TODAY

In 1566, French astrologer, physician and professed prophesier Nostradamus died in Salon

In 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution saying that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States.

In 1881, President James A. Garfield was shot by Charles J. Guiteau at the Washington railroad station; Garfield died the following September. (Guiteau was hanged in June 1882.)

In 1917, rioting erupted in East St. Louis, Illinois, as white mobs attacked Black residents; nearly 50 people, mostly Blacks, are believed to have died in the violence.

In 1937, aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific Ocean while attempting to make the first round-the-world flight along the equator.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law a sweeping civil rights bill passed by Congress.

In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court, in Gregg v. Georgia, ruled 7-2 that the death penalty was not inherently cruel or unusual

In 1979, the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin was released to the

In 1986, ruling in a pair of cases, the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action as a remedy for past job discrimination.

In 1990, more than 1,400 Muslim pilgrims were killed in a stampede inside a pedestrian tunnel near Mecca, Saudi Arabia

In 1997, Academy Award-winning actor James Stewart died in Beverly Hills, California, at age 89.

In 2018, rescue divers in Thailand found 12 boys and their soccer coach, who had been trapped by flooding as they explored a cave more than a week

In 2020, a statement posted on his Twitter account revealed that former GOP presidential candidate Herman Cain was being treated for the coronavirus at an Atlanta-area hospital, less than two weeks after attending President Donald Trump's campaign rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma. (Cain died on July 30 of complications from the virus.) British socialite Ghislaine Maxwell was arrested in New Hampshire on charges that she had helped lure at least three girls - one as young as 14 — to be sexually abused by the late financier Jeffrey Epstein. (Maxwell would be convicted on five of six counts.)

Ten years ago: Jim Yong Kim began his new job as president of the World Bank, promising to immediately focus on helping poor countries navigate a fragile global economy.

Five years ago: New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie was photographed with his family soaking up the sun on a beach he had closed to the public for the Fourth of July weekend because of a government shutdown.

One year ago: After nearly 20 years, U.S. forces in Afghanistan vacated the biggest U.S. air base there, Bagram Airfield, as part of the final U.S. withdrawal from the country; an Afghan official said dozens of looters then stormed through the gates before Afghan forces regained control

Today's birthdays: Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos is 93. Jazz musician Ahmad Jamal is 92. Actor Robert Ito is 91. Actor Polly Holliday is 85. Racing Hall of Famer Richard Petty is 85. Former White House chief of staff and former New Hampshire governor John H. Sununu is 83. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox is 80. Writer-director-comedian Larry David is 75. Luci Baines Johnson, daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson, is 75. Actor Saul Rubinek is 74. Actor-model Jerry Hall is 66. Actor Jimmy McNichol is 61. Actor Yancy Butler is 52. Actor Owain Yeoman is 44. Race car driver Sam Hornish Jr. is 43. Singer Michelle Branch is 39. Figure skater Johnny Weir is 38. Actor Lindsay Lohan is 36. Actor Margot Robbie is 32. U.S. Olympic swimmer Ryan Murphy

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, June 29, 2022

Megabucks 3-13-15-24-29-39 Jackpot: \$2.8 million **Lucky Lines**

1-7-11-13-18-23-25-30 Estimated jackpot: \$23,000

Powerball 8-40-49-58-63

Powerball: 14 Power Play: 3 Jackpot: \$20 million Win for Life

6-13-55-68

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

Thursday, June 30, 2022 **Lucky Lines**

3-8-10-14-19-24-28-30 Jackpot: \$24,000 Pick 4

1 p.m.: 2-8-8-3 4 p.m.: 3-2-9-7 7 p.m.: 3-3-1-0 10 p.m.: 4-0-2-9

Defendant in arson case posts bail

Fire department officials reveal two previous fires happened at the care facility By ISABELLA CROWLEY

The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande man arrested on charges of arson and reckless endangering at the Wildflower Lodge is now out of jail.

Teryn DeMoss, 20, was taken into custody on Thursday, June 23, and lodged in the Union County Jail without incident, according to a press release from the La Grande Police Department. DeMoss worked as the lodge's cook and had been employed at the assisted living facility for over a

"DeMoss ultimately confessed and told me he started the fire in room 42," wrote detective Scott Norton in the probable cause declaration. "I asked DeMoss to tell me how he started the fire and he told me he lit a cardboard box located against the south wall of the room on fire with his lighter (consistent with physical evidence showing fire origin)."

Bail was set at \$25,000 and DeMoss posted his security release of \$2,500



Isabella Crowley/The Observer

A bus waits at the front drive of Wildflower Lodge, La Grande, on Thursday, June 30, 2022. The assisted care facility was the site of three suspicious fires in 2022, the latest of which is the focus of an ongoing arson court case.

on June 25, according to court documents. The conditions of his release include not entering the Wildflower Lodge property and not having any contact with representatives or employees of the facility.

In the declaration, Norton stated he was informed by Deputy State Fire Marshal Casey Kump and La Grande Fire Department Chief Emmitt Cornford that there had been three suspicious fires in the facility since the beginning of 2022 — one in a bathroom, one in a laundry room and the latest fire in room 42.

Norton requested employee records and identified DeMoss — along with two other employees as being listed as working on all three days.

In an interview with police, a lodge employee told the police about additional suspicious activities related to the facility's circuit breakers. The circuit breaker in the kitchen office and the maintenance room had been intentionally flipped on numerous occasions. The employee noticed that the flipped breakers in the maintenance room were predominantly associated with fire control, response and suppression systems. Additionally, the breaks flipped in the kitchen office were for outlets, lights and fire doors in the memory care portion of the facility.

While being interviewed, DeMoss also admitted to being charged with arson as a juvenile. He did not confess to setting the other two fires.

DeMoss is represented by Jared Boyd, of La Grande.

The hearing plea has been scheduled for Aug. 30 in Union County Circuit

Council to consider Parks master plan approval

New plan outlines upgrades to existing assets and areas for new opportunity By ISABELLA CROWLEY

The Observer LA GRANDE — The La Grande City Council is set to consider a new Parks and Recreation

master plan at its regular

session on Wednesday,

July 6. The plan is intended to help meet the needs of current and future residents of La Grande by building onto the community's existing parks and recreation assets and iden-

tifying new opportunities.

The plan includes five

years worth of recommendations and was created based on responses from a community survey.

This city council meeting's agenda includes a public hearing to address comments on the master plan.

The council will also discuss a number of new topics at the session, such as updating the language in the historic district design standards.

The document was written in 1999 as guidelines. The name was updated to standards in 2009, but no changes were made to the wording of the document. As a result, many of the standards are still phrased as recommendations rather than requirements. This has led to confusion from property owners.

Downtown property owners and businesses were invited to review the proposed changes and were asked to provide public comment at the July 6 meeting.

Also in the new business section is an interagency agreement between the city of La Grande and the La Grande School District for use of Pioneer Park's baseball and softball fields.

The artificial turf installed for Optimist Field and Trice Community Field was a cooperative project undertaken by the city and the school district. The proposed agreement outlines both parties' responsibilities when it comes to the baseball and softball fields, equipment and facilities such as the concession stand, box office and restrooms.

The council has also been asked to consider the annexation of two parcels of property. Property owners on the 1600 block of Gildcrest Drive have requested to be annexed by the city in order to have access to water and sewer services provided by La Grande. The property is located within the city of La Grande's urban growth boundary.

Other items on the agenda include appointing members to both the arts and planning commissions.

The regular session meeting will be open to the public at La Grande City Hall. The meeting also will be streamed at the La Grande Alive website and on Facebook.

DEQ fines Union for wastewater permit violation

UNION — The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issued four penalties on Wednesday, June 29, totaling \$78,040 for various environmental violations in May, including a \$3,300 penalty for wastewater issues in Union.

The penalty is for violating the chlorine residual effluent limit in the city's

Wiggins National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit, according to a letter to the city of Union from Kieran O'Donnell, DEQ manager of the office of compliance and enforcement. Chlorine

is highly toxic to fish and other aquatic life in Catherine Creek, the letter said.

According to the state's findings, on Dec. 11, 2020, the city discharged effluent with a chlorine concentration of 0.47 milligrams per liter, exceeding the 0.07 milligrams per liter limit allowed by the city's wastewater discharge permit.

The city must either pay the fine or file an appeal within 20 days of receiving notice of the penalty. It may be able to offset a portion of a penalty by funding a supplemental environmental project that improves Oregon's

environment. Union City Administrator Doug Wiggins said the chlorine got into Catherine Creek because of the failure of a dechlorination

"The system failed," he

Wiggins said the problem occurred early in the morning and the city found out about it at 6:30 a.m. that morning and it was corrected within 30 minutes.

Wiggins said the city would have found out about it sooner but the alarm indicating there was a problem also failed. The city is now appealing the calculation of the fine, which it believes is too high.

Wiggins said Union was not given proper credit for foreseeing the potential problem and having a system in place for preventing it. He also said the city did not get credit for

the fact that the problem did not involve operator

"It was purely mechanical," he said.

Wiggins said he believes DEQ's formula for determining fines calls for them to be lower when a violation is not caused by operator failure. He said that based upon Oregon Administrative Rules the fine should be at least a third less.

"We believe the fine should be no more than \$2,100," he said.

The city administrator said the city told the DEQ about the violation the same day it occurred.

DEQ penalties in May were also issued to Coos Bay, Sandy and Albany, ranging from \$2,250 to \$62,290.

NEWS BRIEFS

CDC: Union, Baker, Wallowa counties reach high levels for COVID spread

LA GRANDE — The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention raised the COVID-19 community levels Thursday, June 30, to high for Union, Wallowa and Baker and 12 other Oregon counties.

The increasing spread means 24 Oregon counties are now at high levels of community spread. Nine counties were at high levels as of

June 23.

All other Oregon counties were listed June 30 at medium levels. Umatilla, Morrow and Malheur counties are also listed at high.

The CDC has been monitoring community levels of COVID-19 to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions and the total number of new COVID-19

cases reported in an area.

Precautions the CDC recommends for communities with high

- Wear a mask indoors in public. • Stay up to date with COVID-19
- vaccines. • Get tested if you have

severe illness.

- symptoms. Additional precautions may be needed for people at high risk for
 - The Observer

'Nothing out of the ordinary'

SATURDAY, JULY 2, 2022

Wallowa County food bank not touched by inflation, for now

By JACK PARRY

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — As trying economic times stretch across the country, it is important to remember that some of the government's essential services, like food banks, are going through similar struggles.

Surprisingly, those struggles haven't had a noticeable effect on the Community Connection of Wallowa County's food distribution center in Enterprise.

Danielle Brockamp, the manager of the center, said that effects of recent inflation and rising gas prices aren't having that much of an impact on the branch.

"I went back the past couple months, and there really hasn't been anything out of the ordinary," she said.

Brockamp, who started at Community Connection in April, only noticed that ground beef was becoming harder to obtain, and she said there hasn't been a jump in the number of people served.
"We have not seen a

whole lot of an increase in our food bank usage yet," she said.

Wallowa County seems fine but that's not the case in nearby counties. Audrey Smith, the manager of Community Connection's Northeast Oregon Regional Food Bank, based in La Grande, has seen a change in the region as a whole, which includes Baker, Grant, Union, and Wallowa counties.

She reported a 7.5% increase in food boxes, which are given out once a month. Also, the food bank has had a 23% increase in produce, bread and grocery rescue boxes. Produce boxes are given out multiple times a month, so the tends to vary more.

"You have a few extra people coming in to get food boxes, and you have a lot of people that are using our produce and grocery rescue program more often," Smith said.

So why is Wallowa County's food bank not experiencing similar trends? Smith believes that's because it's a lot smaller than other operations with just two pantries, in Enterprise and Wallowa. The economic impacts may be harder to notice in Enterprise than they are in the region.

"From January through April, we had an average of 124 people come to the pantry, and in May we had 155," she said. "That is a little bit of an increase."

Brockamp noted that Wallowa County's food bank supply comes from other sources.

"Our Harvest Share and our Fresh Alliance that we get from Safeway help to supplement our food bank," she said. "That helps to sustain our fresher foods, the meat and the salads and stuff like that."

While Brockamp said transportation costs aren't affecting the Enterprise-based center, Smith said that the regional food bank has been renting a U-Haul truck two times a week to transport produce across Northeastern Oregon. They are still waiting for a refrigerated truck that they received a grant for in December of last year.

With gas prices exceeding expectations for grants that they received, the cost of renting a U-Haul is really hurting the produce

"We'll continue to do it as long as we can," Smith