

TODAY IN HISTORY

On Sept. 14, 1814, Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the poem “Defence of Fort McHenry” (later “The Star-Spangled Banner”) after witnessing the American flag flying over the Maryland fort following a night of British naval bombardment during the War of 1812.

In 1812, Napoleon Bonaparte’s troops entered Moscow following the Battle of Borodino to find the Russian city largely abandoned and parts set ablaze.

In 1836, former Vice President Aaron Burr died in Staten Island, N.Y., at age 80.

In 1847, during the Mexican-American War, U.S. forces under Gen. Winfield Scott took control of Mexico City.

In 1861, the first naval engagement of the Civil War took place as the USS Colorado attacked and sank the Confederate private schooner Judah off Pensacola, Florida.

In 1901, President William McKinley died in Buffalo, New York, of gunshot wounds inflicted by an assassin; Vice President Theodore Roosevelt succeeded him.

In 1927, modern dance pioneer Isadora Duncan died in Nice, France, when her scarf became entangled in a wheel of the sports car she was riding in.

In 1982, Princess Grace of Monaco, formerly film star Grace Kelly, died at age 52 of injuries from a car crash the day before; Lebanon’s president-elect, Bashir Gemayel, was killed by a bomb.

In 1994, on the 34th day of a strike by players, Acting Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig announced the 1994 season was over.

In 2001, Americans packed churches and clogged public squares on a day of remembrance for the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks. President George W. Bush prayed with his Cabinet and attended services at Washington National Cathedral, then flew to New York, where he waded into the ruins of the World Trade Center and addressed rescue workers in a flag-waving, bullhorn-wielding show of resolve.

In 2010, Reggie Bush announced he was forfeiting his 2005 Heisman title, citing a scandal over improper benefits while he was a star running back at Southern California; it was the first time college football’s top award had been relinquished by a recipient.

In 2012, fury over an anti-Muslim film ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad spread across the Muslim world, with deadly clashes near Western embassies in Tunisia and Sudan, an American fast-food restaurant set ablaze in Lebanon, and international peacekeepers attacked in the Sinai.

In 2015, Rowan County, Kentucky, clerk Kim Davis returned to work for the first time since she was jailed for defying a federal court and announced that she would no longer block her deputies from issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples.

**Today’s Birthdays:** Actor Walter Koenig (KAY’-nihg) is 85. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Larry Brown is 81. Singer-actor Joey Heatherton is 77. Actor Sam Neill is 74. Singer Jon “Bowzer” Bauman (Sha Na Na) is 74. Actor Robert Wisdom is 68. Rock musician Steve Berlin (Los Lobos) is 66. Country singer-songwriter Beth Nielsen Chapman is 65. Actor Mary Crosby is 62. Singer Morten Harket (a-ha) is 62. Country singer John Berry is 62.

LOTTERY

**Friday, Sept. 10, 2021**  
**Megamillions**  
20-32-35-47-64  
Megaball: 18  
Megaplier: 2  
Jackpot: \$383 million  
**Lucky Lines**  
3-6-11-16-17-22-26-30  
Jackpot: \$16,000  
**Pick 4**  
1 p.m.: 9-1-7-6  
4 p.m.: 6-6-1-1  
7 p.m.: 1-4-3-7  
10 p.m.: 1-8-8-7  
**Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021**  
**Powerball**  
20-31-38-40-49  
Powerball: 21  
Power Play: 2  
Jackpot: \$416 million  
**Megabucks**  
1-6-16-31-36-47  
Jackpot: \$3 million  
**Lucky Lines**  
2-7-9-14-20-22-25-29  
Jackpot: \$17,000  
**Pick 4**  
1 p.m.: 5-6-6-4  
4 p.m.: 0-1-0-7  
7 p.m.: 6-1-7-3  
10 p.m.: 0-3-1-1  
**Win for Life**  
7-10-17-42  
**Sunday, Sept. 12, 2021**  
**Lucky Lines**  
3-7-11-16-17-23-27-31  
Estimated jackpot: \$18,000  
**Pick 4**  
1 p.m.: 9-9-6-6  
4 p.m.: 1-2-2-0  
7 p.m.: 9-4-4-5  
10 p.m.: 0-2-2-4

Local business honors first responders



Davis Carbaugh/The Observer

Staff at Tap That Growlers stand ready to help first responders choose their free meal during the second annual First Responders lunch on Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021, hosted by the brew pub and Conklin Insurance Agency.

Local La Grande businesses offer free lunch to first responders on 20th anniversary of terrorist attacks

By DAVIS CARBAUGH  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — On a day that is difficult for first responders across the country, two local businesses gave back to those that risk their lives.

On the 20th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Conklin Insurance Agency bought lunch for local firefighters, law enforcement and first responders at Tap That Growlers on Adams Avenue.

“They never get thanked for anything, the fire department, police officers and first responders,” said Nate Conklin, of Conklin Insurance Agency. “Especially on 9/11, they were the ones that did everything and this is just a way for us to say thanks.”

The lunch event filled most of the tables at Tap That Growlers, as first responders and their fam-

ilies enjoyed some leisure and camaraderie. Devin Cornford, a retired firefighter who is one of the owners of Tap That Growlers, holds first responders close to the heart.

“I still remember walking into work that day and watching the towers come down. It was terrible,” he said.

Cornford was pleased with the solid turnout and hoped that everyone enjoyed themselves. He gave credit to Conklin for buying the meals and expects to continue holding the event on Sept. 11 in years to come.

“We love partnering with him on it and it’s a great thing, just giving back a bit,” he said.

The event took place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and included red, white and blue decorations. Conklin said that the entire goal is to show appreciation for



Davis Carbaugh/The Observer

An American flag hangs next to the beer taps at Tap That Growlers on Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021. Conklin Insurance Agency and Tap That Growlers collaborated to host a first responders lunch.

first responders, especially on a day that means so much.

“These guys don’t have a holiday and don’t

always get the credit they deserve. It’s a really thankless job,” he said. “It’s just a way for us to say thank you.”

The Observer earns 11 awards from ONPA

La Grande newspaper takes third in general excellence category

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Observer was recognized with 11 awards in the Oregon Newspapers Publishers Association’s annual Better Newspapers Contest, including third place for overall general excellence in its category.

The Observer finished behind The Astorian, an EO Media Group sister newspaper, and the Gresham Outlook for the top award in its category.

Karrine Brogoitti, the publisher of The Observer, said being recognized with other papers for the top award is “quite an achievement.”

“The newsroom works tirelessly

to bring Union County accurate and timely information,” she said. “The Oregon Newspapers Publishers Association allows our reporters the opportunity to compete for the top awards in the state. They’ve done phenomenal work over the last 12 months. I couldn’t be more proud of our institution.”

The awards, which were for the 2020 calendar year, were released during a virtual announcement on Friday, Sept. 10. The contest was judged by the Arizona Newspaper Association.

Former editor Phil Wright earned a first-place award for best general feature for the April 21, 2020, story “Team digs into local mystery.” Wright, along with former reporter Sabrina Thompson, earned a third place for best enterprise reporting. Wright also earned a second place for best editorial.

Reporter Dick Mason earned a pair of second-place awards for best general feature story and best personality feature story.

Former reporter Kaleb Lay earned a second place for best coverage of a business or economic issue. Former sports editor Ronald Bond was awarded a second-place nod for best sports story.

Staff awards included a first place for best graphic, second place for best special section and second place for best page one design.

The Observer is owned by EO Media Group, an Oregon-based family-run business. A total of 100 awards were given to EO Media Group papers. In addition to general excellence awards for The Observer and The Astorian, also earning general excellence honors were the Bend Bulletin (first), Capital Press (second) and East Oregonian (third).

Pickup fire in La Grande reveals man dead in cab

The Observer



La Grande Police Department/Contributed Photo

Investigators examine a truck that caught fire in the early morning on Saturday, Sept. 11, 2021. The fire was caused by the operation of a propane torch within the cab, killing the occupant, Thomas Wayne Johnson, 67, of La Grande.

1990 Chevrolet pickup was on fire and the fire was quickly extinguished.

Firefighters and police

then found a dead man inside the pickup’s cab. Police secured the scene and turned it over to detectives

for further investigation.

A second press release revealed that the deceased male was Thomas Wayne Johnson, 67, of La Grande. The investigation showed that the death was accidental and resulted from Johnson operating a propane torch in the closed cab. Johnson’s next of kin was made aware of the investigation and the agencies involved expressed their condolences to the family.

The La Grande Fire Department, Oregon State Police, Union County Sheriff’s Office, Office of the State Fire Marshal and the Union County District Attorney’s Office are assisting the city police department.

Union County records 70 new cases of COVID-19

The Observer

SALEM — Union County recorded 70 new cases of COVID-19 over the weekend, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

The total was part of 4,700 new cases reported around the state from Friday, Sept. 10, to Sunday, Sept. 12.

Oregon reported 2,142 confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases on Sept. 10, 1,513 new confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases on Sept. 11, and 1,045 new confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases on Sept. 12. There are 32 new COVID-19 related deaths in Oregon, raising the state’s death toll to 3,446, the Oregon Health Authority reported.

Union County’s weekend total brings its case count to 2,578 cases since the start of the pandemic.

The Region 9 COVID-19 Dashboard reported two new deaths in Union County, but no details were released by the state.

Wallowa County reported three new cases over the weekend. Baker County recorded 53 new cases, while Umatilla County tallied 85.

COVID-19 hospitalizations

The number of hospitalized patients with COVID-19 across Oregon is 1,075, which is 11 fewer than Sept. 12. There are 274 COVID-19 patients in intensive care unit (ICU) beds, which is nine fewer than Sept. 12, according to the state.

There are 62 available adult ICU beds out of 652 total (10% availability) and 316 available adult non-ICU beds out of 4,264 (7% availability).

Vaccinations in Oregon

OHA reported that 4,699 new doses of COVID-19 vaccinations were added to the state immunization registry on Sept. 12.

Of this total, 1,170 were administered on Sept. 12: 1,170 were initial doses, 652 were second doses and 52 were third doses. The remaining 3,529 were administered on previous days but were entered into the vaccine registry on Sept. 12.

The seven-day running average is now 7,325 doses per day.

Union County’s vaccination rate is up 1.6% to 53.7%, with more than 11,100 residents having received the vaccine. The county needs more than 5,400 more residents over the age of 18 to be vaccinated to reach 80%. Wallowa County is at 63% vaccination, up 0.6%.

NEWS BRIEF

Union County Board of Commissioners to meet Sept. 15

LA GRANDE — The Union County Board of Commissioners will meet at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 15, and the agenda includes discussions about public health and safety resource shortages.

People will not be able to attend the meeting in person because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To listen to the meeting, or participate in the public comment opportunity, call 253-215-8782 or 301-715-8592 and enter meeting ID number 814 2000 6863. Callers who do not get through the first are encouraged to try again.

People can join the meeting online via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81420006863>.

Written comments, which will be read at the meeting, can be submitted via email to [amoore@union-county.org](mailto:amoore@union-county.org). All written comments should be submitted by 5 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 14.

— The Observer