

TODAY

On Nov. 3, 1997, the Supreme Court let stand California’s groundbreaking Proposition 209, which banned race and gender preference in hiring and school admissions.

In 1868, Republican Ulysses S. Grant won the presidential election over Democrat Horatio Seymour.

In 1911, the Chevrolet Motor Car Co. was founded in Detroit by Louis Chevrolet and William C. Durant. (The company was acquired by General Motors in 1918.)

In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt won a landslide election victory over Republican challenger Alfred “Alf” Landon.

In 1954, the Japanese monster movie “Godzilla” was released by Toho Co.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy established the U.S. Agency for International Development.

In 1970, Salvador Allende was inaugurated as president of Chile.

In 1979, five Communist Workers Party members were killed in a clash with heavily armed Ku Klux Klansmen and neo-Nazis during an anti-Klan protest in Greensboro, North Carolina.

In 1986, the Iran-Contra affair came to light as Ash-Shiraa, a pro-Syrian Lebanese magazine, first broke the story of U.S. arms sales to Iran.

In 1992, Democrat Bill Clinton was elected the 42nd president of the United States, defeating President George H.W. Bush. In Illinois, Democrat Carol Moseley-Braun became the first Black woman elected to the U.S. Senate.

In 1994, Susan Smith of Union, South Carolina, was arrested for drowning her two young sons, Michael and Alex, nine days after claiming the children had been abducted by a Black carjacker.

In 2004, President George W. Bush claimed a re-election mandate a day after more than 62 million Americans chose him over Democrat John Kerry; Kerry conceded defeat in make-or-break Ohio rather than launch a legal fight reminiscent of the contentious Florida recount of four years earlier.

In 2014, 13 years after the 9/11 terrorist attack, a new 1,776-foot skyscraper at the World Trade Center site opened for business, marking an emotional milestone for both New Yorkers and the nation.

Today’s Birthdays: Actor Lois Smith is 91. Actor Monica Vitti is 90. Former Massachusetts Gov. Michael S. Dukakis is 88. Actor Shadøe Stevens is 75. Singer Lulu is 73. “Vogue” editor-in-chief Anna Wintour is 72. Comedian-actor Roseanne Barr is 69. Actor Kate Capshaw is 68. Comedian Dennis Miller is 68. Actor Kathy Kinney is 68. Singer Adam Ant is 67. Sports commentator and former quarterback Phil Simms is 66. Director-screenwriter Gary Ross is 65. Actor Dolph Lundgren is 64. Rock musician C.J. Pierce (Drowning Pool) is 49. Actor Francois Battiste (TV: “Ten Days in the Valley”) is 45. Olympic gold medal figure skater Evgeni Plushenko is 39. Actor Julie Berman is 38. Actor Antonia Thomas (TV: “The Good Doctor”) is 35. Alternative rock singer/songwriter Courtney Barnett is 34. TV personality and model Kendall Jenner (TV: “Keeping Up with the Kardashians”) is 26.

LOTTERY

Friday, Oct. 29, 2021
Megamillions
15-26-28-35-45
Megaball: 4
Megaplier: 3
Jackpot: \$26 million
Lucky Lines
4-6-10-16-19-22-25-30
Jackpot: \$25,000
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 3-7-1-7
4 p.m.: 0-0-5-4
7 p.m.: 5-2-3-1
10 p.m.: 9-1-2-2
Saturday, Oct. 30, 2021
Powerball
5-23-28-43-56
Powerball: 19
Power Play: 2
Jackpot: \$123 million
Megabucks
10-14-28-43-47-48
Jackpot: \$5.1 million
Lucky Lines
4-5-12-13-19-21-27-29
Jackpot: \$26,000
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 7-9-2-3
4 p.m.: 9-4-9-7
7 p.m.: 0-7-8-4
10 p.m.: 8-5-0-4
Win for Life
46-49-57-67
Sunday, Oct. 31, 2021
Lucky Lines
4-5-11-13-20-24-26-32
Estimated jackpot: \$27,000
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 8-3-9-7
4 p.m.: 1-3-9-3
7 p.m.: 8-2-6-2
10 p.m.: 0-6-8-2

Rain doesn’t dampen downtown Halloween fun



Costumed trick-or-treaters, above, make their way along Adams Avenue in downtown La Grande on a rainy Friday, Oct. 29, 2021. The dampness didn’t deter the hundreds of revelers who turned out for the Halloween-spirited activities, held for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began. All ages gathered goodies, including, at left, “old women” Tegan Alley, left, and Riatt Titus.

Photos by Alex Wittwer/The Observer

First phase of Meacham road work almost done

Second phase of I-84 project will start in the spring

By DICK MASON
The Observer

MEACHAM — Crews working on an Interstate 84 restoration project running from Meacham east to Spring Creek will soon temporarily shift into park after a successful six months of work.

Crews and workers contracted by the Oregon Department of Transportation project are wrapping up work on the first section of the \$39 million Oregon Department of Transportation project, which extends from Meacham east for 3-1/2 miles.

“We should be completely out of there in about two weeks,” said ODOT’s Mike Remily, a project engineer who is helping direct the project.

Remily said sometime this week most of the 3-1/2

mile stretch will again be completely open after being periodically closed for restoration work in recent months. Still, motorists should expect a few smaller lane closures over the next two weeks. One closure will be at about milepost 238 near Meacham. A left lane closure will be in effect there for up to 14 days to allow for the repair of a concrete bridge rail that was damaged in a traffic accident.

A second lane closure will be in place in the left eastbound lane at milepost 240, about 2 miles east of Meacham. The closure will be conducted to allow for the repair of a guardrail.

Remily also said the right eastbound and westbound lanes at milepost 242, 4 miles east of Meacham, will be closed intermittently between 6:30 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. one night this week to allow crews to patch deteriorated asphalt. He said the area will be repaved in 2022 as part of the project,

but patching work is being conducted now to make it safer this winter.

The Meacham to Spring Creek project is being funded primarily with federal gas tax money.

Crews will begin work on the second phase of the project in April 2022. A 6-1/2 mile stretch of Interstate 84 running east to the Spring Creek Exit, 18 miles northwest of La Grande, will be repaved as part of the final phase of the two-year project.

Remily said he has been pleased with the progress crews have made this year on the project, adding crews have been aided by arid conditions over the summer.

“The dry weather was a big help,” he said.

The completion of the first phase of the Meacham to Spring Creek project comes about six week after the completion of a \$1.2 million project aimed at repairing and stabilizing the shoulder of a section of the Ukiah-Hilgard

Highway about 12 miles south of Hilgard State Park. The work was necessary because in some areas the highway shoulder drops steeply toward the Grande Ronde River. Erosion had occurred as a result, creating an unstable slope that had washed out several times in recent years, according to ODOT spokesperson Tom Strandberg.

The project included the installation of a new wall made of rocks enclosed with wire. It is 240 feet long and 8 feet high. It replaced an old wall that had badly deteriorated.

The installation of the new guardrail and wall were part of two portions of the highway project. The second involved moving two small portions of the Ukiah-Hilgard Highway nearly 20 feet farther away from the Grande Ronde River over a 1,500-foot span, Strandberg said, giving the roadway greater protection from flooding and soil erosion.

NEWS BRIEFS

Union County adds 22 new COVID-19 cases over the weekend

LA GRANDE — Union County had 22 new cases of COVID-19 over the weekend, the Oregon Health Authority reported Monday, Nov. 1. Wallowa County added four new cases in the same timeframe. The new cases move Union County’s total to 3,268, and Wallowa County’s count moves to 705. Neither county reported a new death, with those numbers remaining at 50 and 12, respectively.

October concludes with Union County adding 312 cases of COVID-19, and 123 being reported in Wallowa County.

In the state, there were, 2,569 cases and five deaths reported by OHA over the weekend, with the statewide pandemic counts now at 367,610 cases and 4,377 deaths.

The OHA also reported 10,364 new vaccine doses on Oct. 31, with the seven-day running average of doses now at 15,236.

There were 1540 people in Oregon hospitalized with COVID-19 at the time of the report, and 114 of them were in intensive care unit. The state shows 65 ICU beds available out of 690, and 355 non-ICU beds available out of 4,101 total.

Region 9, which includes Union and Wallowa counties, had reported 20 or fewer COVID-19 hospitalizations from Oct. 21-29, but on Monday was up to 28 hospitalizations. Currently, the region has seven ICU beds and 52 non-ICU beds available.

Union County’s vaccination rate of those 18 and older is 57.2%. In Wallowa County, it’s 66.8%.

Truck crash forced closure of Interstate 84

LA GRANDE— Nobody was injured in a one-vehicle crash 2 miles west of La Grande on Interstate-84 on Friday, Oct. 29.



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

Emergency workers secure the scene of a semi-truck crash 2 miles west of La Grande on Interstate 84 on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021. No injuries were reported, but the eastbound lanes were closed until about 8 p.m.

The crash occurred at about 3:20 p.m. and involved a semi-truck driven by Sukhbir Singh Janjua, 34, of Lathrop, California, who was traveling east. Following the crash, the truck was facing west in the median between the westbound and eastbound lanes of traffic with its trailer across both eastbound lanes, according to the Oregon State Police.

The crash closed the eastbound lanes of I-84 between La Grande and Pendleton until about 8 p.m., according to the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Central Elementary evacuates students as precautionary measure

LA GRANDE — Central Elementary School students were evacuated Monday, Nov. 1, when staff reported a potential gas leak.

Students were evacuated around 8:30 a.m. to La Grande High School. After an investigation by Avista Utilities and with the support of the La Grande Fire Department, it was determined there wasn’t a leak. Students returned to school at 10 a.m.

Central Elementary Principal

Monica West said the students and staff quickly and calmly filed to the La Grande High School gymnasium and auditorium.

“Our staff kept the students organized and engaged while they waited for news that it was safe to return. I am proud of this team,” she said.

La Grande School District Superintendent George Mendoza said the evacuation went smoothly.

“The safety of our students was of utmost concern. All students were safely evacuated and accounted for, the fire department and Avista Utilities were contacted, and our off-site location was determined and readied for the students. Once it was determined normal building operations could resume, students were returned to Central in an orderly manner.”

The district has shut down the kitchen air handler unit to resolve the source of the smell and repair parts have been ordered. The weather inversion did not allow the air to dissipate as it normally does.

The district has a natural gas monitor in place and will be monitoring for gas leaks out of an abundance of caution.

— The Observer

Josephy Center names new development director

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

JOSEPH — The Josephy Center for Arts and Culture has a new development director. The organization announced last week that Dera Stewart has taken over the position previously held by Kellee Sheehy, who resigned



Stewart

in mid-September after two years in the role.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to join the Josephy team,” Stewart said in a press release announcing the hire. “We are in a unique position to bring our community together with exhibits that foster the exchange of ideas and promote the development of new perspectives and understanding. The pandemic has been hard for all of us, and the Josephy Center has also become an extension of home for many who are needing a place for social connection, healing and mental well-being.”

Stewart and her husband moved to Joseph in 2017. Originally from Hawaii, Stewart has previously been a program manager for the National Marine Fisheries Service, where she worked to support marine mammal conservation in the Pacific.

The press release describes Stewart as “passionate about strengthening communities through engagement and partnerships” and said she “is excited to be a part of an organization that plays such an important role in the health and vitality of this county.”

A large part of Stewart’s role as development director is writing grant applications and seeking funds from organizations with a mission in line with the Josephy Center.

“A lot of our programs and exhibits — mostly exhibits — come from grant funding, and then also, as far as the rest of the development, I’m going to be working directly with fundraising,” she said. “This past year Kellee and the team worked on Phase I of the capital campaign to purchase the building and for repairs. That took a lot of meeting with people that are interested in the Josephy cause and our mission.”

Another important part of Stewart’s role, she said, is “forming relationships with the community (and) with people outside of the community that still have interest in Wallowa County and what we do here. The capital campaign is a big thing right now. We’re focusing on our year-end campaign, so developing a strategy for best connecting with donors and engaging with people who want to partner with us (is important).”

She added that the center has been gaining momentum as a result of the capital campaign.

Cheryl Coughlan, executive director of the Josephy Center, thinks Stewart is a good fit.

“Dera’s professional experience is a great addition to the Josephy Center team,” she said. “As a non-profit organization, we rely heavily on individual donor support. Dera has the right personality and skill set, which will be instrumental in raising the much-needed funds to support and expand our programs in the years ahead.”