

TODAY

Today is Saturday, Aug. 21, the 233rd day of 2021. There are 132 days left in the year.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHT IN HISTORY

On August 21, 1991, the hard-line coup against Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev collapsed in the face of a popular uprising led by Russian Federation President Boris N. Yeltsin.

ON THIS DATE

In 1831, Nat Turner launched a violent slave rebellion in Virginia, resulting in the deaths of at least 55 whites; scores of Blacks were killed in retribution in the aftermath of the rebellion. (Turner was later captured and executed.)

In 1911, Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" was stolen from the Louvre Museum in Paris. (The painting was recovered two years later in Italy.)

In 1959, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed an executive order making Hawaii the 50th state.

In 1986, more than 1,700 people died when toxic gas erupted from a volcanic lake in the West African nation of Cameroon.

In 1992, an 11-day siege began at the cabin of white separatist Randy Weaver in Ruby Ridge, Idaho, as government agents tried to arrest Weaver for failing to appear in court on charges of selling two illegal sawed-off shotguns; on the first day of the siege, Weaver's teenage son, Samuel, and Deputy U.S. Marshal William Degan were killed.

In 1993, in a serious setback for NASA, engineers lost contact with the Mars Observer spacecraft as it was about to reach the red planet on a \$980 million mission.

In 2000, rescue efforts to reach the sunken Russian nuclear submarine Kursk ended with divers announcing none of the 118 sailors had survived.

In 2010, Iranian and Russian engineers began loading fuel into Iran's first nuclear power plant, which Moscow promised to safeguard to prevent material at the site from being used in any potential weapons production.

In 2013, an Army private now known as Chelsea Manning was sentenced at Fort Meade, Maryland, to up to 35 years in prison for spilling an unprecedented trove of government secrets. (The sentence for the former intelligence analyst was commuted by President Barack Obama in his final days in office.)

In 2014, Gov. Jay Nixon ordered the Missouri National Guard to begin withdrawing from Ferguson, where nightly scenes of unrest had erupted since a white police officer fatally shot a Black 18-year-old nearly two weeks earlier.

Ten years ago: Euphoric Libyan rebels raced into Tripoli and took control of the center with little resistance as Moammar Gadhafi's defenses collapsed and his four-decade regime appeared to be crumbling.

Five years ago: Shaking to samba and sharing reflections in uniquely Brazilian words, Olympians and fans said goodbye to the Rio Games with one last big bash inside Maracana Stadium. Earlier in the day, Kevin Durant scored 30 points and helped the Americans rout Serbia 96-66 for their third straight gold medal, capping an Olympics in which the U.S. dominated the medal tables, both the gold (46) and overall totals (121).

One year ago: Michigan's appeals court said Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's emergency declarations and orders to curb the coronavirus clearly fell within the scope of her legal powers. Police in Lafayette, Louisiana, shot and killed a Black man, Trayford Pellerin, outside a convenience store; they said he was carrying a knife and ignored commands to drop it.

LOTTERY

Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2021

Megabucks

2-4-7-9-29-44

Jackpot: \$2 million

Lucky Lines

2-6-11-16-20-23-25-31

Estimated jackpot: \$62,000

Powerball

35-36-51-55-61

Powerball: 26

Power Play: 2

Jackpot: \$290 million

Win for Life

23-27-47-67

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 6-2-6-6

4 p.m.: 9-1-7-1

7 p.m.: 0-1-5-6

10 p.m.: 8-3-2-6

Thursday, Aug. 19, 2021

Lucky Lines

4-7-12-13-18-22-26-31

Jackpot: \$63,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 9-8-5-7

4 p.m.: 3-4-2-4

7 p.m.: 2-8-0-2

10 p.m.: 9-6-6-1

UNION COUNTY

Sheriff: New building necessary

Union County green lights exploratory process for new public safety building

By DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — A new public safety building may be in the future for Union County.

Union County Sheriff Cody Bowen told the Union County Board of Commissioners Wednesday, Aug. 18, that he wanted to have his office put out a request for proposals to get a design firm to come in and develop a conceptual plan for a new public safety building. The commissioners, ultimately, gave Bowen the green light to proceed.

The sheriff's office will now begin an exploratory process for determining how a new public safety building could be built. Bowen will later report the findings to the commissioners.

If a new structure is built, it might replace Union County's current law enforcement building, which was built in 1979. The structure — which houses the Union County Sheriff's Office, the La Grande Police Department, the Union County Jail, the La Grande Police Department Dispatch Center, and the Union County Emergency Operations Center — is too small to accommodate all the services it provides, Bowen told



The Observer, File

The Union County Board of Commissioners voted on Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2021, to begin the process of designing and building a new county jail and public safety building.

commissioners.

"We are like a family of five in a one-bedroom apartment," he said.

The lack-of-space issue in the building also applies to its Union County Jail, which Bowen said is among the smallest in the state.

He said it would be impossible to add to the current law enforcement building because of the way it is designed and where it is located.

"There is no way to go down, up or out," he said.

The firm making a successful bid for the architectural project will be

responsible for developing a conceptual design for a public safety center that would house the Union County Sheriff's Office, the La Grande Police Department, the Union County Jail and Union County Parole and Probation, according to Bowen's proposed RFP.

Bowen told the commissioners he would also like the building to have a center where people experiencing mental health issues could be helped.

The firm chosen for the project would be required to get input from people with local criminal jus-

tice entities on their needs before creating architectural plans. The company would also be asked to make a cost estimate for the structure it creates a design for.

The deadline for "finalizing architectural plans" would be March 1, 2022.

The sheriff's office will issue its request for proposals in early September, and the deadline for submitting would be 4 p.m. Monday, Oct. 4.

"If we do not take the first step, we will not take any," Union County Commissioner Paul Anderes said.

911 dispatcher honored by commissioners

Brooke Langerman awarded Golden Feather of Achievement award

By BILL BRADSHAW

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — The coronavirus pandemic may be causing problems, but it also allows for stars to shine — in this case, a star of the Wallowa County 911 dispatch division.

On Wednesday, Aug. 18, dispatcher Brooke Langerman was awarded the second-ever Golden Feather of Achievement award by the Wallowa County Commissioners at their regular meeting.

"For the second time ever since I've been here, we're recognizing an employee for exemplary work," Commission Chairman Todd Nash said. "This goes to Brooke Langerman. She apparently got tricked into coming over here. We really appreciate the above and beyond and your willingness to hang in there and keep a vital part

of Wallowa County operating at the 911 station. You gave up family time in a time of trepidation where you could've said, 'It's just too dangerous and I'm not coming in.' But you kept that operation going and we really appreciate your service and we want to recognize that. There's a lot of extra people who came here today just to make sure you are recognized for your duties, so thank you very much."

This was met with applause from those present, which included Sheriff Joel Fish, several Enterprise police officers and other 911 dispatchers.

Langerman said after the presentation that four of the six 911 dispatchers had been out sick with coronavirus and it was just her and her supervisor keeping the operation going.

"We were working



Bill Bradshaw/Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa County 911 dispatcher Brooke Langerman, right, is congratulated by Commission Chairman Todd Nash for exemplary work on Wednesday, Aug. 18, 2021, as Commissioner Susan Roberts applauds and fellow dispatchers watch in the background.

12-hour shifts," Langerman said.

The working mom of three kids ages 3, 5 and 6, said the long shifts and shorthanded situation lasted about two weeks.

Nash turned the presentation of the award over to Commissioner Susan Roberts.

"Since it was decided that we have employees who went above and beyond, we decided we

needed to give those employees something special when they did something special," Roberts said. "So, the local glassblower made the Golden Feathers of Achievement for us. We do understand that the line on the flag for 911 operators is a gold line."

The first time such an award was presented was June 16 to Wallowa County Deputy Jennifer Harmon.

NEWS BRIEFS

Union County with 81 new cases of COVID-19 in two days

LA GRANDE — The Oregon Health Authority reported 64 more cases of COVID-19 in Union County on Thursday, Aug. 19, and 17 cases on Friday, Aug. 20, among more than 5,000 new cases reported in the state those two days. The county total is up to 2,103.

Neighboring Wallowa County, meanwhile, had its highest one-day total of the pandemic with 16 new cases Thursday and five Friday, and now is at 332.

The state passed 250,000 overall cases of COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, and now has 252,977. On both Aug. 19 and 20, there were 19 more COVID-related deaths reported by the OHA.

One of those deaths on Friday was of a 62-year-old Union County man who died on Aug. 17 at home. The man had tested positive seven days earlier, and had underlying conditions.

Union County's total vaccination rate is up to 40.8%, and the rate of those 18 and older is 50.4%. The Wallowa County rates are 50.4% and 60.3%, respectively.

Oregon averaged an all-time high of 2,020 cases a day over the past week.

Law enforcement responds to two pursuits in two days

LA GRANDE — A brief foot pursuit on Thursday, Aug. 19, ended with an arrest and the recovery of a stolen motorcycle, according to a press release from the La Grande Police Department.

The La Grande Police Department responded to a report of a stolen motorcycle around 1 p.m. on Aug. 19. Prior to confronting Albert Jared Horne, the department confirmed that the 23-year-old had a Union County arrest warrant for unlawful use of a weapon, assault in the fourth degree, reckless endangering of another person and menacing. The warrant was a result of a July domestic violence incident, the release said.

Upon finding Horne at a residence on the 3000 block of Union Street, Horne fled on foot toward the Grande Ronde River. Law enforcement chased Horne as he crossed the river and began running on Interstate 84. The chase caused traffic to stop in both directions as an Oregon State Police trooper apprehended Horne on the interstate, with assistance from the Union County Sheriff's Office.

Horne was arrested for his previous arrest warrant and faces additional charges of unauthorized use of

a motor vehicle, two counts of escape and disorderly conduct.

La Grande Police officers recovered a 2017 Honda motorcycle that was reported stolen in Baker City on Aug. 18.

The La Grande Police Department was assisted by the Union County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police and Oregon Department of Transportation, the release said.

Police said the investigation is ongoing and additional charges could be filed.

The Oregon State Police and Union County Sheriff's Office also were involved in a pursuit on Aug. 18.

The Union County Sheriff's Office assisted Oregon State Police in the arrest of Aubrey Scott Fryman between Baker and North Powder, according to police. Deputies arrested Fryman around 3 p.m., with assistance from four Oregon State Police officers. Fryman was arrested for attempting to elude by vehicle and on foot, reckless driving, reckless endangering, driving while suspended and resisting arrest, police said.

Law enforcement made the arrest on Pocahontas Road in Baker County. Four Union County Sheriff's deputies were involved in the chase and arrest.

— The Observer

County OKs new smart texting system

By BILL BRADSHAW

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — A presentation on a new smart texting system was made to the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners on Wednesday, Aug. 18, after which the board agreed to purchase and install the system.

Attending the meeting via Zoom, Russell Murphy, of TextMyGov, demonstrated to the commissioners how the system would work both for the county and for county residents.

According to the company's website, TextMyGov is a software company out of Logan, Utah, that uses smart texting technology to communicate with citizens 24/7. Local government agencies can answer questions, send links to their website and provide details on garbage pickup, utility payment, city news, events, office hours, department locations and more.

Murphy has been working with Stacey Fregulia, the county's information technology director and the commissioners' executive assistant on the system.

Murphy said he's also been working with other Oregon counties and local governments in other states. In addition to contact between the county and residents, the administrators can allow other select groups to be involved.

"We work with all kinds of populations and demographics," he said.

The three main functions of the system are to allow texting to:

- Report issues, such as those concerning public safety.
- Find information on a variety of topics.
- Request permits issued by the county.

"We wanted to make it simple, so it's simple for the citizens to get in," Murphy said.

Search parameters use keywords such as "fire," "fair" or "events" and can include additional ones as county administrators determine the necessity.

"I like it," Commission Chairman Todd Nash said. "It seems like a product that is really user friendly."

Commissioner John Hillock had his thoughts on possible uses for the system.

"The Road Department could use it if they had a road delay, fire emergencies, there are a lot of things that we could definitely use it for," he said.

Commissioner Susan Roberts said a certain level of responsibility is needed by those using it.

"A citizen has to sign in, that's an important thing," she said.

Fregulia, in her role as IT director, gave her thumbs-up to the system.

"It's very user friendly," she said. "It's very non-complicated for department heads."

Roberts said the system will cost the county \$2,500 a year with a \$1,000 setup fee. It starts with an initial two-year contract and after that each year is a separate contract.

The cost of the system pays for 50,000 texts and additional texts can be purchased.

"We have to be careful of that limited number of texts," Roberts said. "Everybody and their dog is going to be texting."

The commissioners agreed it will take some monitoring to control the number of texts used in the system.