Hunting with Heroes for four years, with his brothers Gee and Steve of Wyoming, who also assisted with Anderson's hunt.

Jeff Grende said he has never had a cougar partially gut an elk someone in his party has taken.

"I've heard about it, but this was the first time I've seen it," he said.

Fortunately the cougars did not reappear and the party was able to get the elk out

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Nicolina Anderson of La Grande shows the branch antlered elk she shot in October 2020 while with a Hunting With Heroes party in southeast Wyoming.

*"I was shaking so much that I could not hold my binoculars still."*

— Nicolina Anderson, La Grande

## Anthony Lakes slopes open for season

Resort requires guests wear masks, stay 6 feet apart

By Kaleb Lay  
The Observer

BAKER CITY — Skiers and snowboarders rejoice: Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort opened to season passholders for the first turns of the season on Saturday, Nov. 28.

Peter Johnson, who manages the resort, said snow conditions were better than had been expected earlier in the year.

"It's looking really good," Johnson said. "This is by far the best snow, the most snow we've had this early. All the forecasts sound really good. We'll see if those come through or not, but obviously with (COVID-19), that changes everything for us."

The slopes at Anthony Lakes can be expected to look a bit different this year. For a start, the resort is adopting a "zero tolerance policy" regarding the wearing of masks.

"We have a business to run, and it's not a discussion point,"



Chelsea Judy/Anthony Lakes Ski Area, Contributed Photo, File  
Skiers and snowboarders will notice changes this winter at Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort, which will reduce capacity in the lodge and in other buildings due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Johnson said. "Wear a mask or not come up. There are a lot of other places to go skiing. For the state of Oregon, it's required, so we're going to be enforcing it."

All guests and employees will be required to mask up "from the moment you pull into the Anthony Lakes parking lot to

when you leave," except while eating or drinking, and Johnson said that anyone who refuses to wear one will be asked to leave.

The resort also is adopting a sort of cohort-style approach to the ride up the mountain on the ski lift.

"If you show up in the same

vehicle, you can ride the lift together," Johnson said. "We're not going to force someone to ride with someone they don't know.... We're going to have a lot of changes to our lift line and just asking people to ride with the people they drove up with."

For example, someone who arrives at the resort alone will ride the ski lift to the top alone, and a group who carpooled to the resort will ride only with the members of that group.

Guests also will have to maintain a social distance of 6 feet, and Anthony Lakes will have a "floor walker" patrolling the lodge during business hours to help guests maintain their distance, disinfect surfaces and answer questions as needed.

The Starbottle Saloon will feature a new "ski-through" window for service and will place an emphasis on providing outdoor seating, though a reduced amount of indoor seating will be available.

Notably, Anthony Lakes will limit the number of day tickets it sells to reduce the number of people on the mountain each day.

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

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



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TUESDAY

LA GRANDE HOUSING ANALYSIS

Online at lagrandeobserver.com