

TODAY

On Jan. 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court, in its *Roe v. Wade* decision, declared a nationwide constitutional right to abortion.

In 1901, Britain's Queen Victoria died at age 81 after a reign of 63 years; she was succeeded by her eldest son, Edward VII.

In 1938, Thornton Wilder's play "Our Town" was performed publicly for the first time in Princeton, New Jersey.

In 1944, during World War II, Allied forces began landing at Anzio, Italy.

In 1947, America's first commercially licensed television station west of the Mississippi, KTLA-TV in Los Angeles, made its official debut.

In 1995, Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy died at the Kennedy compound at Hyannis Port, Massachusetts, at age 104.

In 1997, the Senate confirmed Madeleine Albright as the nation's first female secretary of state.

In 1998, Theodore Kaczynski pleaded guilty in Sacramento, California, to being the Unabomber responsible for three deaths and 29 injuries in return for a sentence of life in prison without parole.

In 2006, Kobe Bryant scored 81 points, the second-highest in NBA history, in the Los Angeles Lakers' 122-104 victory over the Toronto Raptors.

In 2007, a double car bombing of a predominantly Shiite commercial area in Baghdad killed 88 people. Iran announced it had barred 38 nuclear inspectors on a United Nations list from entering the country in apparent retaliation for U.N. sanctions imposed the previous month.

In 2008, actor Heath Ledger, 28, was found dead of an accidental prescription overdose in a New York City apartment.

In 2009, President Barack Obama signed an executive order to close the Guantanamo Bay prison camp within a year. (The facility remained in operation as lawmakers blocked efforts to transfer terror suspects to the United States; President Donald Trump later issued an order to keep the jail open and allow the Pentagon to bring new prisoners there.)

In 2020, Chinese health authorities urged people in the city of Wuhan to avoid crowds and public gatherings after warning that a new viral illness that had infected hundreds of people and caused at least nine deaths could spread further. Health officials in Washington state said they were actively monitoring 16 people who'd come in close contact with a traveler to China, the first U.S. resident known to be infected with the virus.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Piper Laurie is 90. Celebrity chef Graham Kerr (TV: "The Galloping Gourmet") is 88. Author Joseph Wambaugh is 85. Singer Steve Perry is 73. Country singer-musician Teddy Gentry (Alabama) is 70. Movie director Jim Jarmusch is 69. Actor John Wesley Shipp is 67. Hockey Hall of Famer Mike Bossy is 65. Actor Linda Blair is 63. Actor Diane Lane is 57. Actor and rap DJ Jazzy Jeff is 57. Celebrity chef Guy Fieri is 54. Actor Olivia d'Abo is 53. Actor Katie Finneran is 51. Actor Gabriel Macht is 50. Actor Balthazar Getty is 47. Actor Christopher Kennedy Masterson is 42. Jazz singer Lizz Wright is 42. Pop singer Willa Ford is 41. Actor Beverly Mitchell is 41. Rock singer-musician Ben Moody is 41. Actor Kevin Sheridan is 40. Actor-singer Phoebe Strole is 39. Rapper Logic is 32. Tennis player Alizé Cornet is 32. Actor Sami Gayle is 26.

LOTTERY

Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2022

Megabucks

1-3-9-13-26-44

Jackpot: \$8.6 million

Lucky Lines

3-8-12-16-20-21-27-30

Estimated jackpot: \$13,000

Powerball

11-15-43-55-61

Powerball: 10

Power Play: 3

Jackpot: \$76 million

Win for Life

17-38-40-53

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 3-8-5-2

4 p.m.: 2-2-0-3

7 p.m.: 3-9-7-6

10 p.m.: 9-7-9-6

Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022

Lucky Lines

4-5-12-13-18-24-27-31

Jackpot: \$14,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 5-1-6-8

4 p.m.: 4-9-0-8

7 p.m.: 2-6-5-2

10 p.m.: 0-6-2-4

Power companies announce deal on B2H

The Observer

PORTLAND — Idaho Power, PacifiCorp and the Bonneville Power Administration have reached a nonbinding agreement on the massive Boardman to Hemingway transmission line.

The BPA in a press release Wednesday, Jan. 19, announced the agreement clarifies and updates roles and responsibilities for the B2H project.

"The proposed agreement is an important step for this 500-kilovolt, 290-mile transmission line, which would deliver 1,000 megawatts of reliable, affordable power in each direction between the Pacific Northwest and Mountain west," according to the press release.

Under the new deal, Idaho Power and PacifiCorp will jointly own the B2H transmission line, with PacifiCorp owning 55% and Idaho Power owning 45%.

Idaho Power will acquire an ownership interest in PacifiCorp transmission lines and other equipment between eastern Idaho and the Four Corners Substation in northwest New Mexico. B2H and those acquisitions amplify Idaho Power's connections to key energy markets that will help the company meet



East Oregonian, File

A crew works on a transmission line tower outside of Boardman in November 2017. The Bonneville Power Administration on Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2022, announced it, Idaho Power and PacifiCorp have a new deal on the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line that would run through Eastern Oregon.

customer demand.

The Bonneville Power Administration will transfer its ownership interest in B2H to Idaho Power and will not participate in construction or have any ownership interest in the transmission line project.

Facilities PacifiCorp uses to serve BPA's customers in and around southeast Idaho will be transferred to Idaho Power. BPA will acquire transmission service over Idaho Power's transmission system, including the newly constructed B2H, to serve public utility cus-

tomers in Idaho, Wyoming and Montana.

PacifiCorp will acquire Idaho Power transmission assets across southern Idaho that, combined with its majority stake in Boardman-Hemingway, will increase its contiguous power transfer capability between its western and eastern systems, and will acquire additional transmission service from BPA to enable it to serve its growing customer base in central Oregon.

With the non-binding term sheet developed, the three organizations move into a negotiation phase

to finalize the agreements and seek regulatory approval. Concurrent with this press release, BPA is issuing a letter to its regional stakeholders and customers that outlines the proposal, describes the background and explains the process for engaging with BPA on this topic.

Construction of the line is slated to begin in 2023, and B2H is anticipated to come online in 2026.

The term sheet and background information about B2H are available at www.boardmantohemingway.com.

Grant agreement approved for water storage study

Two studies on Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed will begin this year

By DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The Union County Board of Commissioners approved a grant agreement on Wednesday, Jan. 19, that will likely help an effort to ultimately improve the flow of rivers and streams in the Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed, which includes Catherine Creek.

The commissioners approved a grant agreement between Union County and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. The agreement involves a \$75,000 technical services grant for an Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Feasibility and Stream Flow study for water storage.

The grant, which came from the state's Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, will pay for a study of the results. The



Oregon Department of Transportation/Contributed Photo, File
Ice jams like this one in 2014 on Catherine Creek east of Union put the city at risk of flooding. The Union County Board of Commissioners approved a grant agreement on Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2022, that may improve the flow of rivers and streams in the Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed, including Catherine Creek.

Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership will use the study in its efforts to determine what steps can be taken to improve water storage in the Upper Grande Ronde River Basin.

The Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed Partnership — an organization with a wide range of members, including natural resources professionals, those in the agricultural industry and city representatives — has been meeting since 2016.

"Improved water storage is needed to reduce

flooding in the winter and spring and to prevent the river flows from becoming very low in the summer in the Upper Grande Ronde River Watershed," said Union County Commissioner Donna Beverage, a member of the partnership and its chair.

Water storage options the partnership may consider include expanding portions of rivers and streams to prevent the creation of ice jams in narrow stretches that can lead to flooding.

Another option could

be pumping water in Catherine Creek into underground caverns in the spring when flows are high and then pumping it out in the summer when flows are lower.

"We will explore all options. We want to help all water users without doing harm to any," Beverage said.

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board funding is one of two grants Union County has received for feasibility and stream flow studies in the Upper Grande Ronde River Basin. The county previously received a grant of more than \$75,000 from the Oregon Water Resources Department to conduct a water storage study.

The water storage study conducted with the grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board will complement the one funded by the Oregon Water Resources Department, Beverage said.

Both studies will be conducted by Anderson Perry & Associates, a La Grande-based engineering firm, and will begin later this year.

Cove, Imbler, Union schools coping with COVID-19

Some rural districts see fewer absences related to virus

By DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande and North Powder school districts are being hit hard by COVID-19 but three other Union County school districts are faring much better.

The La Grande School District's latest COVID-19 statistics, covering the week of Jan. 10-14, indicate that 98 students and 17 staff members missed

school because of positive COVID-19 tests, close contact with people who are COVID-19 positive or because of symptoms of the virus. The North Powder School District had 11 positive cases among students over a one-week period, which prompted the school district to offer only online Comprehensive Distance Learning starting Wednesday, Jan. 19, although in-person instruction is expected to begin again on Jan. 24.

The COVID-19 situation is significantly better in the Cove, Imbler and Union school districts.

The Union School District on Jan. 17 had one

staff member out due to either a positive COVID-19 test or a close contact, and two students were absent because of close contacts with family members who were believed to be COVID-19 positive.

Union School District Superintendent Carter Wells feels good about his district's COVID-19 situation but added that he knows it could change quickly.

"We have been very fortunate," Wells said.

The Imbler School District on Jan. 18 had one staff member out due to COVID-19 and four or five students absent due to close contacts. The stu-

dents' close contacts had been with family members, according to Imbler School District Superintendent Doug Hislop.

The Cove School District had one staff member out due to COVID-19 on Jan. 19 and less than 10 students out due to close contacts. All of the students' close contacts were family members, said Earl Pettit, superintendent of the school district. Pettit feels hopeful about his school district's COVID-19 status and does not foresee having to go to Comprehensive Distance Learning anytime soon.

"We are a long way from CDL," Pettit said.

NEWS BRIEF

La Grande sets forum on parks master plan

LA GRANDE — The city of La Grande Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission is set to host a public forum to discuss the 2022-2027 parks master plan. The meeting will be held via Zoom beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 3.

The meeting will gather public input on the final draft of the plan, which will serve as the department's guidelines for the next five years.

The plan was drafted by city staff and parks and recreation advisory commission members, as well as through community feedback. It includes suggested improvements to current parks as well as initiatives for

the next five years, such as increasing indoor recreation space, restrooms, trails and covered picnic areas.

The final draft of the master plan, as well as the meeting's Zoom link, can be found at www.cityoflagrande.org/parks-recreation. Parks and Recreation Director Stu Spence can also be reached at 541-962-1348.

— The Observer

City set to map out strategy, goals

La Grande council, URA to discuss 2022 priorities during city retreats

By DAVIS CARBAUGH

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande City Council and Urban Renewal Agency are set to meet for the annual city retreats, which will focus on exchanging strategies and goals for the upcoming year.

The Urban Renewal Agency will meet at 6 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, and the city council's retreat will begin at 6 p.m. Jan. 25.

The retreats serve as an opportunity for members of each group to collaborate on ideas for 2022, which will then become a point of emphasis during budget development for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. The retreats, to be held virtually, are open for viewing on the city's Facebook page, but public comment is not allowed during the meetings.

No official decisions or votes are conducted during the La Grande City Council retreat, but ideas can be scheduled for upcoming regular sessions.

Topics that will be discussed in the city council retreat are infrastructure-related needs and priorities, staffing needs among the city's police and fire departments, housing production strategy and commercial land needs analysis, recent concerns over homelessness at Max Square, increasing diversity and participation in commissions and committees, improvements to the city's parks, partnerships with the chamber of commerce and La Grande Main Street Downtown, wildland urban interface and budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

City Manager Robert Strobe at the council retreat will also relay his top priorities: fiscal management, COVID-19 recovery, economic development, wildland urban interface, general fund capital improvements, housing production strategy, staffing, Federal Emergency Management Agency maps and code amendments.

The URA will meet with a similar goal in mind, collaborating on ideas and creating priorities for the upcoming year.

One topic to be discussed is economic development strategy, which involves the city's priority industry sectors — recreational, manufacturing and retail, timber industry and e-commerce.

The agency will also discuss the potential for small-scale manufacturing and micro production in La Grande. The idea involves attracting small manufacturers that can utilize space in the city and assist in La Grande's local supply chain.

The URA will discuss the potential of a commercial land needs analysis and comprehensive plan goal, in order to address the shortage of available lands for large-scale commercial and retail development.

Agency members at the retreat will discuss the budget for urban renewal programs, which includes \$350,000 toward the non-business park Call for Projects, \$200,000 for business park Call for Projects, \$200,000 for the city's traded sector program and \$300,000 for agency-initiated programs. The retreat will conclude with a discussion of fiscal management related to the city's urban renewal plan.

Both meetings will be hosted on Facebook live at www.facebook.com/CityofLaGrande.