

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Thursday, Jan. 28, the 28th day of 2021. There are 337 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT IN HISTORY:

On Jan. 28, 1986, the space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after liftoff from Cape Canaveral, killing all seven crew members, including schoolteacher Christa McAuliffe.

ON THIS DATE:

In 1547, England's King Henry VIII died; he was succeeded by his 9-year-old son, Edward VI.

In 1911, the notorious Hope Diamond was sold by jeweler Pierre Cartier to socialites Edward and Evalyn McLean of Washington, D.C., for \$180,000.

In 1915, the American merchant vessel SS William P. Frye, en route to England with a cargo of wheat, became the first U.S. ship to be sunk during World War I by a German cruiser, the SS Prinz Eitel Friedrich, even though the United States was not at war.

In 1939, Irish poet-dramatist William Butler Yeats died in Menton, France.

In 1956, Elvis Presley made his first national TV appearance on "Stage Show," a CBS program hosted by Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey.

In 1973, a cease-fire officially went into effect in the Vietnam War, a day after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords by the United States, North Vietnam and South Vietnam.

In 1977, actor-comedian Freddie Prinze, 22, shot and mortally wounded himself at the Beverly Comstock Hotel (he died the following day).

In 1985, the charity supergroup USA for Africa recorded the Michael Jackson-Lionel Richie song "We Are the World" in Los Angeles.

Ten years ago: Chaos engulfed Egypt as protesters seized the streets of Cairo, battling police, burning down the ruling party's headquarters and defying a military curfew. Five years ago: With Donald Trump absent because of a feud with Fox News, the other Republican presidential candidates strained to take advantage of a rare opportunity to step out of the front-runner's shadow during a debate in Des Moines, Iowa.

Lee’s Beans is now open to caffeinate Cove

By KALEB LAY
The Observer

COVE — The sleepy little town of Cove has been a bit less sleepy in the past couple of weeks.

Lee’s Beans, the walk-up and drive-thru coffee stand that opened at the Cove Steakhouse two Fridays past, has brought a caffeinated jolt to the town known for its Cherry Festival, and since then has seen fairly steady business.

“Everybody’s been really excited,” said owner Rob Hasse, who also owns the Steakhouse at Cove. “It’s great to still be able to do something for the community here.”

Hasse said he decided to open Lee’s Beans — named for his mother — in an effort to make up for lost business after the COVID-19 pandemic kept him from seating people inside his restaurant and winter weather made outdoor seating impractical. He noted that he hoped people would be excited to support a local business in its efforts to survive the pandemic.

The coffee shop takes



Kaleb Lay/The Observer

A customer stops for some caffeine Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2021, at the drive-up window of Lee’s Beans, a new coffee shop open behind the Steakhouse at Cove.

the form of a large trailer, which Hasse remodeled into a coffee stand. The transformation into Lee’s Beans required Hasse to install a drive-up window and water fixtures, and he traveled as far as Umatilla County to pick up specialty espresso equipment.

“It’s been pretty much

investment so far,” Hasse said, adding that it was too early to tell if the shop would be able to make up for his restaurant’s losses.

Hasse said that he would like to explore putting in a more permanent structure in the future if the stand proves successful, noting that he liked the idea of

using the trailer to cater for events around the county. He also said he would like to redecorate the black trailer with a more festive appearance, more in line with the colorful signage currently adorning and advertising the stand.

“The black is a little dreary,” Hasse said.

Union closer to getting a new city councilor

By DICK MASON
The Observer

UNION — The Union City Council is a step closer to filling its open position.

The council interviewed Heidi Denton and Dan Hall for the Position 6 vacancy during its work session on Monday, Jan. 25. Denton and Hall applied for the position after incumbent Brian McDowell announced he was stepping down.

Denton is a La Grande business owner and a dental hygienist. Hall is a real estate broker in training.

The city council is set to vote on whether to appoint Denton or Hall when it meets Feb. 8 for its regularly monthly meeting. The

council could not vote on an appointment on Jan. 25 because it is not allowed to take action at work sessions.

McDowell stepped down from Position 6 at the end of December. He cited the demands of his job with Business Oregon, the state’s economic development agency, as his reason for resigning.

The person appointed to fill his position will serve as a councilor for the final 23 months of the seat’s unexpired term.

The addition of a new councilor will give the Union City Council its full complement of members — six councilors plus its mayor.

Police: Baker City man made bomb threat

By CHRIS COLLINS
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — A Baker City man who apparently regretted the story he told police that landed his fiancée in jail Friday, Jan. 22, on a domestic violence charge later called 911 allegedly threatening to blow up a building if he also wasn’t arrested.

Baker City Police Chief Ray Duman said the incident started when officers responded to the couple’s home on a report of a disturbance and arrested Kellie Marrae Neary, 50, for fourth-degree assault constituting domestic violence. Police booked Neary into the Baker County Jail, which released her on bail.

Duman said about 2-1/2 hours after the arrest, David Allen Lyle, 49, called dispatch making threats.

“He said he was going to build a bomb and blow up a building if he was not arrested,” Duman said.

Lyle said he should be arrested because he had lied to police when they arrested Neary on the domestic violence charge, Duman said.

Because of the seriousness of Lyle’s threats, police took him to the jail and held him on suspicion of first-degree disorderly conduct and harassment. Under Oregon law, those charges apply when someone “initiated or circulated a report, concerning an alleged or

Lee’s Beans opened after the city of Cove granted Hasse a nine-month permit to operate the coffee stand earlier this month.

Tiara Howard, who Hasse hired on to run Lee’s Beans, said that she’s been interested in opening a coffee shop in Cove for some time.

“The only other place in town to get coffee is the gas station,” Howard said. “And they can’t do things like espresso.... It’s just gas station coffee.”

“Tiara makes a mean cup of joe,” Hasse said.

Lee’s Beans also will offer baked goods alongside Cove’s morning cup of Joe. Hasse, who said he’s an experienced baker, said the shop would be serving his signature “bananza bread,” homemade donuts and anything else his customers wanted.

“If they want to buy it, I want to sell it,” Hasse said with a grin.

Lee’s Beans can be found at the back of the Steakhouse at Cove at 505 S. Main from 6 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on weekdays and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on weekends.

Rep. Bentz appointed to House Natural Resources Committee

The Observer

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Oregon U.S. Rep Cliff Bentz now is serving on the House Natural Resources Committee.

Bentz in a press release said he was honored to receive the appointment to a committee well-suited to Oregon’s vast 2nd Congressional District.

“Membership on this committee, combined with my previous experience as a water rights attorney, rancher, member of the Oregon Water Resource Commission, and member of Oregon state Legislature, will help me advocate for improved management and more balanced use of our federal lands, forests, and water,” Bentz stated.

The freshman representative also affirmed he would continue to focus on the communities hardest hit by natural disasters, especially those in southern Oregon struggling to rebuild after devastating wildfires.

The House Natural Resources Committee oversees a number of important matters, including federal lands, wildlife, water, energy and mineral resources, oversight and investigations, and affairs with indigenous peoples. Bentz added that given the recent exposure of the nation’s dangerous supply chain dependence on countries such as China, the committee can protect and preserve U.S. access to rare-earth minerals on federal lands.

According to the press release, the committee’s ranking member, Republic Rep. Bruce Westerman of Arkansas, cheered the appointment.

“Oregon has an incredibly diverse array of public lands and resources,” Westerman said, “and I know Congressman Bentz will bring that important perspective and background to the Natural Resources Committee.”



Bentz

Umatilla National Forest selects new deputy forest supervisor

East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The Umatilla National Forest soon will have a new deputy forest supervisor.

Heidi McRoberts will step into the new role, according to a press release, effective March 14. McRoberts serves as a fish biologist on the Nez-Perce Clearwater National Forest.

“The Umatilla is fortunate to have such a highly qualified individual who is so familiar with our communities and landscape join the Forest in this leadership role,” said Umatilla National Forest Supervisor Eric Watrud. “Her skills and background are an outstanding complement to the priority work the Forest has underway and the interests of the communities and partners that we serve.”

McRoberts brings a variety of experience to the Umatilla National Forest, including a strong natural resources background and experience working with a variety of Tribal governments, County Commissioners, partners, public stakeholders, and several National Forests.

Since 2019, McRoberts has worked as a fish biologist on the Forest Plan Revision team for the Nez-Perce Clearwater National Forest, helping to develop and write the plan. This position also requires her to coordinate with other federal agencies and a variety of external stakeholders to understand differing interests and develop the plan components to meet multiple use needs.

Prior to this position, McRoberts spent 22 years working for the Nez Perce

Tribe, including 10 years as deputy director for the Department of Fisheries Resource Management/Watershed Division. During her time with the Nez Perce Tribe, McRoberts was responsible for leading a large and geographically dispersed department, managing a complex budget, and working with a variety of federal agencies, including 13 National Forests, Tribes, state and local government and private interest groups. She said the position provided extensive experience in collaboration and partnership development, and a thorough understanding of forest management.

McRoberts has a masters in fisheries resources from the University of Idaho and is working toward a doctorate in natural resources and society from the University of Idaho.

Umatilla County sponsors Spanish-speaking radio show about COVID-19

Host says show has 15,000 followers across Umatilla, Morrow and Union counties

By BRYCE DOLE
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Early in the pandemic, Jose Garcia said most of the stories told about COVID-19 on Radio La Ley’s “La Voz Del Pueblo” (The Voice of the People) were of fear and misconception.

Slowly, more residents tuned in each Sunday, sharing stories of COVID-19 on a weekly hourlong section of the radio show called “Acción Rural Hispana,” which Garcia hosts. It became clear to Garcia how the show would be a valuable resource bringing answers to the Spanish and Mam dialect-speaking commu-

nity — how to stay safe, what common symptoms of COVID-19 are and where to get help.

“We were trying to figure out how this was going to affect the Latino community,” Garcia, chair of the Hispanic Advisory Committee in Hermiston, said. “But we didn’t know to what extent it would.”

The Umatilla County Public Health Department allocated new funding to sponsor the radio show, which broadcasts out of Kennewick, Washington, and was launched in April 2020 by Oregon Rural Action, a grassroots organization that aims to promote social justice, diversity and



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Jose Garcia, left, and Rafael Romero host Radio La Ley’s “La Voz Del Pueblo” on Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021, from a studio in Kennewick, Washington.

the environment in rural Oregon communities.

“We’re told it’s become very popular,” said Joe Fiumara, the county’s public

health director. “We thought it was a good way to keep an opening to the (Hispanic) population, which is hard for us to reach.”

The funds will help pay for advertisements and the show itself, and will help it run for another year. Fiumara said county health officials will work with the show to provide written responses to listeners’ questions about the virus.

Garcia estimated the show has a regular following of around 15,000 people that spans across Umatilla, Morrow and Union counties, as well as the Tri-Cities in Washington.

Local Hispanic and Latino listeners have called in with many stories, Garcia said. Entire crews of farmworkers falling ill. Family and friends who refrained from telling employers they tested positive because, living paycheck to paycheck, they must work and

support their family.

One story Garcia said he has heard from perhaps 10 families on the show. Their loved one tested positive for COVID-19 at a local hospital, but was later sent home — partly because the hospital was at, or nearing, capacity. With little help and care, their symptoms worsened, prompting their families to bring their sick loved one back to the hospital where, weeks later, they died.

“Most of our stories right now are from people who had somebody that they lost to COVID-19,” he said.

In Oregon, Hispanic people account for 13% of the state’s population but have reported 36% of its total cases, according to the Oregon Health Authority as of Thursday, Jan. 21.