

## TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Saturday, Jan. 30, the 30th day of 2021. There are 335 days left in the year.

### TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT IN HISTORY:

On Jan. 30, 1948, Indian political and spiritual leader Mohandas K. Gandhi, 78, was shot and killed in New Delhi by Nathuram Godse a Hindu extremist. (Godse and a co-conspirator were later executed.)

### ON THIS DATE:

In 1649, England's King Charles I was executed for high treason.

In 1862, the ironclad USS Monitor was launched from the Continental Iron Works in Greenpoint, New York, during the Civil War.

In 1933, Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany.

In 1945, during World War II, a Soviet submarine torpedoed the German ship MV Wilhelm Gustloff in the Baltic Sea with the loss of more than 9,000 lives, most of them war refugees; roughly 1,000 people survived.

In 1968, the Tet Offensive began during the Vietnam War as Communist forces launched surprise attacks against South Vietnamese towns and cities; although the Communists were beaten back, the offensive was seen as a major setback for the U.S. and its allies.

In 1974, President Richard Nixon pledged to rein in rising prices without the "harsh medicine of recession" and establish a national health care plan that every American could afford.

## CORRECTIONS

The business story on the Lee's Beans coffee stand in Cove in the Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021, edition of The Observer misspelled the name of the stand's manager, Teara Howard. The Observer regrets the error.

The business story on Back Achers building supply in the Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021, business section of The Observer contained errors. Owner Ben Deal's son Jack Deal's in-laws own Little Bear Drive-in in Walla Walla. Ben Deal had three sons and two daughters and all but one son helped in the store. Deal started his first business in Berkeley, California. The storefront downtown is 10,000 square feet, and Jack Deal is putting in a flea market in the semi-trailers at the main store.

## Low clouds and sunny highlights



Phil Wright/The Observer

Low clouds touch the tops of the peaks while the sun peeks through and reaches the lowlands north of La Grande the morning of Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021.

## Locals ride in virtual Inauguration Day parade

By KALEB LAY

The Observer

UNION COUNTY — In lieu of a traditional parade in Washington, D.C., for the Jan. 20 inauguration of President Joe Biden, people gathered in small groups across the nation to take part in a virtual "parade across America." In Oregon, members of the American Sidesaddle Association with deep Union County roots participated.

Julie Murphy, formerly of La Grande, was one of eight riders who donned costumes themed in Oregonian blue and gold, sham-pooed her steed and rode in honor of the nation on Jan. 20. Her mother, daughter and grandson joined the parade as well.

"With the election and everything, how the country is so divided and so split — some of us are Republican, some of us are Democrat, we ride together, we're great friends — when we were asked if we wanted to participate, we decided representing Oregon was absolutely awesome," Murphy said. "It was a great honor



Marie Rampton/American Sidesaddle Association

Three generations of Oregonians dress in blue and gold in honor of their home state. Delaney Kenney (from left), Barbara Baum and Julie Murphy took part in a virtual inaugural parade across America on Jan. 20, 2021, as Joe Biden became the 46th President of the United States. Murphy is Baum's mother and a longtime Union County resident.

to do that. All of us participated just because we love our country. We're proud of being from Oregon, and it was a thing to do where we could show other people that we can be united, and we hope other people will be as well."

The group's efforts even garnered a shoutout from Gov. Kate Brown, who

offered congratulations to the group on her Facebook page.

Murphy's mother, 89-year-old Barbara Baum, a longtime county resident and Union native, hefted the Oregon state flag alongside Old Glory as the group walked and rode in procession to honor the nation on Inauguration Day.

Baum's ties to Union County are as deep as her ties to horseback riding. Her father, Orville Roberts, rode broncs and a white horse named Stranger he'd trained to do tricks at the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show, and Baum's mother, Ina Deering, worked at the Union Hotel. After the two married, Roberts worked

and trained horses for local ranchers.

Barbara inherited a love of horses from her father and went on to become a princess in the EOLS rodeo court while attending Union High School. Her daughter Julie later attended La Grande High School, and the passion for working with horses has been passed down two generations further since.

Orville and Ina's great-great-grandson, Aidan, riding since the age of 3 and a member of the American Sidesaddle Association, also took part in the virtual inaugural parade of 2021 — an event his predecessors could likely never have imagined in their wildest dreams.

"We really enjoyed doing it, and it's not something we'll soon forget. It was very special and meant a lot to all of us," Murphy said.

In their pandemic-era participation in the inaugural parade across America, Murphy and her group sent a message of national unity and pride and honored a rich family history and tradition.

## PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT

### WEDNESDAY, JAN. 27

8:08 a.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1000 block of 13th Street on a report of possible fraud. An officer resolved the situation.

11:55 a.m. — A resident on the 67800 block of Craig Loop, Summerville, reported a hit-and-run to a fence. A Union County sheriff's deputy made contact and logged information.

2:33 p.m. — A caller on the 200 block of Terrace Avenue, La Grande, asked to speak to law enforcement about a possible restraining order violation and a welfare check. An officer will attempt to contact the other party.

3:46 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1600 block of Adams Avenue for a female creating a disturbance. She moved on.

6:28 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 400 block of Adams Avenue on a report of a male waving around a shovel. The person told

police he would go to the Union County Warming Station, 2008 Third St., Suite B, La Grande.

7:09 p.m. — A caller reported a man was yelling on the corner of Third Street and Adams Avenue, La Grande. Police arrived, and the man from the complaint about the shovel again said he would go to the warming station.

8:50 p.m. — Staff at the Union County Warming Station asked police to remove a person from the premises. Police responded and the person left for the night.

### THURSDAY, JAN. 28

2:46 a.m. — A caller reported a female screaming at O Avenue and Cherry Street, La Grande. Officers checked the area but did not find anyone.

10:13 a.m. — A caller on the 62200 block of Peacock Road, La Grande, reported an aggressive dog. The animal enforcement responded and counseled the owners.

11:50 a.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1100 block of 11th Street on a burglary call and took a report.

12:30 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 1900 block of U Avenue on a burglary call and took a report.

1:15 p.m. — A caller reported the theft of a trailer from the 10 block of Highway 82, Elgin. A Union County sheriff's deputy responded and took a report.

5:04 p.m. — La Grande police responded to the 2100 block of Adams Avenue on a report of a disturbance. Officers determined this was a landlord-tenant argument and provided options.

8:57 p.m. — The Union County Sheriff's Office responded to an Elgin address on a report of child abuse. A deputy took a report and contacted the Oregon Department of Human Services.

9:10 p.m. — La Grande police took a report of a sex crime and furnishing alcohol to minors.

## 158 units donated at LG blood drive

By DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Red Cross-operated La Grande Community Blood Drive is off to a promising start for 2021.

A two-day drive Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 26 and Jan. 27, collected 158 units of blood. This was two short of the drive's goal of 160 units — still the effort puts it on pace to get its highest total in at least 20 years, said Sheldon Strand, co-coordinator, with his wife, Linda, of the La Grande blood draw.

A total of 643 units of blood were donated to the La Grande Community Blood Drive in 2020.

Four more blood drives are scheduled in La Grande for 2021. If the most recent rate of donations continues through the year, the community effort will collect 790 units, well over last year's mark.

Sheldon Strand said the drive this week likely would have reached the goal of 160 if not for icy road conditions on Wednesday.

"That kept some people from coming," he said.

The blood the Red Cross collects at drives in La Grande is normally used to help people in the Pacific Northwest. However, if there is a major emergency, some blood from this region may be sent to another part

of the country, Linda Strand said. Most people participating in blood drives donate one unit, which is about a pint.

Three of the La Grande blood drives conducted in 2020 were one-day events and the final two went two days. All of the 2021 drives will run for two days because of the increased local interest in donating, Sheldon Strand said.

The next La Grande blood drive will be March 30-31 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1802 Gekeler Lane from noon to 6 p.m. March 30 and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. March 31. Sign up online at [redcross.org/blood](http://redcross.org/blood).

## Baker County risk level might stay extreme

By JAYSON JACOBY

Baker City Herald

BAKER COUNTY — Baker County might have met one of the two requirements to move down from extreme to high on the state's COVID-19 risk level starting Friday, Jan. 29.

But though the county's rate of new virus cases slowed substantially in recent days, its test positivity rate might keep the county in the extreme-risk category for two more weeks.

Baker County, with 16,800 residents, is in the "medium" group, those with a population between 15,000 and 30,000.

The risk level for medium-size counties is based on two statistics. Those are the number of new cases over a two-week period, and the test positivity rate during that period. If Baker County has either 60 or more new cases during the most recent measuring period — Jan. 10-23 — or a test positivity rate of 10% or higher, it will remain at extreme risk. That category includes the most stringent restrictions on businesses, including a ban on indoor dining at restaurants, and the closure of fitness centers and gyms, theaters and museums.

County Commissioner

Mark Bennett said Monday afternoon, Jan. 25, the state's preliminary figures for Baker County are 66 new cases and a positivity rate of 14.6%. Either would keep the county in the extreme category.

But Bennett said the county's tally for new cases is 54, including 15 between Jan. 16-24. That's the slowest rate of new cases in the county since October 2020. He said he suspects the discrepancy is due to state officials failing to deduct from the county's total any cases involving inmates at the Powder River Correctional Facility in Baker City.

## Wallowa County records 100th COVID-19 case

Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — Wallowa County has been one of the regions of the state least-hit by COVID-19, but late Tuesday, Jan. 26, Oregon Health Authority reported one more case of the coronavirus, which is the 100th

in the county since the start of the pandemic last year. Only three counties have had fewer cases, and one of those — Wheeler — is the only county with a county-wide infection lower than Wallowa's 1.4%. The county remains at three deaths.

The vaccine has continued to reach people, as now 325,473 doses have been administered statewide. In Wallowa County, 710 people have received the vaccine, with 32 of them having received both doses for full immunization.