

**TODAY**

**On Dec. 16, 1773**, the Boston Tea Party took place as American colonists boarded a British ship and dumped more than 300 chests of tea into Boston Harbor to protest tea taxes.

**In 1653**, Oliver Cromwell became lord protector of England, Scotland and Ireland.

**In 1811**, the first of the powerful New Madrid earthquakes struck the central Mississippi Valley with an estimated magnitude of 7.7.

**In 1944**, the World War II Battle of the Bulge began as German forces launched a surprise attack against Allied forces through the Ardennes Forest in Belgium and Luxembourg (the Allies were eventually able to turn the Germans back).

**In 1950**, President Harry S. Truman proclaimed a national state of emergency in order to fight "world conquest by Communist imperialism."

**In 1960**, 134 people were killed when a United Air Lines DC-8 and a TWA Super Constellation collided over New York City.

**In 1982**, Environmental Protection Agency head Anne M. Gorsuch became the first Cabinet-level officer to be cited for contempt of Congress for refusing to submit documents requested by a congressional committee.

**In 1991**, the U.N. General Assembly rescinded its 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism by a vote of 111-25.

**In 2000**, President-elect George W. Bush selected Colin Powell to become the first African-American secretary of state.

**In 2001**, after nine weeks of fighting, Afghan militia leaders claimed control of the last mountain bastion of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida fighters, but bin Laden himself was nowhere to be seen.

**In 2012**, President Barack Obama visited Newtown, Connecticut, the scene of the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre; after meeting privately with victims' families, the president told an evening vigil he would use "whatever power" he had to prevent future shootings.

**In 2014**, Taliban gunmen stormed a military-run school in the northwestern Pakistan city of Peshawar, killing at least 148 people, mostly children.

**In 2019**, House Democrats laid out their impeachment case against President Donald Trump; a sweeping report from the House Judiciary Committee said Trump had "betrayed the Nation by abusing his high office to enlist a foreign power in corrupting democratic elections." Boeing said it would temporarily stop producing its grounded 737 Max jet as it struggled to get approval from regulators to put the plane back in the air; it had been grounded since March after two deadly crashes.

**Ten years ago:** In San Francisco, eight years of being investigated for steroid allegations ended for home run king Barry Bonds with a 30-day sentence to be served at home. (Bonds never served the sentence; his conviction for obstruction of justice was overturned.)

**Five years ago:** President Barack Obama put Russia's Vladimir Putin on notice that the U.S. could use offensive cyber muscle to retaliate for interference in the U.S. presidential election, his strongest suggestion to date that Putin had been well aware of campaign email hacking. John Glenn's home state and the nation began saying goodbye to the beloved astronaut and former U.S. senator starting with a public viewing of his flag-draped casket inside Ohio's Statehouse rotunda in Columbus.

**One year ago:** The first COVID-19 vaccinations were underway at U.S. nursing homes, where the virus had killed 110,000 people. Tyson Foods said it had fired seven top managers at its largest pork plant after an investigation confirmed allegations that they had wagered on how many workers at the plant in Iowa would test positive for the coronavirus.

**LOTTERY**

**Monday, Dec. 13, 2021**  
Megabucks

4-7-16-18-27-33  
Estimated jackpot: \$7 million

**Lucky Lines**  
1-6-10-15-19-23-27-30  
Estimated jackpot: \$45,000

**Win for Life**  
5-15-31-72

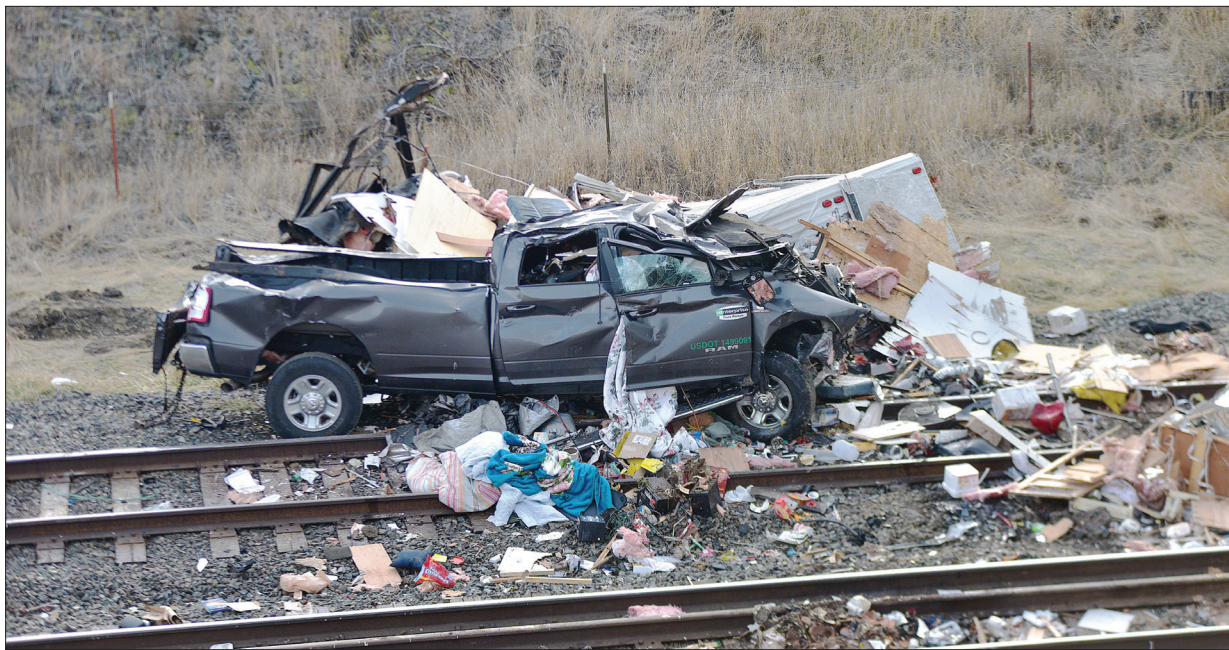
**Pick 4**  
1 p.m.: 0-1-1-6  
4 p.m.: 0-3-7-7  
7 p.m.: 0-4-5-5  
10 p.m.: 0-2-1-5

**Tuesday, Dec. 14, 2021**  
Mega Millions

33-35-44-55-69  
Mega Ball: 20  
Megaplier: 3  
Estimated jackpot: \$160 million

**Lucky Lines**  
3-8-10-14-19-22-26-32  
Estimated jackpot: \$46,000

**Pick 4**  
1 p.m.: 8-8-2-1  
4 p.m.: 3-6-2-3  
7 p.m.: 9-9-5-5  
10 p.m.: 9-2-0-4



Davis Carbaugh/The Observer

**A rental truck bearing Washington plates sits on the railroad tracks near North Powder on Wednesday, Dec. 15, 2021. The truck crashed off Interstate 84 and the driver of the vehicle was pronounced dead at the scene. It was unclear what caused the crash, according to police.**

**Early-morning crash kills one**

**Driver killed in vehicle accident on Interstate 84**

**By DICK MASON and DAVIS CARBAUGH**  
The Observer

**NORTH POWDER** — The driver of a full-sized Dodge pickup pulling a camper died in a single-vehicle accident on the south edge of North Powder early Wednesday, Dec. 15.

The driver, an adult male, was killed when the pickup he was driving went off the left westbound lane of Interstate 84 and down an embankment. The pickup and the camper came to rest on Union Pacific Railroad

tracks. The accident was reported at 6:29 a.m. to the Baker County 911 dispatch center.

According to Oregon State Police Sgt. Dave Aydelotte, the driver was deceased by the time first responders arrived. The victim was not ejected from his truck, said Senior Trooper Greg Retherford.

The vehicle in the fatal accident had no passengers. The pickup the man was driving was an Enterprise rental and had Washington license plates. The camper also had at least one Washington license plate.

A Life Flight helicopter was dispatched to the scene but turned around immediately after reaching North Powder because the driver did not

survive the crash.

"It flew in and circled the area but it did not set down," Retherford said.

The identity of the driver was not released as of press time, pending the notification of the next of kin.

In addition to OSP, those responding to the crash site included the La Grande Fire Department, the Union County Sheriff's Office and Union Pacific Railroad.

Retherford said a La Grande Fire Department vehicle got stuck on the railroad tracks while a train was coming toward it about a quarter mile west of the accident scene. Fortunately, the railroad was contacted and the train, which was moving slowly, was able to stop with plenty of distance to

spare — but not before causing some concern.

"It was a little nerve-racking for a while," Retherford said.

The cause of the accident remains under investigation. According to Aydelotte, Oregon requires a local medical examiner to investigate the cause and manner of death when the death is unattended.

"At this point in time we just don't know," he said.

Aydelotte said no estimate of the vehicle's speed has been determined.

The accident blocked both active rail lines until approximately 8:45 a.m., when one of the lines was cleared. The crash did not close I-84 and no other vehicles were involved.

**Santa Mall returns for another year**

**Annual event provides children opportunity to buy gifts for family**

**By DICK MASON**  
The Observer

**LA GRANDE** — Children will again have the opportunity to experience the joy of Christmas giving, starting Friday, Dec. 17.

Young holiday shoppers on Dec. 17 and Dec. 18 will be flocking to the Riviera Activity Center, 2609 N. Second St., La Grande, for the annual Santa Mall. The event is open to the public but its main focus is on giving all children, including those from lower income families, the opportunity to buy gifts for family members.

The Santa Mall will be open from 1-7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 17, and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on

**MORE INFORMATION**  
For details on getting Santa Bucks for a child or serving as a vendor, call or text 541-975-0353.

Saturday, Dec. 18. Santa will be at the event on Saturday and will pose for photographs with children throughout his visit, according to Santa Mall Director Dawn Hayes.

Thirty-five vendors have signed up for the Santa Mall, and openings still are available. All children will receive Santa Bucks to use as currency to purchase items from the vendors.

The Santa Mall program, in its 26th year, has about \$5,000 in money for Santa Bucks, its highest total ever, Hayes said. The money was raised from sponsors, individuals donations and money paid by this year's vendor fees.

To date, almost 300 children have been pro-

vided Santa Bucks, and the Santa Mall has enough available for another 100 children, Hayes said.

Hayes has volunteered at the Santa Mall for the past eight years, and in the last six has co-directed it with Shelia Evans, who died Oct. 9 of natural causes. Evans was 52 years old. Hayes said memories of Evans will burn bright at this year's Santa Mall.

"It was her passion," she said.

Hayes said the loss of Evans is leaving a big void because of the volume of responsibilities she shouldered.

"Sheila took on so much," she said.

Hayes is grateful for individuals stepping up to assist her this year,

including Amy Horn, who she describes as her top assistant. Horn is an advertising representative for The Observer.

Masks will not be required at the Santa Mall, Hayes said. She said that anyone meeting with a vendor not wearing a mask will be able to request the individual wear one.

Hayes said helping run the Santa Mall is one of the joys of her life.

"It is a labor of love," she said.

Hayes said the opportunity to help put smiles on the faces of children makes it all worth it.

Items at the Santa Mall include toys, clothing, crafts, blankets, homemade goods and home decor items. Hayes said the Santa Mall is also a good place for adults to do their Christmas shopping.

"There are shopping opportunities for everybody," she said.

**NEWS BRIEFS**

**OHA reports one new death, 28 new COVID-19 cases in Union County**

**SALEM** — The Oregon Health Authority released its latest COVID-19 update on Wednesday, Dec. 15, which showed 28 new cases and one new death in Union County. Wallowa County added one new case on the report.

A 67-year-old man from Union County who tested positive on Nov. 23 died on Dec. 9 at Grande Ronde Hospital. The man reportedly had underlying conditions.

The 28 cases is the highest single day mark over the last 30 days and brings the county's total to 3,465 since the start of the pandemic. Wallowa County stands at 768 cases. Union County's death toll is up to 58.

Across Oregon, 883 new confirmed and presumptive cases were reported — the state's case count since the beginning of COVID-19 is up to 402,436. The report showed 49 new deaths in Oregon, which brought the death toll to 5,469.

There are currently 382 patients hospitalized with

COVID-19, which is a decrease of 26 patients from yesterday's report. There are 59 open adult ICU beds out of 685 in the state and 272 available adult non-ICU beds out of 4,143.

The seven-day running average of vaccine doses per day in Oregon is currently 21,820.

**NEOEDD seeks website redesign proposals**

**ENTERPRISE** — The Northeast Oregon Economic Development District is seeking proposals to redesign its website in 2022, according to a press release.

A copy of the detailed request for proposals can be found on the NEOEDD website, www.neoedd.org (see the Upcoming Events page).

Questions from contractors will be accepted until Jan. 21. Proposals must be submitted by Jan. 28.

The RFP includes the district's background, website redesign goals and scope of work, RFP process and project timeline, proposal submission instructions and details of the contractor selection process. The RFP also gives examples of website components the organization likes

and a site map draft.

For more information, contact Lisa Dawson, district executive director, at 541-426-3598, ext. 1, or by email at lisadawson@neoedd.org.

**Anthony Lakes ski area will open Dec. 18**

**NORTH POWDER** — With another 8 inches of snow falling overnight Monday, Dec. 13, the ski area at Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort will open for the season on Saturday, Dec. 18.

Anthony Lakes reported a base of 22 inches on Dec. 14, with 19 inches of snow falling in the past three days.

The resort, in the Elkhorn Mountains about 44 miles southeast of La Grande, will be open daily through Jan. 2, 2022, except Christmas Day. The ski area will close at 1 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

Unlike last winter, the lodge will be open this year, although face coverings are required indoors.

More information, including daily snow updates, are available at www.anthonylakes.com.

— The Observer

**Greif set to retire at end of school year**

**Elgin superintendent has worked for the school district for 29 years**

**By DICK MASON**  
The Observer

**ELGIN** — Elgin School District Superintendent Dianne Greif, to the dismay of her school board, will soon do what she had initially planned to do in 2020 — begin her retirement.

Greif has decided step down as superintendent on June 30, 2022.

"I want to spend more time with my family," she told the Elgin School Board on Monday, Dec. 13.

Greif initially intended to retire in July of 2020 but moved her retirement plans back because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The superintendent said that she wanted to use her experience to help the school district overcome the uncommon challenges posed by the pandemic, which hit Oregon in March of 2020.

"I did not feel that it would be the right time to leave," she said.

The Elgin School Board voted 4-1 to accept Greif's resignation during its regularly scheduled meeting on Dec. 13. School board member Rod Spikes voted against accepting her resignation.

"She has done a great job for us," he said.

Greif has been Elgin's superintendent the past 6-1/2 years and has worked 29 years for the Elgin School District. She has done double duty throughout her stint as superintendent, serving as principal of Stella Mayfield School her first four years as superintendent and principal of Elgin High School the past 2-1/2 years.

Spikes said Greif is particularly needed now because of the work she does as principal of Elgin High School. He said a skilled administrator like Greif is needed to guide the school, which has many new staff members.

"She is such a good leader," he said. "She is always on top of things."

Greif began her career with the school district as a substitute kitchen staff worker and a substitute playground supervisor. She later taught third grade and middle school math at Stella Mayfield School for 17 years. She was named principal of Stella Mayfield School nine years ago.

Elgin School Board member Randy Laber, who like Spikes is upset that Greif is leaving, credits her with a diverse range of skills, including grant writing and communication.

"She is a woman of many capes," he said.

Laber credits Greif with always stepping forward when needed.

"If something needs to done, she is on it," he said.

Greif said that she feels good about the position the Elgin School District is in. She said it is on stable ground financially, has teachers who are doing an excellent job and its students are doing well in terms of academic achievement.

The superintendent, a 1979 Elgin High School graduate and a graduate of Eastern Oregon University, said she never imagined when she started working as a kitchen substitute and substitute playground supervisor that she someday would take the reins of the district.

"When I started, all I wanted to do was to become a teacher," she said.

Greif began pursuing a career as administrator in an effort to provide stability for the school district. Greif said during her 17-year teaching career she had nine principals, noting that the instability hurt the school and she wanted to provide the continuity it needed.

Greif said her career with the Elgin School District, despite the challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic, has been rewarding.

"My years with the school district have been spectacular," she said.

Greif said she will be available to help the school district as long as it needs her until a new superintendent is in place.

"I'm not going to just walk away when help is still needed," she said.



Greif