

TODAY IN HISTORY

TODAY

Today is Thursday, Jan. 21, the 21st day of 2021. There are 344 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT IN HISTORY:

On Jan. 21, 2020, the U.S. reported its first known case of the new virus circulating in China, saying a Washington state resident who had returned the previous week from the outbreak's epicenter was hospitalized near Seattle; U.S. officials stressed that they believed the overall risk of the virus to the American public remained low.

ON THIS DATE:

In 1793, during the French Revolution, King Louis XVI, condemned for treason, was executed on the guillotine.

In 1924, Russian revolutionary Vladimir Lenin died at age 53.

In 1942, pinball machines were banned in New York City after a court ruled they were gambling devices that relied on chance rather than skill (the ban was lifted in 1976).

In 1954, the first atomic submarine, the USS Nautilus, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.

In 1976, British Airways and Air France inaugurated scheduled passenger service on the supersonic Concorde jet.

In 1977, on his first full day in office, President Jimmy Carter pardoned almost all Vietnam War draft evaders.

In 1997, Speaker Newt Gingrich was reprimanded and fined as the House voted for the first time in history to discipline its leader for ethical misconduct.

In 2003, the Census Bureau announced that Hispanics had surpassed blacks as America's largest minority group.

In 2007, Lovie Smith became the first Black head coach to make it to the Super Bowl when his Chicago Bears won the NFC championship, beating the New Orleans Saints 39-14; Tony Dungy became the second when his Indianapolis Colts took the AFC title over the New England Patriots, 38-34.

In 2010, a bitterly divided U.S. Supreme Court vastly increased the power of big business and labor unions to influence government decisions by freeing them to spend their millions directly to sway elections for president and Congress.

Josephy Center starts expansion fundraiser

By **BILL BRADSHAW**

Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — The Josephy Center for Arts and Culture publicly launched the “Key to Our Future” capital campaign Wednesday, Jan. 13, to purchase, renovate and expand the building located on 403 Main St. in Joseph, according to a press release.

The campaign is focused on making the Josephy Center a permanent home for arts and culture in Wallowa County, as well as restoring and expanding the center to enhance visitor experience and fit the growing needs of the community.

The campaign is set up in phases: Phase 1 focuses on the building purchase, which the center does not now own. It also includes critical safety repairs and accessibility for all. Phase 2 focuses on the renovation and expansion of the building.

“We don’t exactly know what’s that going to look like,” Development Director Kellee Sheehy said of potential expansion.

The goal of the first phase is to raise \$575,000 by this summer. Thanks to the tremendous support from local patrons combined with funding from the Ronald Naito Foundation, the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, the Autzen Foundation and the Oregon Cultural Trust, this campaign has made great progress



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

The Josephy Center for Arts and Culture in Joseph launched a fundraising campaign Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2021, to purchase, expand and improve its building.

toward reaching that goal — but community support is sought to raise another \$50,000. Business sponsorships and resident participation in fundraisers are crucial to the success of the campaign, the release stated.

To help incentivize community giving, the Murdock Foundation has offered to match all community donations (e.g., a \$200 donation would become \$400 dollars) up to \$50,000. Upon purchase of the building, a long-time patron of the Josephy Center has generously promised \$100,000 toward an endowment to

help maintain the building for years to come.

“The support we’ve seen already — especially during a year like 2020 — shows what we can do when we all pull together,” Sheehy said. “The impact of this campaign on the economy, on community development and on the morale of Wallowa County will last for generations to come.”

Phase 2, the renovation and expansion phase of the campaign, will position the Josephy Center to better serve Wallowa County as a community gathering place by increasing functionality, accessibility and program-

ming. The expansion may include features such as a multipurpose room for performing arts like dance and theater and an expanded ceramics studio, which will accommodate more students. Reconfiguration of the existing space will also increase access to regional and Nez Perce educational displays.

Sheehy said the center also wants public input on what they’d like to see in the revamped center.

“We have a long wish list of what we’d like to do,” she said. “We just have to see what the public wants and what’s within our budget.

We’re excited to involve the public and hear their ideas; we want to make sure that the expanded center is a place where residents want to spend time.”

While public fundraising for Phase 2 won’t begin until 2022, the center is gathering financial support from other sources, such as the Cultural Resource Economic Fund, in preparation for this phase.

The center is largely counting on Oregon Lottery funds, which have been delayed for more than 30 projects because lottery sales were insufficient to fund the bonds they pay for. The Legislature will soon take up the matter.

“It was important that we found funding from other sources and could embark on both phases of this campaign without financially burdening county residents,” Executive Director Cheryl Coughlan said.

Board President Jeff Costello also is optimistic about the future of the center.

“Ten years ago, a permanent arts and culture center in Wallowa County that does what the Josephy Center does was inconceivable,” he said. “Not only is it now within reach, but it is shaping up to be more than most of us dreamed possible.”

To donate visit josephy.org or mail a check to P.O. Box 949, Joseph 97846.

Cove School District principal search off to good start

By **DICK MASON**

The Observer

COVE — The Cove School District’s search for a new principal is off to a promising start.

The school district began accepting applications Jan. 7 for the principal for grades seven through 12. So far, it has received two applications.

In addition, Cove School District Superintendent Earl Pettit said a number of other educators interested in applying are scheduling



Pettit

trips to Cove to see what its public schools and community are like. The deadline for submitting applications is

March 8.

“We are receiving a lot of response,” Pettit said. “There is a lot of interest being expressed.”

Pettit said the school district hopes to have someone hired by late March or early April. The superintendent

said the top quality the school district is looking for in a candidate is successful experience as a school administrator. He said this is particularly important in a small district such as Cove because it has no high school administrators anyone can mentor under as an assistant.

“There is no time to learn. The individual has to be ready,” Pettit said.

The educator who is hired would start on July 1. The school district is

seeking a successor for Mat Miles, who retired in December. Miles served as principal for 10 years. He came to Cove after working in the La Grande School District for 11 years.

Pettit said the school board does not want to hire someone who would start the position before the 2020-21 school year is over. He explained this is because it is likely that if the board hired anyone to start before then, the individual would be leaving a position before

their school year was over.

“That would not be a good indicator of loyalty to their school district,” Pettit said.

Pettit will serve in the role of principal through the remainder of the school year in the absence of a successor for Miles. Pettit also is Cove Elementary School’s principal. The superintendent said he will be better able to take on the added responsibility because he has an excellent staff.

Baker County woman faces animal neglect charges

By **CHRIS COLLINS**

Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — The Baker County Sheriff’s Office has seized two donkeys, eight cats, four dogs and 23 chickens and cited the owner of the Baker Valley property where the animals were kept after investigating allegations of second-degree animal neglect.

Deputy Craig Rilee cited Virginia Lee Gould, 68, of Baker City, on Thursday afternoon, Jan. 14, on a Baker County Circuit Court warrant.

Gould is scheduled to appear in court at 9:30 a.m. Jan. 26. District Attorney Greg Baxter filed a petition Thursday, Jan. 20, seeking a pretrial order requiring Gould to forfeit the animals.

The Baker County Sheriff’s Office seized and impounded the animals on Jan. 7 after executing a search warrant on Gould’s property at 15742 Hunt Mountain Lane, according to the Sheriff’s Department and court documents.

The donkeys now are being cared for in the Keating area, and the other animals are being tended by volunteers with Best Friends of Baker.

Unless a security deposit or bond is posted within 72 hours of the scheduled hearing that would repay all costs incurred for the care of the two donkeys from Jan. 7 to the trial date, the donkeys would be forfeited, the petition states.

The charge of second-degree animal abuse, a Class B felony, alleges Gould failed to provide minimum care for the animals. In an affidavit filed in court Thursday, Baxter stated, “The dogs, cats and chickens were housed in cages that had feces several inches deep. The dogs and cats appeared to be in poor health. The donkeys’ hooves had not been clipped in quite some time, causing the donkeys to not be able to walk in a normal manner.”

Old Glory flies as the sun rises



Kaleb Lay/The Observer

Old Glory wafts in the breeze as the sun rises on the morning of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 18, 2021, in downtown La Grande. The city of La Grande displayed flags along Adams Avenue.

LGSD to hold virtual town hall on plans for reopening

By **KALEB LAY**

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande School District will hold a virtual town hall at 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 21.

District officials are expected to discuss plans regarding potential changes to instruction at the beginning of the next semester.

The school district previously stated that grades seven through 12 may have an opportunity to return to in-person instruction when that

semester begins Jan. 27.

Kindergarten through sixth-grade students returned to in-person instruction earlier this month. State guidelines were loosened early in the new year to give school districts more control over teaching methods used during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual town hall will stream live beginning at 6 p.m. To view the event, go online to lgsd.tv or the La Grande School District’s Facebook page.

Pendleton police arrest man they say suffering ‘psychosis’ from kratom

By **BYRCE DOLE**

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Pendleton police arrested a man on Monday, Jan. 18, who was suffering from an “apparent psychosis” most likely brought on by the substance kratom after he caused a public disturbance and leapt through a closed second-story window.

At around 7:30 p.m., Pendleton police received multiple reports from residents of a public disturbance on the 700 block of Southwest First Street, according to a press release from the police department. Upon arriving, police found Daniel P. Kemp, 37, who the department reported was agitated, screaming, removing his clothing, going into neighboring residences, destroying property and running in and out of his home.

Officers attempted to deescalate the situation, the press release stated, but Kemp fled

inside a building, ran to the second story, jumped through a closed window and landed on the ground.

Officers went outside and found Kemp covered in blood. Paramedics already had been requested to the scene because of Kemp’s condition.

Kemp proceeded to engage law enforcement in a “physical confrontation,” according to the press release, and it took four officers to restrain him and secure him to a medical gurney to treat his injuries. Officers also tased Kemp, but he was not affected.

Officers were exposed to blood-borne pathogens but were not injured, the press release said.

Upon further investigation, police said they believe that Kemp’s psychosis most likely was caused by the herbal drug kratom.

Kratom, which is part of the coffee family, is derived from

the leaves of a tree native to Southeast Asia. It is legal and, for the most part, unregulated and untracked in Oregon and nationally.

When kratom is introduced into the body in large amounts, it can have a sedative effect, similar to that of an opiate. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration warns that people who use kratom run the risk of dependency and, in some cases, addiction.

Some people, however, use the drug in small amounts as a remedy for chronic pain, depression and anxiety and as a curb for opioid addiction — though it is not medically prescribed. Some veterans have also said it helps control symptoms of post-traumatic stress, according to the New York Times.

Information and data on the positive and negative effects of kratom are limited, and because of this, health officials have voiced concerns it is

largely unregulated.

Other reported kratom side effects include seizures and hallucinations. Past government reviews have linked kratom to more than 100 overdose deaths.

In 2017, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported kratom was the cause of 91 of 27,000 overdose deaths the agency examined during an 18-month period.

The substance is banned in six states — Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin — and also in the District of Columbia.

“Individuals under the influence of kratom can be unpredictable and dangerous, as witnessed by this incident,” the press release stated. “Several businesses in the Pendleton area currently sell kratom.”

Kratom is found most commonly in smoke shops, dispensaries and even in some gas stations.