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Abigail Dollins/Salem Statesman Journal

La Grande's Braden Carson celebrates with his coach and father, Klel Carson, during the OSAA Class 4A state wrestling championship on Saturday, Feb. 26, 2022. Wrestling in the 145-pound weight class, he earned his third state championship in the tournament, held at Cascade High School in Turner.

LEGISLATURE

Rural fire districts could change

Senate bill would authorize districts to annex 7 miles from fire department, raising property taxes

By ALEX WITTWER
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — Rural residents, outside city limits, may be brought into a city's fire district under a proposed law in the Oregon Legislature, resulting in increased taxes to pay for the service.

Senate Bill 1582 would allow rural fire districts to annex areas within 7 road miles of a fire department. That means residents who might have foregone paying taxes for fire protection services could see an increase to help fund the departments. The Senate on Thursday, Feb. 17, passed the bill 18-8.

For some fire chiefs, the legislation would give their departments the option to increase taxes. La Grande Rural Fire District Chief Craig

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'SO MUCH HEART'

Tigers bask in three individual titles, team title during Class 4A state championships

By JEFF BUDLONG • For The Observer

TURNER — A champion knows what it takes. "This is the second time I have been part of a state championship team which is just amazing," said La Grande three-time state wrestling champion Braden Carson following the conclusion of the Saturday, Feb. 26, OSAA Class 4A state wrestling tournament where the Tigers' scored 275.5 points to easily outdistance runner-up Sweet Home.

That amazing feeling was the result of a dominant team flexing its muscles on the biggest stage to bring home the school's fourth team title and three individual champions. In all, the Tigers finished with 14 individuals who placed during the one-day tournament at Cascade High School.

Carson was joined by Kai Carson and Joshua Collins on top of the podium.

"Honestly, my team impressed me more than I thought they could," Braden Carson said. "There were some guys that won matches they weren't supposed to and got after it. I am so proud of all of them because they have just shown so much heart and grit throughout the entire year."

For complete results for the weekend's state wrestling tournament, see Page A9



Abigail Dollins/Salem Statesman Journal

La Grande's Joshua Collins competes against Stayton's Eli Howard in the 138-pound weight class of the OSAA Class 4A state wrestling championship on Saturday, Feb. 26, 2022, at Cascade High School in Turner.

Oregon will lift mask mandate March 12

By GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon will drop its indoor mask mandate on March 12, more than a week earlier than announced last week.

Gov. Kate Brown said Monday, Feb. 28, that Oregon, California and Washington would lift their mandates simultaneously at 11:59 p.m. March 11. The new date includes ending mask mandates in schools. The order will affect more than 51.2 million people from the Mexican border to the Canadian border, about 15% of the national population.

The move comes on the two-year anniversary of the first case of COVID-19 reported in Oregon, on Feb. 28, 2020, in Washington County. Working with California

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Foster parents needed in Northeastern Oregon

Foster families will share their experiences during March virtual event

By LISABRITTON
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Foster families are needed in Northeastern Oregon, and an event is scheduled in March for those who would like to learn more about foster care.

And it will be virtual, so people can join from anywhere.

During the discussion, a panel of experienced families

will share their stories about providing foster care.

"To share their experiences, and why they got started," said Tammie Blessing, resource family retention and recruitment champion for Districts 13 and 14, which includes Baker, Union, Wallowa, Grant, Harney and Malheur counties. "Having families talk about it is our best

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Contributed Photo

Kala and Terry Linville have been foster parents, and adopted their daughter, Evey, in 2021. Foster families will share their experiences during a virtual event on March 16, 2022. Anyone interested in learning more about foster care is encouraged to join.

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WEATHER Full forecast on the back of B section

 <p>Tonight 39 Low A few showers</p>	 <p>Wednesday 51/37 Cloudy, a shower</p>
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La Grande, Oregon

Email story ideas to news@lagrandeobserver.com.
More contact info on Page A4.



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THURSDAY

EOU LACROSSE SETTLES INTO SEASON

Online at lagrandeobserver.com