

TODAY

In 1643, Louis XIV became King of France at age 4 upon the death of his father, Louis XIII.

In 1796, English physician Edward Jenner inoculated 8-year-old James Phipps against smallpox by using cowpox matter.

In 1804, the Lewis and Clark expedition to explore the Louisiana Territory as well as the Pacific Northwest left camp near present-day Hartford, Illinois.

In 1940, the Netherlands surrendered to invading German forces during World War II.

In 1948, according to the current-era calendar, the independent state of Israel was proclaimed in Tel Aviv by David Ben-Gurion, who became its first prime minister; U.S. President Harry S. Truman immediately recognized the new nation.

In 1955, representatives from eight Communist bloc countries, including the Soviet Union, signed the Warsaw Pact in Poland. (The Pact was dissolved in 1991.)

In 1961, Freedom Riders were attacked by violent mobs in Anniston and Birmingham, Alabama.

In 1988, 27 people, mostly teens, were killed when their church bus collided with a pickup truck going the wrong direction on a highway near Carrollton, Kentucky. (Truck driver Larry Mahoney served 9-1/2 years in prison for manslaughter.)

In 1998, singer-actor Frank Sinatra died at a Los Angeles hospital at age 82. The hit sitcom "Seinfeld" aired its final episode after nine years on NBC.

In 2001, the Supreme Court ruled 8-0 that there is no exception in federal law for people to use marijuana for medical purposes.

In 2003, more than 100 immigrants were abandoned in a locked trailer at a Texas truck stop; 19 of them died. (Truck driver Tyrone Williams was later sentenced to nearly 34 years in prison for his role in the deaths.)

In 2008, the Interior Department declared the polar bear a threatened species because of the loss of Arctic sea ice.

In 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned doctors about a serious rare inflammatory condition in children linked with the coronavirus.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama sought to tarnish Republican Mitt Romney as a corporate titan who got rich by cutting rather than creating jobs; Romney's campaign responded that the former Massachusetts governor alone helped spur more public and private jobs than Obama had.

Five years ago: Emmanuel Macron swept into office as France's new president, pledging to fortify the European Union, redesign French politics and glue together his divided nation.

One year ago: Demonstrating allegiance to Donald Trump, Republicans elected Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York, a Trump stalwart, to a House leadership post that had been held by Trump critic Liz Cheney until she was tossed from that post days earlier.

Today's Birthdays: Photo-realist artist Richard Estes is 90. Actor Dame Sian Phillips is 89. Movie producer George Lucas is 78. Actor Meg Foster is 74. Movie director Robert Zemeckis is 71. Rock singer David Byrne is 70. Actor Tim Roth is 61. Rock singer Ian Astbury (The Cult) is 60. Rock musician C.C. (aka Cecil) DeWille is 60. Actor Danny Huston is 60. Rock musician Mike Inez (Alice In Chains) is 56. Fabrice Morvan (ex-Milli Vanilli) is 56. R&B singer Raphael Saadiq is 56. Actor Cate Blanchett is 53. Singer Danny Wood (New Kids on the Block) is 53. Movie writer-director Sofia Coppola is 51. Actor Gabriel Mann is 50. Singer Natalie Appleton (All Saints) is 49. Singer Shanice is 49. Actor Carla Jimenez is 48. Rock musician Henry Garza (Los Lonely Boys) is 44. Rock musician Mike Retondo (Plain White T's) is 41. Actor Amber Tamblyn is 39. Facebook co-founder Mark Zuckerberg is 38. Actor Lina Escó is 37. NFL player Rob Gronkowski is 33. Actor Miranda Cosgrove is 29.

CORRECTIONS
The Observer works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-963-3161.

LOTTERY

Wednesday, May 11, 2022
Megabucks
2-14-18-21-36-37
Jackpot: \$5.4 million
Lucky Lines
1-5-11-13-19-21-27-29
Estimated jackpot: \$29,000
Powerball
5-7-61-63-69
Powerball: 18
Power Play: 2
Jackpot: \$83 million
Win for Life
12-25-33-55
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 9-5-3-6
4 p.m.: 2-5-7-6
7 p.m.: 3-9-0-6
10 p.m.: 5-4-2-1
Thursday, May 12, 2022
Lucky Lines
3-5-9-14-18-21-28-31
Jackpot: \$30,000
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 1-8-3-2
4 p.m.: 3-1-4-2
7 p.m.: 3-3-1-7
10 p.m.: 4-3-2-0



Ian Crawford/Baker City Herald

Students from North Powder Elementary rush to be the first to try the new equipment on North Powder's renovated playground on Thursday, May 12, 2022. The children ran through the crepe paper ribbon to officially open the newly named G.M. Huckleberry Park Playground. The equipment cost \$67,000 and was purchased with money raised from donations and grants.

Community, students celebrate restored, updated playground

Play area with all-new equipment officially opened in North Powder

By DICK MASON

The Observer

NORTH POWDER — The restored playground at North Powder's city park is now formally open thanks to about 60 energetic children.

Students from nearby North Powder Elementary School participated in a grand opening ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, May 12. The children cut through a crepe

paper ribbon on the edge of the playground by running through it.

The unusual ribbon cutting ceremony officially opened a renovated playground that features a swing set with six swings, two designed for small children and four for older children; a double teeter-totter; a merry-go-round; and a jungle gym with a double slide and a curly slide attached.

All of the items replaced the previous equipment that was in poor condition because of age, according to Beth Wendt, North Powder city recorder.

Almost all of the children who participated in the ribbon-cutting event

were kindergarten, first and second grade students at North Powder Elementary School and were brought to the playground by their teachers.

The grand opening was conducted at what is now G.M. Huckleberry Park Playground. The name reflects the fact that the North Powder area is known for its huckleberries and that there is an annual huckleberry festival in the city each summer, Wendt said. The city park, until now, did not have a formal name.

The new playground equipment at the park cost \$67,000 and was purchased with money raised from donations and grants.

The new equipment was installed last fall and since then finishing work has been conducted. Children began using the new playground once the new items were put in.

"Some children were even using them when there was snow on the ground," Wendt said.

Today, many more children are coming to the playground than before the new equipment was installed, Wendt said. Sometimes the playground almost seems too popular.

"Hardly a day goes by when I don't look at that playground and wonder if the children there are skipping school," she said.

Willow Creek Bridge to be restored

UC Commissioners give project the green light

By DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — A bridge built when Lyndon Johnson was president is set to be restored.

The Union County Board of Commissioners voted on Wednesday, May 11, to enter into an agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation to restore the Willow Creek Bridge on Courtney Lane about 3 miles northwest of Imbler.

The total project will cost an estimated \$508,000,



Dick Mason/The Observer

A vehicle passes over Willow Creek Bridge on Wednesday, May 11, 2022, on Courtney Lane a few miles northwest of Imbler. The bridge is deteriorating and Union County and ODOT will begin a restoration project in about two years.

with the Oregon Department of Transportation picking up \$456,000 of the tab and Union County handling the other \$52,000. ODOT's funding for the replacement will be provided by the Federal

Highway Bridge Replacement Program, according to Union County Public Works Director Doug Wright.

The Willow Creek Bridge was built in 1965 and age has taken a toll on the structure, which was

selected by the ODOT Bridge Selection Committee for replacement. Wright said the bridge is supported by timber piles that are showing signs of decay. The timber piles will be replaced by steel piles during the restoration process.

The restoration work will not begin for about two years, Wright said. This is because of the time needed to get environmental permits and to complete the design.

The Willow Creek Bridge serves an important role because Courtney Lane is used by agricultural vehicles and local residents. Courtney Lane is also used as a detour route when Highway 82 is closed, Wright said.

Brown submits appointments for Senate confirmation

The Observer

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown submitted a list of state board and commission appointments to the Oregon Senate for confirmation — and four Union County residents are up for consideration.

Eastern Oregon University President Tom Insko is up for reappointment for a four-year term on the Oregon Business Development Commission.

"I am committed to ensuring that all boards and commissions represent the growing racial, gender, and age diversity of our state,"

Brown said in a press release. "State board and commission members bring a diverse set of life experiences and backgrounds to address the wide range of ongoing issues facing Oregon. I appreciate the willingness of all these nominees to help us build a safer, stronger, just and equitable Oregon



Insko



Mendoza



Cavinato



Martin

for all." Brown's appointments fill some holes on the Eastern Oregon University Board of Trustees.

Anna Cavinato, of La Grande, was appointed to a two-year-term to replace Karyn Gomez. Cavinato is currently a professor of chemistry at Eastern. Current board members

Cheryl Martin and George Mendoza have both been reappointed for four-year terms. Martin is currently the vice chair of the board and is a rancher/owner of VP Ranch in North Powder. Mendoza is the La Grande School District's superintendent.

Richard Chaves, president of Chaves Consulting in Baker City, has also been reappointed to a four-year term on the EOU Board of Trustees. Chaves is currently the chair of the board.

The Senate Committee on Rules is scheduled to consider the nominations in June.

NEWS BRIEFS

Budget meeting planned in Joseph on May 24

JOSEPH — An online budget meeting will be held by the Joseph City Council at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 24. The public is welcome to attend via Zoom or by telephone.

To join the Zoom meeting, visit <https://bit.ly/38fDGiv>. The webinar ID is 881 3875 4137 and the passcode is 269827.

To attend by phone, dial 253 215 8782.

The city council must approve the budget by the end of June.

Joseph to hold hearing on requested zoning change

JOSEPH — A public hearing on a resident's request for a zoning change will be held during the Joseph City Council meeting Thursday, June 2, according to a press release.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m.

at the Joseph Community Events Center. The public is welcome to attend in person or via Zoom.

To join the Zoom meeting, visit <https://bit.ly/38fDGiv>. The webinar ID is 881 3875 4137 and the passcode is 269827. To attend by telephone, call 253-215-8782.

The council will adjourn its regular session to go into the public hearing to consider a request by Andy McKee for a minor partition of property at 201 E. Second St. and a zoning change from R-2 (general residential) to commercial.

A map showing the request is available on the city's website.

All residents who own property within the 250-foot conditional use/ variance zone are allowed to voice any concerns about the requested changes. The council also urges any residents with other concerns to speak at the hearing.

Anyone wishing to provide input before the meeting is asked to do so before 4 p.m. May 25 at Joseph

City Hall or email the cityofjosephoregon@gmail.com. For questions regarding this meeting, call city hall at 541-432-3832.

May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

SALEM — As Oregon weather turns warmer, drivers should expect to see more motorcycle and moped riders on the road. By intentionally looking for riders, drivers can reduce the potential of a "Looked But Failed to See" crash, according to a press release.

The governor has proclaimed the month of May Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, urging all drivers to "look twice" for riders.

The proclamation also encourages riders to ride in a courteous, legally compliant manner, which can reduce some risks associated with riding motorcycles and mopeds.

—EO Media Group

Future VA town hall planned

Wyden to gather input on changes to Walla Walla Clinic

By DAVIS CARBAUGH

The Observer

SALEM — Following a series of local virtual town hall meetings in Eastern Oregon, Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden is looking to voice the concerns of local veterans regarding a proposed downgrade to the Jonathan M. Wainwright Memorial Veterans Administration Medical Center in Walla Walla.

Wyden fielded input from local veterans in Union County and surrounding areas during a string of virtual town hall meetings, several of which were related to concerns over the potential plan to limit the scope of physical and mental health services at the medical center.

The proposal would move services such as a 31-bed residential rehabilitation treatment program to Spokane, Washington, increasing travel time and complications for veterans in Eastern Oregon who currently utilize the Walla Walla clinic's current services.

In a letter addressed to Dr. Teresa Boyd of the VA Northwest Health Network Office and Walla Walla VAMC Director Scott Kelter, Wyden forwarded the comments of local veterans and called for more input from veterans in the decision-making process. The letter came in the wake of a call with the VA officials to discuss the apprehension expressed by veterans in Eastern Oregon.

"I have been hearing throughout Eastern Oregon from veterans that the physical and mental health services at the Walla Walla VAMC are critical to their well-being," Wyden wrote in the letter. "Simply put, they have well-founded fears that the proposed facility downgrade will reduce the access to vital services they've earned."

The VA already has a community-based outpatient clinic in La Grande, which is frequently used by veterans in the rural region. The proposed changes to the Walla Walla center would make it similar to the La Grande clinic, and local veterans who need services beyond the outpatient clinic would have to travel to Spokane instead. Wyden cited winter conditions, lack of public transit and weather-related highway closures as reasons for concern over the proposed limitations of the Walla Walla clinic.

In his letter Wyden wrote that he finds these changes "particularly troubling to my constituents in Oregon, who often trek across state lines to receive crucial care from the VA," he wrote. "Adding 180 miles to their commute will effectively cut off access to behavioral health and substance use treatment services."

Wyden also included several other points from the local town halls in the letter, such as delays in travel reimbursement and technical failures related to the electronic health record system. The letter included seven questions in regard to how the proposed downgrade at the Walla Walla Clinic would negatively impact veterans in Eastern Oregon.

Following the letter, Wyden's team reported that the VA and senator are planning a town hall to gather more input from local veterans on the future plans regarding their health care. Dates and formats for the town hall will be determined in the near future.



Wyden