

TODAY

In 1865, President Abraham Lincoln and Confederate Vice President Alexander H. Stephens held a shipboard peace conference off the Virginia coast; the talks deadlocked over the issue of Southern autonomy.

In 1913, the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, providing for a federal income tax, was ratified.

In 1917, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany, the same day an American cargo ship, the SS Housatonic, was sunk by a U-boat off Britain after the crew was allowed to board lifeboats.

In 1959, rock-and-roll stars Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson died in a small plane crash near Clear Lake, Iowa.

In 1966, the Soviet probe Luna 9 became the first man-made object to make a soft landing on the moon.

In 1988, the U.S. House of Representatives handed President Ronald Reagan a major defeat, rejecting his request for \$36.2 million in new aid to the Nicaraguan Contras by a vote of 219-211.

In 1994, the space shuttle Discovery lifted off, carrying Sergei Krikalev, the first Russian cosmonaut to fly aboard a U.S. spacecraft.

In 1995, the space shuttle Discovery blasted off with a woman, Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Eileen Collins, in the pilot's seat for the first time in NASA history.

In 1998, a U.S. Marine plane sliced through the cable of a ski gondola in Italy, causing the car to plunge hundreds of feet, killing all 20 people inside.

In 2006, an Egyptian passenger ferry sank in the Red Sea during bad weather, killing more than 1,000 passengers.

In 2009, Eric Holder became the first black U.S. attorney general as he was sworn in by Vice President Joe Biden.

In 2020, in closing arguments at President Donald Trump's first impeachment trial, Democratic prosecutors urged senators to stop a "runaway presidency" and recognize Trump's actions in Ukraine as part of a pattern of behavior that would allow him to "cheat" in the 2020 election; Trump's defenders accused Democrats of trying to undo the 2016 election and said voters should decide Trump's fate.

Today's Birthdays: Football Hall of Famer Fran Tarkenton is 82. Actor Bridget Hanley is 81. Actor Blythe Danner is 79. Football Hall of Famer Bob Griese is 77. Singer-guitarist Dave Davies (The Kinks) is 75. Singer Melanie is 75. Actor Morgan Fairchild is 72. Actor Pamela Franklin is 72. Actor Nathan Lane is 66. Rock musician Lee Ranaldo is 66. Actor Thomas Calabro is 63. Rock musician/author Lol Tolhurst (The Cure) is 63. Actor-director Keith Gordon is 61. Actor Michele Greene is 60. Country singer Matraca Berg is 58. Actor Maura Tierney is 57. Actor Warwick Davis is 52. Actor Elisa Donovan is 51. Actor Isla Fisher is 46. Human rights activist Amal Clooney is 44.

CORRECTION

In the Page A1 story "Cultivating Community Confidence," published Saturday, Jan. 29, the story misstated that the Blue Mountain Humane Association used to be a kill shelter, euthanizing dozens of animals per day. The shelter was euthanizing dozens of animals per week, not per day. The story also misstated that the former president was living in the shelter. The former director lived in the shelter.

LOTTERY

Monday, Jan. 31, 2022

Megabucks

11-12-15-20-25-30

Estimated jackpot: \$1.1 million

Lucky Lines

4-8-10-14-19-24-27-31

Estimated jackpot: \$12,000

Win for Life

22-31-45-73

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 3-6-6-6

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

7 p.m.: 5-1-7-4

10 p.m.: 1-9-8-0

Tuesday, Feb. 1, 2022

Mega Millions

11-24-38-62-66

Mega Ball: 1

Megaplier: 4

Estimated jackpot: \$22 million

Lucky Lines

1-7-12-15-19-22-26-29

Estimated jackpot: \$13,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 9-0-6-9

4 p.m.: 3-6-4-0

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

10 p.m.: 5-0-6-9



Adam Stein/Contributed Photo

Cattle owned by Bob Dean Oregon Ranches feed on hay brought to them after they were stranded in deep snow on the Upper Imnaha.

Dean attorney disputes resignation

La Grande-based attorney says former ranch manager was dismissed

By **BILL BRADSHAW**

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — An attorney for the Bob Dean Oregon Ranches is disputing the circumstances by which former ranch manager B.J. Warnock left his job there, saying Warnock's departure was a "dismissal."

Attorney J. Logan Joseph, of the Joseph Law Firm, La Grande, confirmed in an email that Katie Romero, who comes from New Mexico, according to her website, is the new manager "of all Dean family cattle opera-

tions in Wallowa County," and said that Warnock's "dismissal" was "on or about Jan. 17 of this year."

Warnock has not returned a request for clarification on the matter.

Romero has stated that her boss, Bob Dean's wife, Karen Dean, has forbidden her from speaking to the press. Bob Dean is suffering mental trauma following a surgery in June, Karen Dean said in early January, so she is speaking for him.

Joseph said he knows nothing of Wallowa County Sheriff Joel Fish's investigation for possible animal neglect other than the investigation is ongoing.

Fish confirmed on Monday, Jan. 31, that he is still investigating.

The case involves hun-

dreds of cattle that were trapped in heavy snows in the Upper Imnaha area and the cows were unable to get themselves or their calves to safety. It is believed at least two dozen mother cows died, some of which "literally 'milked themselves to death,' in an attempt to provide for their calves," Wallowa County Stockgrowers President Tom Birkmaier said Jan. 19.

Numerous rescued calves were taken in by area ranchers and cared for. It is still uncertain how many cattle were involved, but Warnock originally said there were more than 1,500 on summer pasture that they were trying to bring out last fall.

Birkmaier and others rallied fellow ranchers to try to rescue the cows

and calves beginning in late December. The effort included taking hay to the animals by snowmobile or dropping it by helicopter. It also included bringing cattle out on a trailer pulled by a tracked vehicle that was able to get to the animals after private and public efforts to open backcountry roads.

Joseph added in his email the Dean family's appreciation for the help of locals in rescuing the cattle and calves.

"The Dean family would like to thank all of the local ranchers and any other persons that assisted in the location and retrieval of these cattle," the attorney wrote. "It is truly encouraging to see a community come together in such a fashion under such circumstances."

Elgin superintendent to remain

Dianne Greif, who intended to retire July 1, will remain after that date while a search for successor continues

By **DICK MASON**

The Observer

ELGIN — Elgin School District Superintendent Dianne Greif is delaying her retirement — for the second time in two years.

Greif, who announced in December that she would step down as superintendent on June 30, has agreed to stay on at the request of the Elgin School Board. The school board made its request after just two candidates applied for the position by the submission deadline in January.

Greif then agreed at the Elgin School Board's January meeting to continue serving as superintendent after June 30 until someone is found to succeed her. Greif will be working on a

part-time basis after June 30, when she will resign her position as Elgin High School principal, a position she's held since July 2019.

The Elgin School Board will hire someone later to fill the principal position.

Greif believes she will likely continue on as superintendent at least through June 30, 2023, adding she wants to work the extra time because it will give her a chance to finish projects she has helped start. One such project is the renovation of the school's football field, which still needs to have lights added, and the installation of a new and improved weight room at

the high school.

"I want to stay until the projects we have started are finished," she said.

The superintendent added that she also wants to help the Elgin School District use COVID-19 relief funding to upgrade the heating systems of both Stella Mayfield Elementary School and Elgin High School.

Greif initially intended to retire in July 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 2020.

Greif has been Elgin's superintendent the past 6-1/2 years and has worked 29 years in total for the Elgin School District.



Greif

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.

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.

She said she is looking forward to continuing to work with the Elgin School Board.

"We have a good working relationship. It is a good board to work with," Greif said.

The superintendent is a 1979 Elgin High School graduate and a graduate of Eastern Oregon University.

Grande Ronde Hospital announces expansion plans

Expansion project set to improve facilities, address space constraints

The Observer

LA GRANDE — Grande Ronde Hospital is putting in place a major expansion project of its facility.

The hospital released a statement on Wednesday, Feb. 2, stating that a "significant expansion" is on the way. According to the press release, the expansion will address spacing constraints in the hospital's operating and proce-

dures rooms as well as other areas of improvement.

"With more than a century of caring for the citizens of Union County and beyond, this investment will strengthen our ability to continue that legacy for future generations," Grande Ronde Hospital President and CEO Jeremy Davis said in the statement. "It is also a testament to our wonderful providers and staff, as well as the strong community support we have received."

According to the press release, construction is estimated to begin as early as the summer of 2022. A completion date is believed to be in 2024.

The statement noted that the volume of surgical services has risen at Grande Ronde Hospital over the past few years, as the recruitment of primary care providers and physicians increased. The expansion will address a need for more space in the operating and procedure rooms, as well as the need to comply with state code requirements in the future. The additional space will also improve the patient and process flow at Grande Ronde Hospital.

The expansion has been in the works among the Grande Ronde Hospital and Clinics Board of Trustees, consulting with health care

architects during the planning process. In addition, the hospital gathered feedback from the surgical services staff to address needs and wants in a potential expansion.

Additional details will be provided as the hospital finalizes specific plans regarding the expansion of its main campus in La Grande.

"This new expansion will empower GRH to continue recruiting and retaining providers, which supports our efforts in providing expanded services to our community," Board of Trustees Chair Teri Champlin said in the statement.

HEALTH

EOU COVID-19 case count a mixed bag

School's on-campus infection count stays steady; off-campus cases rise in January

By **DAVIS CARBAUGH**

The Observer

LA GRANDE — Like any other entity in Oregon, Eastern Oregon University has not been immune to the sharp increase in COVID-19 cases in the midst of the spike caused by the omicron variant.

The university saw a significant rise in off-campus cases in January, while its numbers among on-campus individuals stayed rather steady.

Eastern Oregon University has totaled 259 total positive COVID-19 cases this academic year, since the school began tracking data at the start of July. Of that total, just under 60% of the positive tests came from off-campus students, roughly 18% of the positive tests accounted for employees and just under 16% of the positive tests were from on-campus students.

Throughout the 2020-21 academic year, Eastern totaled 157 cases — 93 were among off-campus students.

From Dec. 6, 2021, to Jan. 1, there were 16 total cases among on-campus students. By the end of January, that total rose to 40. The rate among employees at Eastern Oregon University saw a similar mild increase, rising from 22 to 45.

Cases among off-campus students saw a significant rise in the same time frame, jumping from 44 cases to 152.

The university had several high points in January, mirroring national and statewide trends as the emergence of the omicron variant led to an increase in cases. Eastern recorded a record-high case count for a single day on Jan. 4, tallying 23 positive cases. The school recorded 21 cases on Jan. 10 and 14 on Jan. 25, all three of which are the highest single days since Eastern started tracking its COVID-19 data this school year.

The previous single-day high was seven cases on Sept. 13.

The numbers echo Union County's COVID-19 case counts, which have averaged just under 37 cases per day in January. The county's high point was reached on Jan. 26, when the Oregon Health Authority reported 85 cases. During the period from Jan. 17-30, Union County averaged just over 52 cases per day.

Eastern's testing has continually increased throughout the 2021-22 school year, reaching 2,458 total tests through Feb. 2. The 259 total positive tests result in a 10.5% positivity rate. The measurement had stayed steady around 5% through most of the fall, peaking toward the end of January and into February.

Eastern has 50 isolation rooms available on campus in case of infection, but the university has never come close to running out of space in that regard. From Jan. 5-10, 45 out of the 50 spaces were available, the lowest mark that Eastern has reached since the dashboard started tracking data at the start of July.

The vaccination rate among on-campus students stands at 75.7%, with a 24.2% exemption rate. For on-campus employees, 80.1% are vaccinated and 17.7% received an exemption.