



THE OBSERVER

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Good day to our valued subscriber Dennis Hohstadt of Imbler

Car shows, yard sale and brews

EO Beer Festival and Grassroots Festival return on Aug. 14

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

UNION COUNTY — Grande Ronde Valley residents will have a chance to do a summer fest double-dip in mid-August.

The coronavirus pandemic in 2020 led to the cancellation of La Grande's Eastern Oregon Beer Festival and Union's Grassroots Festival. This summer, the annual events are set to reemerge on the same day, Aug. 14.

Donna Beverage, Union County commissioner and director of the Grassroots Festival, said she believes the two Saturday events can complement each other.

"We are hoping to work together so that more people will be able to enjoy activities at both festivals that day," Beverage said.

Beverage noted people could be encouraged to attend morning activities at the Grassroots Festival, which starts at 7 a.m., and then go to the beer festival later in the day.

The festivals are scheduled to

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House GOP says it won't delay budget bills

By **GARY A. WARNER**
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon House Republicans said Tuesday, March 30, they will not use delaying tactics on budget bills when they come up for a vote.

House Minority Leader Christine Drahan, R-Canby, in a statement reported Republicans would drop their delaying strategy of requiring bills to be read in full when it came time to consider the budget legislation.

"Part of this commitment is to ensure we have a balanced budget prior to our constitutional deadline before adjourning this session," Drahan said.

Under the Oregon Constitution, the Oregon Legislature must adjourn no later than June 28. Budget bills are often among the

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Dick Mason/The Observer

Tanner Hibbert, of Challis Concrete Construction of La Grande, works in Imbler on Tuesday, March 30, 2021, on a curb ramp project. Hibbert is helping install new curb ramps as a part of an Oregon Department of Transportation project.

Improving curb courtesy

ODOT curb ramp project eases access for people with mobility issues

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

UNION COUNTY — People with mobility issues soon will have a much easier time getting to and from sidewalks in Imbler, Elgin, Island City and La Grande.

The Oregon Department of Transportation this spring and summer is installing 238 new curb ramps in the Union County communities as part of a statewide project. The Union County work, which will cost \$5.1 million, started in March in Imbler where 52 new curb ramps, almost all replacing old ones, are going in on Highway 82 through downtown.

The small new ramps are designed to make it easier for people using wheelchairs to pass between the sidewalk and the road. Via the ODOT project, many ramps that are at least 20 years old are being replaced with ones that have more gradual grades. Also, the ramps are bright yellow, making them easier to see.

This work is part of an ODOT effort to boost accessibility throughout the state.

"We are committed to this goal," said ODOT spokesperson Tom Strandberg.

ODOT will install thousands of ramps across Oregon. The state transportation agency installed some of the first in

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Dick Mason/The Observer

Tanner Hibbert of Challis Concrete Construction helps with an installation of new curb ramps on Tuesday, March 30, 2021, in Imbler. The Oregon Department of Transportation is installing 238 of the ramps in Union County over the next seven months to improve access for people with mobility issues.

LOCATIONS FOR NEW CURB RAMPS

- **La Grande:** Highway 30 from 20th Street to McAlister Road and on Highway 82 at its intersection with 26th Street.
- **Cove:** Highway 237 from Foster Street to Church Street.
- **Imbler:** Highway 82 from Hull Lane to Brooks Road.
- **Island City:** Highway 82 from Walton Road to West Railroad Avenue.
- **Elgin:** Highway 82 from Hemlock Street to North Third Avenue and on Highway 204 from North 10th Avenue to North 17th Avenue.

Wallowa School District puts \$2.3 million seismic grant to work

By **ELLEN MORRIS BISHOP**
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — Wallowa may look like a placid little town, but there's a monster lurking underground just a few miles to the southeast. The Wallowa School District is outfitting its Cougar Dome to ensure safety for students and a safe haven for the community should the monster ever strike.

The "monster" is the nearly 40-mile-long Wallowa fault and related faults that define the Los-

tine and other river valleys, as well as other parts of the Blue Mountains. Historic seismic activity in Wallowa County has produced only magnitude 5 and smaller quakes, and many have been centered around Joseph.

In January, two magnitude 2 quakes occurred six to seven miles from of Lostine. Locals felt the tremblers. Although no fault scarps younger than 17,000 years have been found, some geologists, notably U.S. Geological Survey's Gary Mann, con-

sider the Wallowa fault, which has been active for about 12 million years, to be capable of a magnitude 7 quake.

The Wallowa School District is addressing this potential threat with the \$2.29 million Seismic Rehabilitation Grant it received in May 2020.

State bonds fund the grants, and Business Oregon, the state's economic development agency, administers the program.

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APRIL FOOLS' DAY CONTEST

In the spirit of April Fools' Day, The Observer has an April Fools' gag of its own inside the paper. Find that content, which contains numerous popular culture references, and send us an email or a message on Facebook with the name of the article and a list of the references. The person who lists the most correct responses wins a \$20 gift certificate to the local restaurant of their choice. In the event more than one person gets them all, whoever submitted the complete list first is the winner. Entries are due by Thursday, April 8, at noon.

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WEATHER

Full forecast on the back of B section

	Tonight		Friday
	39 LOW		68/40
	Mainly clear		Increasing clouds

CONTACT US

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La Grande, Oregon

Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com.
More contact info on Page 4A.



SATURDAY SHELTER SOUP SUPPER

Online at lagrandeobserver.com