

TODAY

On Dec. 11, 1972, Apollo 17's lunar module landed on the moon with astronauts Eugene Cernan and Harrison Schmitt aboard; they became the last two men to date to step onto the lunar surface.

In 1816, Indiana became the 19th state.

In 1910, French inventor Georges Claude publicly displayed his first neon lamp, consisting of two 38-foot-long tubes, at the Paris Expo.

In 1936, Britain's King Edward VIII abdicated the throne so he could marry American divorcee Wallis Warfield Simpson; his brother, Prince Albert, became King George VI.

In 1941, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States; the U.S. responded in kind.

In 1946, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was established.

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter signed legislation creating a \$1.6 billion environmental "superfund" to pay for cleaning up chemical spills and toxic waste dumps. "Magnum PI," starring Tom Selleck, premiered on CBS.

In 1997, more than 150 countries agreed at a global warming conference in Kyoto, Japan, to control the Earth's greenhouse gases.

In 1998, majority Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee pushed through three articles of impeachment against President Bill Clinton, over Democratic objections.

In 2001, in the first criminal indictment stemming from 9/11, federal prosecutors charged Zacarias Moussaoui, a French citizen of Moroccan descent, with conspiring to murder thousands in the suicide hijackings. (Moussaoui pleaded guilty to conspiracy in 2005 and was sentenced to life in prison.)

In 2002, a congressional report found that intelligence agencies that were supposed to protect Americans from the Sept. 11 hijackers failed to do so because they were poorly organized, poorly equipped and slow to pursue clues that might have prevented the attacks.

In 2008, former Nasdaq chairman Bernie Madoff was arrested, accused of running a multibillion-dollar Ponzi scheme that wiped out the life savings of thousands of people and wrecked charities. (Madoff died in April 2021 while serving a 150-year federal prison sentence.)

In 2018, a Virginia jury called for a sentence of life in prison plus 419 years for the man who killed a woman when he rammed his car into counter-protesters at a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. (James Alex Fields Jr. received that sentence in July, 2019.)

Ten years ago: Former military strongman Manuel Antonio Noriega was flown from France to Panama to face additional punishment in his home country after spending more than 20 years in U.S. and French prisons for drug trafficking and money laundering. A U.N. climate conference in Johannesburg, South Africa, reached a hard-fought agreement on a far-reaching program meant to set a new course for the global fight against climate change.

Five years ago: President-elect Donald Trump called a recent CIA assessment of Russian hacking in the U.S. election "ridiculous" and said he wasn't interested in getting daily intelligence briefings, telling "Fox News Sunday," "I get it when I need it."

One year ago: The Supreme Court rejected a lawsuit backed by President Donald Trump to overturn Joe Biden's election victory, ending a desperate attempt to get legal issues that were rejected by state and federal judges before the nation's highest court. The Food and Drug Administration authorized an emergency rollout of the nation's first COVID-19 vaccine, developed by Pfizer and its German partner BioNTech; the decision came as the U.S. recorded a new daily high in the number of coronavirus deaths, at 3,309, and a new high in daily confirmed infections with more than 231,000.

LOTTERY

Wednesday, Dec. 8, 2021

Megabucks

6-7-14-23-24-30

Jackpot: \$6.8 million

Lucky Lines

4-5-9-13-18-22-27-30

Estimated jackpot: \$40,000

Powerball

3-7-33-50-69

Powerball: 24

Power Play: 2

Jackpot: \$307 million

Win for Life

17-24-35-76

Pick 4

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

4 p.m.: 1-8-3-8

7 p.m.: 2-7-9-2

10 p.m.: 9-4-2-0

Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021

Lucky Lines

1-5-10-16-18-21-25-31

Jackpot: \$41,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 9-2-0-3

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

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

10 p.m.: 8-7-8-4

Fair Lights plans in full swing

By ANN BLOOM

For EO Media Group

ENTERPRISE — The plans for Fair Lights 2021 are in full swing, with the same number of exhibits expected this year as last — 23. However, according to new Wallowa County Fair Board Manager Annett Connor, the fair board is "just starting to recruit" for exhibits, so there could be more, she said.

This year's drive-thru Fair Lights opens at 5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 17, featuring lighted displays at the Wallowa County Fairgrounds in Enterprise. Cars enter through a gate off Medical Parkway near Les Schwab, drive around the track to view the lighted, holiday-themed displays, which are provided by area businesses and organizations, and exit near the indoor arena off Lyle Street. The event runs from 5-8 p.m. each night through Dec. 26. Fair Lights 2021 is free, though donations are appreciated.

The first 100 cars on opening night will each receive a goody bag of donated merchandise. And Santa Claus will be there to help celebrate the return of the event.

Details are still being



Wallowa County Chieftain, File

A message of hope from the Enterprise Seventh-day Adventist Church was the theme of a Christmas display Friday, Dec. 18, 2020, at the Wallowa County Fairgrounds for the opening night of Fair Lights 2020. A similar series of displays at the fairgrounds opens Friday, Dec. 17, 2021.

finalized, but according to Connor some things being considered for inclusion in this year's event are a popcorn stand and roasted chestnuts. Last year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a local provider had some chestnuts left over from a canceled order and was able to provide the chestnuts. It is unknown if that is the case this year.

There is a contingency plan for inclement weather.

"If the weather is bad, we will have walk-throughs, if we can't drive through," she said.

Connor, who started as fair board office manager

Sept. 21, said she wants people to "just come and enjoy." She added, "The fair board enjoyed meeting the community when they were there passing out goody bags last year."

She came to the fair board position from the Education Service District in Pendleton, where she worked as an internet technology server analyst. She said she wanted to get out of IT, had relatives in Wallowa County, "and (the job) seemed like a perfect fit for me." She said she had been the secretary for the Oregon Hunters Association and the fair board position "seemed

City officials address downtown concerns

By DAVIS CARBAUGH

The Observer

LA GRANDE — La Grande officials will address safety concerns during an upcoming informational meeting with downtown business owners and discuss the city's plan moving forward.

The meeting comes in the wake of concerns expressed about loitering at Max Square and reports of vandalism and trespassing.

Taking part in the meeting will be La Grande Police Chief Gary Bell, Parks and Recreation Director Stu Spence, Economic Development Director Timothy Bishop, Center for Human Development Mental Health Director Aaron Grigg and La Grande City Manager

Robert Strope. The city officials will be joined by local business and property owners in the downtown area.

According to Strope, the meeting will include the city's steps taken to address the issue and a chance for feedback and ideas from downtown merchants.

A group of 18 individuals wrote a letter to Bell expressing their concerns about the situation at Max Square and activities happening downtown they deemed unsafe, which was further discussed at a La Grande City Council meeting last month. Councilor John Bozarth raised the issue, calling the gathering an "eyesore for the community."

Bell wrote a letter to

downtown merchants on Nov. 29, which responded to the concerns and described ways the police department is striving to address the issue. The letter included details on a variety of efforts the department has undertaken to improve the safety in downtown La Grande, as well as some of the hurdles law enforcement is facing in doing so.

Following the discussion at the city council meeting in November, Bell met with Strope and Spence to plan possible routes the city can take in responding to the issue. According to Strope, the letter from Bell was a means of raising awareness as the issue will be an ongoing discussion with the community moving

IF YOU GO

What: Informational meeting on downtown safety

Where: Brother Bear Cafe, 1009 Adams Ave., La Grande

When: 6 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 14

In attendance: La Grande Police Chief Gary Bell, Parks and Recreation Director Stu Spence, Economic Development Director Timothy Bishop, Center for Human Development Mental Health Director Aaron Grigg and La Grande City Manager Robert Strope

forward. This week's meeting will give the city an idea of next steps that can be taken regarding the recent public concern.

Bell and the police department encourage residents to contact law enforcement if they witness any criminal violations.

La Grande district's COVID-19 numbers remain low

By DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande School District's COVID-19 infection rate remains in the single digits.

The school district's latest weekly statistics show that nine students missed school during the week of Nov. 29-Dec. 3 because of positive COVID-19 tests, COVID-19 symptoms or close contact with those who have COVID-19. That number was up four from Thanksgiving week, Nov. 22-23 when five students missed school because of COVID-19. The increase, though, may reflect the fact that there were just two days of school the week of

Thanksgiving, while there were four the week of Nov. 29-Dec. 3. Most of the La Grande School District's weeks have five class days.

The school district's recent COVID-19 numbers are down dramatically from the week of Oct. 11-15 when 57 students were out because of COVID-19 and a far cry from mid-September when 123 students and staff were out during one week.

The school district's Nov. 29-Dec. 3 statistics indicate that no staff members were absent during the week due to positive COVID-19 tests, symptoms of the disease or close contact with someone who has it. This marks the eighth week in a row that the La Grande School District did not have any staff out due to COVID-19.

The district's latest statistics, based on reports to school district nurses, show that two students were out the week after Thanksgiving due to testing positive for COVID-19. Both students were from La Grande High School.

Four students missed class that week because of close contact to an individual who had tested positive for COVID-19. Two of the students were from Island City Elementary and two were from La Grande High School. Three students, one at Central Elementary and two at Greenwood Elementary, missed school because of primary COVID-19 symptoms.

The school district's continuing low numbers mean the district will be able to

remain in the low-risk category under the rules of its 2021 Communicable Disease plan. The school district moved into the low-risk category from the moderate-risk category about a month ago.

Being in the low-risk category means schools can continue conducting assemblies and concerts that can be attended by parents and community members, more volunteers can work in the school district and, in some instances, children in different grades can have recess at the same time at elementary schools.

The school district still must adhere to state COVID-19 safety rules, including wearing masks and practicing social distancing.

Reward for info on poisoned wolves now nearly \$43K

By KALE WILLIAMS

The Oregonian

LA GRANDE — Conservation groups are offering a \$42,977 reward for information that leads to a conviction after at least eight wolves were poisoned in Eastern Oregon earlier this year.

Three groups — Wolves of the Rockies, Trap Free Montana and The 06 Legacy Project — added an additional \$10,000 to the existing reward Monday, Dec. 6. An additional \$6,977 in reward money from the Greater Hells Canyon Council, Humane Society of the United States and private donations was announced Dec. 7.

"We were heartbroken to hear of these horrific and inhumane killings, and condemn in the strongest terms this atrocity," Marc Cooke, president of Wolves of the Rockies, said in a statement, adding that the poisonings were the result of escalating tensions between wolves and ranchers. "But this slaughter did not occur in a vacuum. We hope to see those responsible for the illegal killings brought to justice."

In early February, Oregon State Police investigators were alerted that a wolf fitted with a tracking collar had stopped moving near Mount Harris, about 10 miles north-east of La Grande in Union County.

They found the entirety of the Catherine Pack, three males and two females, dead along with a dead magpie that was found near the wolves, according to state police. The wolves were sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Forensics Lab in Ashland for testing.

About a month later, wildlife officials again contacted state police to report concerns about a collared wolf in the same area of Union County. Another search turned up a dead female wolf along with another dead magpie and a dead skunk. Again, all the animals were sent to the lab for testing.

By April, the toxicology tests confirmed all six wolves had been poisoned.

Two more wolves would be poisoned in the months to come. Later in April, another male wolf, this one from the Five Points Pack, was found dead near the town of Elgin. In July, a young female wolf was found dead northeast of La Grande, state troopers said. That animal had recently dispersed from the Keating Pack.

Testing on both confirmed different types of poison, but investigators believe the young female's death may be related to the six earlier poisonings.

Tension between wolf advocates and ranchers, whose livestock has sometimes been preyed upon by the canids, has festered in Oregon since the animals began repopulating the state in the early 2000s. Debates on how best to resolve conflict have grown contentious at times.

Six wolves from the Lookout Mountain Pack, in Baker County, were killed by the state earlier this year after repeated attacks on livestock in the area.

Last year, federal protections for wolves under the Endangered Species Act were rescinded by the Trump administration, though advocates for the animals have sued to have the animal's protected status reinstated.

Previously, eight conservation groups — the Center for Biological Diversity, Cascadia Wildlands, Defenders of Wildlife, The Humane Society of the United States, Northeast Oregon Ecosystems, Oregon Wild, Predator Defense and WildEarth Guardians — had offered a \$26,000 reward for information on the case.

NEWS BRIEFS

OHA reports six new COVID-19 cases in Union County

SALEM — In the Oregon Health Authority's daily COVID-19 report on Thursday, Dec. 9, Union County tallied six new positive cases. In Wallowa County, one new case was reported.

The report increased Union County's total case count to 3,434 since the start of the pandemic. Wallowa County has totaled 767 positive cases.

Across the state, 901 new confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases were included in the daily report. OHA indicated that 38 new deaths were reported, which brought Oregon's death toll to 5,356. The new cases increased the state's total to 399,361 since the pandemic began.

OHA's latest breakthrough report indicated that 6,496 (69.4%) of the reported COVID-19 cases between

Nov. 28 and Dec. 4 were among unvaccinated individuals. There were 1,989 (30.6%) breakout cases in that same time frame. According to OHA, there have been 47,687 total breakthrough cases in Oregon.

The Dec. 9 report stated there are currently 404 patients hospitalized with COVID-19 in the state, which is an increase of seven patients from the previous report. Out of 682 adult ICU beds in Oregon, 56 are currently available. There are 247 open adult non-ICU beds out of 4,171.

Oregon's seven-day running average of vaccine doses per day stands at 23,668.

Baker man accused of burglary

BAKER CITY — A Baker City man is accused of first-degree burglary, a Class A felony, and multiple

misdemeanor charges for a Nov. 8 incident in Baker City.

Juan Pablo Burgos, 60, was arrested Dec. 3 in Baker City, the day after a Baker County grand jury indicted him.

Burgos remains in the Baker County Jail on \$15,000 bail. He could be released by posting 10% of the bail amount.

According to the indictment, Burgos on Nov. 8 entered a Baker City dwelling, damaged property and subjected the woman living there to "offensive physical contact."

He is charged with two counts of first-degree burglary and one count each of first-degree criminal trespassing, second-degree criminal mischief and harassment.

Burgos is scheduled to enter a plea to the charges on Dec. 27 at 1:30 p.m. in Baker County Circuit Court.

— EO Media Group