

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Saturday, April 24, the 114th day of 2021. There are 251 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT IN HISTORY:

On April 24, 1980, the United States launched an unsuccessful attempt to free American hostages in Iran, a mission that resulted in the deaths of eight U.S. servicemen.

ON THIS DATE:

In 1877, federal troops were ordered out of New Orleans, ending the North's post-Civil War rule in the South.

In 1960, rioting erupted in Biloxi, Miss., after Black protesters staging a "wade-in" at a whites-only beach were attacked by a crowd of hostile whites.

In 1962, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology achieved the first satellite relay of a television signal, between Camp Parks, California, and Westford, Massachusetts.

In 1967, Soviet cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov was killed when his Soyuz 1 spacecraft smashed into the Earth after his parachutes failed to deploy properly during re-entry; he was the first human spaceflight fatality.

In 1974, comedian Bud Abbott, 78, died in Woodland Hills, Calif.

In 2005, Pope Benedict XVI formally began his stewardship of the Roman Catholic Church; the former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger said in his installation homily that as pontiff he would listen to the will of God in governing.

In 2009, Mexico shut down schools, museums, libraries and state-run theaters across its overcrowded capital in hopes of containing a swine flu outbreak.

In 2013, in Bangladesh, an eight-story commercial building housing garment factories collapsed, killing more than 1,100 people.

CJD court earns long-awaited honors

By ELLEN MORRIS BISHOP
For the Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — After a year marked by the cancellation of Chief Joseph Days in 2020 due to COVID-19, Chief Joseph Days officially awarded a triple crown of equal honors to its Honor Court for the 75th Anniversary Chief Joseph Days.

The coronation took place Saturday, April 17, in the CJD Thunder Room.

Casidee Harrod, Brianna Micka and Destiny Weeks will share the role of queen and all other associated duties equally. The three made up the 2020 court, but were never officially crowned. Instead, they agreed to serve as a co-equal honor court, staying on as a court for the 2021 Chief Joseph Days.

They are looking forward to reigning over the rodeo and other festivities July 27 to Aug. 1 in Joseph.

"It's been really nice," Harrod said. "It's been a lot more relaxed, and a lot less stress. It's fun."

"We're really happy to do this," Micka said. "It's worked out really well, and we've formed some really deep friendships."

"In normal years," Weeks said, "we'd have just finished the riding competition. We'd be stressing about, 'Did I ride hard enough? Did I speak well enough?' But today, we just got together and we were laughing and listening to music. It's been fun. We have some great memories."

While COVID-19 has reduced the number of rodeos across Oregon and the nation for 2021, the



Ellen Morris Bishop/For the Wallowa County Chieftain

The members of the 75th Anniversary Chief Joseph Days Honor Court pose for a portrait following their coronation Saturday, April 17, 2021. From left are Destiny Weeks, Brianna Micka and Casidee Harrod.

court will still represent Chief Joseph Days in a number of events, including upcoming rodeos in Asotin, Washington, April 23-25, and Riggs, Idaho, May 1-2.

"We're going to try to go to as many rodeos as possible," Weeks said.

"We're really happy to do this. It's worked out really well, and we've formed some really deep friendships."

— **Brianna Micka**, member of the Chief Joseph Days Honor Court

At the coronation ceremony, 2019 CJD Queen Rylee Wilcox joked that she had been the lon-

gest reigning queen in CJD history. Because the 2020 CJD Rodeo was canceled, and there was no 2020 coronation, Wilcox's official title as CJD queen technically remained

intact until she bestowed three equal crowns to Harrod, Micka and Weeks on Saturday night.

"This is only the second honor court in the history of Chief Joseph Days," CJD Board President Terry Jones said. "All three wanted to come back. They didn't want to have the competition, and they all made sacrifices to be here, especially the seniors, Brianna and Casidee. But next year we'll go back to a more normal process for the court."

Lost Prairie-area silversmith Larry Bacon was named the grand marshal of the Chief Joseph Days celebration. Bacon grew up on the family homestead at the far north end of Wallowa County, attending a one-room schoolhouse for elementary grades. He crafted his first pair of spurs at age 13. Although he also crafts bits, buckles and jewelry, he's best known for making the spurs awarded to the all-around CJD champion for the past 30 years.

Jones recognized retiring board members, including Jeff West, Diane Witherrite, 25-year member Doris Noland and 30-year member Shelley Marshall, and welcomed new board members Teah Jones, Jessie Cunningham and Sara Freels-Tippett.

"Back in this winter, the board decided we had two choices," Terry Jones told the coronation gathering. "We could either cancel this rodeo for another year, or we could go ahead and take our chances and have Chief Joseph Days in 2021. And that's what we decided. We're full-steam ahead."

BRIEFS

Crash kills one in Wallowa County

WALLOWA COUNTY — Oregon State Police reported one person died Wednesday, April 21, in a crash in Wallowa County.

Troopers and emergency personnel at 3:59 p.m. responded to a single-vehicle crash on Highway 82 near milepost 48, according to OSP. Preliminary investigation revealed Thomas Stumpf, 74, of Netarts, was driving a Ford pickup eastbound when it left the road and rolled. Stumpf died at the scene.

The Wallowa County Sheriff's Office, Wallowa County Department of Emergency Services and the Oregon Department of Transportation assisted at the scene.

LHS blood drive nets 38 units

LA GRANDE — Another chapter was added to a lifesaving La Grande High School tradition Thursday, April 22.

An American Red Cross blood drive was conducted at La Grande High School and collected 38 units.

The total is consistent with what the school has drawn at blood drives for at least the past nine years, during which two blood drives have been conducted annually, said LHS science teacher Pat Des Jardin.

"The main focus of the blood drive is to provide LHS students with a chance to donate. The hope is that they have a good experience with us so they will continue to donate as long as they can in the future because the need for blood is constant," Des Jardin said.

LHS teachers and staff make time to donate during hectic work days, Des Jardin said.

"This often means that they are finishing their donation, and then rushing off to class to teach or work with students," Des Jardin said.

The student leader of the blood drive was Lauran Rinker, a member of La Grande High's National Honor Society chapter, whose members chair the blood drive. Rinker led both of LHS's blood drives this school year.

— *The Observer*

New Greenwood principal awaits school board OK

Dawn Guentert to succeed Ryan Westenskow

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — Greenwood Elementary School's future is coming into sharper focus.

La Grande School District Superintendent George Mendoza announced Thursday, April 22, that Dawn Guentert, an educator in the Umatilla School District, is Greenwood's next principal.

Guentert, the principal of Clara Brownell Middle School in Umatilla, will succeed Ryan Westenskow as principal at Greenwood, pending school board approval, on July 1. Westenskow will step down at the end of June to become a school principal in the North Santiam School District.

Guentert is finishing her third year as principal at Clara Brownell Middle School and her 14th year in the Umatilla School District. She was an instructional coach for students in kindergarten through 12th grade for three years and a high school science teacher for eight years prior to becoming Clara Bownell's principal.

The educator was a middle and high school level science teacher in the Elgin School District prior to joining the Umatilla School District.

Guentert, a La Grande resident the past 30 years,

has a bachelor of science degree in biology and a master's degree in teaching from Eastern Oregon University.

Mendoza said Guentert believes the key to student achievement starts with creating a safe environment that is built on strong relationships and support.

"She believes that student achievement is a byproduct of those connections and she looks forward to building those strong relationships with our students, staff, and families. We look forward to having her as part of our school district," Mendoza said.

Westenskow, who has been at Greenwood for six years, will serve as the principal of Sublimity School in Marion County. Sublimity School serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Greenwood fifth-grade teacher Missy Rinker credited Westenskow with doing an outstanding job.

"He leads the school with compassion and puts the needs of kids first," Rinker said.

Megan Sherer, another fifth-grade teacher at Greenwood, also has words of praise.

"He is the best principal I have worked for," said Sherer, who has taught for about half a dozen principals during her career.

Mendoza said Westenskow has drawn on excellent people and leadership skills to do an outstanding job of leading Greenwood.

Colorful greeter stands at Baker Heritage Museum

Bessie the Bovine welcomes all to Baker City

By LISA BRITTON
For the Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Friendship and a public art project are the reasons there's a colorful new bovine in front of the Baker Heritage Museum.

Molly Wilson, who serves on the Baker City Public Arts Commission, is heading a project to place cow sculptures around Baker City.

Her friends Cammy Warner and Diana Brown knew about the project. On a trip through Central Oregon last year, the trio discovered a large metal cow at an antique shop in Canyon City.

Wilson knew it was perfect.

All it took was a return trip with a horse trailer, and some hefting, and the blank canvas of a cow came to Baker City.

And there it sat for several months, until moving to the garage of Warner, who volunteered to put the artistic touch on the creature.

"I knew what I wanted to do. I'd do a little here, a little there," she said.

Her husband Fred helped too. He handled the details while she focused on the abstract art aspect.

She used spray paint to decorate the hide in blocks of color.



Lisa Britton/Baker City Herald

Bessie the Bovine, a colorful piece of public art, took up residence in mid-April 2021 in front of the Baker Heritage Museum at 2480 Grove St., Baker City.

"He helped and we got it done," she said. "It was fun."

The arts commission wanted the cow placed on Campbell Street.

Warner serves on the Baker County Museum Commission, and the Baker Heritage Museum is at Campbell and Grove streets, just east of Geiser-Pollman Park. She talked to other commission members to see if the museum could host the cow.

The answer was yes. "I think it catches people's eyes and might draw them in," Warner said.

Bessie the Bovine was placed in front of the museum in mid-April.

Wilson wants to grow the herd around Baker City, but the project depends on more fundraising. She's also looking for a source of metal cow sculptures.

Anyone who would like to support the project can take a donation to Baker City Hall and specify it is for the arts commission's cow project.

For more information, contact Robin Nudd at city hall or email her at rnudd@bakercity.com.

Telephone pedestals go up in flames, interrupting phone service

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Three telephone service pedestals in the rural Enterprise area were burned in just seven days by landowners burning ditches along roadsides, temporarily disrupting service, said a spokesman with Ziplly Fiber, the company that owns the pedestals.

"This is an uncommon volume for such a short window of time," said Ryan Luckin, vice president of marketing and communications in an email Thursday, April 15.

The most recent pedestal destroyed was at Hurricane Creek Road and Dorrance Lane between Enterprise and Joseph. It was replaced Monday, April



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Ziplly Fiber worker Mark Ralph, left, watches as Danny Stubblefield operates a backhoe to dig out and replace a telephone service pedestal Monday, April 19, 2021, that was burned April 14 by a landowner burning his ditch at Hurricane Creek Road and Dorrance Lane south of Enterprise.

19, by a Ziplly crew from La Grande.

Luckin said telephone customers were quickly returned to service on

a temporary basis. He did not know if cellular towers were affected by the damage and twas unsure if cell service was disrupted.

He said it depends on the extent of the damage, but he estimated the cost to replace the pedestal would be between \$1,800 and \$2,000. He said often the responsible landowner is billed for the damage, but that's evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

"The most important thing is to restore service quickly and keep residents connected to critical means of communication," Luckin said.

The pedestal is one that provides telephone service to customers in rather remote areas, he said.

Paul Karvoski, emergency services manager for Wallowa County, is apprehensive over the coming

potential fire season.

"Get ready for summer," he told the Enterprise City Council in his dual capacity as city fire chief Monday, April 12.

He also told the council of numerous incidents of intentional burns getting out of control over the previous few days, including five from noon to 5 p.m. the previous Friday.

"Friday afternoon was very stressful," he told the council.

On Thursday, Karvoski said it appears landowners need to be more careful when conducting controlled burns.

"They're not doing their due diligence to keep it away from the telephone box," he said.