

**TODAY**

**In 1687**, Isaac Newton first published his “Principia Mathematica,” a three-volume work setting out his mathematical principles of natural philosophy.

**In 1811**, Venezuela became the first South American country to declare independence from Spain.

**In 1865**, the Secret Service Division of the U.S. Treasury Department was founded in Washington, D.C., with the mission of suppressing counterfeit currency.

**In 1935**, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act.

**In 1940**, during World War II, Britain and the Vichy government in France broke off diplomatic relations.

**In 1943**, the Battle of Kursk began during World War II; in the weeks that followed, the Soviets were able to repeatedly repel the Germans, who eventually withdrew in defeat.

**In 1947**, Larry Doby made his debut with the Cleveland Indians, becoming the first Black player in the American League three months after Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in the National League. (In the game against the Chicago White Sox at Comiskey Park, Doby, pinch-hitting for Bryan Stephens, struck out in his first at-bat during the seventh inning; Chicago won 6-5.)

**In 1954**, Elvis Presley’s first commercial recording session took place at Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee; the song he recorded was “That’s All Right.”

**In 1971**, President Richard Nixon certified the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which lowered the minimum voting age from 21 to 18.

**In 1975**, Arthur Ashe became the first Black man to win a Wimbledon singles title as he defeated Jimmy Connors, 6-1, 6-1, 5-7, 6-4.

**In 2008**, Venus Williams won her fifth Wimbledon singles title, beating younger sister Serena 7-5, 6-4 in the final.

**In 2011**, a jury in Orlando, Florida, found Casey Anthony, 25, not guilty of murder, manslaughter and child abuse in the 2008 disappearance and death of her 2-year-old daughter, Caylee.

**Ten years ago**: Trucks carrying NATO supplies rolled into Afghanistan for the first time in more than seven months, ending a painful chapter in U.S.-Pakistan relations that saw the border closed until Washington apologized for an airstrike that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers.

**Five years ago**: The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that two laws passed by Congress did not end the right to a bond hearing for unaccompanied immigrant children who are detained by federal authorities.

**One year ago**: Amazon founder Jeff Bezos officially stepped down as CEO; he was succeeded by Andy Jassy, who ran Amazon’s cloud-computing business.

**Today’s birthdays**: Singer-musician Robbie Robertson is 79. Julie Nixon Eisenhower is 74. Rock star Huey Lewis is 72. Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Rich “Goose” Gosage is 71. Singer-songwriter Marc Cohn is 63. Actor Edie Falco is 59. R&B singer Joe is 49. Rock musician Bengt Lagerberg (The Cardigans) is 49. Actor Dale Godboldo is 47. Rapper Bizarre is 46. Rapper Royce da 5’9” is 45. Rock singer Jason Wade (Lifehouse) is 42. Country musician Dave Haywood (Lady A) is 40. Soccer player Megan Rapinoe is 37. California Angels pitcher and designated hitter Shohei Ohtani is 28.



The Observer, File

Rebel Woolworks owner Tara Sager poses for a picture behind the store’s counter on Tuesday, July 20, 2021. The speciality store, which sold hand-dyed yarn and featured a mercantile for artisan products, closed in June 2022.

# Downtown yarn business closes

**Rebel Woolworks owner leaving La Grande to take job in Alaska**

By **DICK MASON**  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — La Grande is losing a business that appeared to have a promising future.

Rebel Woolworks, a dyed yarn shop at 113 Adams Ave., closed in June. The store’s owner, Tara Sager, wrote on her store’s Facebook page that she will be moving to Alaska where she has accepted a construction project management position.

Sager’s store celebrated its one-year anniversary in April and seemed then to have a bright path ahead of it.

“It’s been a whirlwind, but I’m really looking forward to next year,” Sager said in an April 14 Observer article. “It’s moved from what was a hobby turning into a business, into a business that is continuing to grow and expand.”

Sager declined to discuss why she closed her



Dick Mason/The Observer

A message remains displayed on a window of Rebel Woolworks, a store now closed, on Friday, July 1, 2022.

shop last month. However, on her Facebook page she wrote that her business was impacted when her Instagram account was hacked in late May.

“As a dyer that depends upon my platform to support my business, this has been devastating,” the Facebook post said. “There were massive monetary losses with this hack as well.”

Sager said the money lost and the hack forced her to make her move.

“This loss has forced

us to look outside the box at options to sustain our family. The option we decided on has been something on our back burner for a couple years and is going to take us away from Eastern Oregon,” the Facebook post said.

Sager started selling dyed yarn online in 2010, knitting hats and gloves to help people stay warm in Alaska, where she then lived, during the winter. She moved to La Grande in May 2020 and was intrigued with the

town’s downtown area, according to the April 14 Observer article, which reported that Sager’s business had become a staple of the business landscape downtown. The business included a mercantile on the left side of the space, offering teas, coffees, gourmet desserts and other goods from local stores around the Pacific Northwest. In April Sager said the mercantile was serving as a good resource for customers on their way to go camping or just passing by on a day trip through the area.

Rebel Woolworks earlier won a La Grande Business plan contest hosted by Eastern Oregon University’s Small Business Development Center, La Grande Main Street, Ignite and the Northeast Oregon Economic Development District. Rebel Woolworks received \$3,000 from the city of La Grande’s Urban Renewal Agency for winning the contest. La Grande City Manager Robert Strobe said the store will not be required to pay back these funds. Strobe said the purpose of the contest was to help a new business get its start in La Grande.

# BottleDrop announces 2022 Hidden Bottle Hunt

Daily clues will lead treasure hunters to six commemorative bottles hidden throughout the state July 6-10

The Observer

SALEM — The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative is hosting the 2022 Hidden Bottle Hunt from July 6-10 by hiding six commemorative bottles in parks and trails throughout the state.

Clues for the statewide hunt will be posted daily on the Oregon BottleDrop website leading treasure hunters to the final hiding places.

“Last year’s Hidden Bottle Hunt was the first of its kind, hosted to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Oregon Bottle Bill,” said Eric Chambers, external relations director for OBRC, the not-for-profit cooperative that serves as

the operational steward of the Bottle Bill and operates the BottleDrop network. “It was so much fun and was so successful at raising awareness about the legacy of Oregon’s Bottle Bill that we decided to do it again.”

Like last year, the 2022 Hidden Bottle Hunt will comprise six separate, simultaneous hunts, geographically dispersed in parks and trails across Oregon. OBRC will release one clue per bottle per day, leading hunters to the final hiding spots.

The winners will get to keep the commemorative bottle and select a BottleDrop Give non-profit partner to receive a \$1,000 donation through BottleDrop’s Containers



Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative/Contributed Photo

The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative is hosting the 2022 Hidden Bottle Hunt from July 6-10 by hiding six commemorative bottles in parks and trails throughout the state.

for Change program. More than 5,000 nonprofits across Oregon raise funds for their organizations through BottleDrop’s Give program.

July marks the 51st anniversary of the Oregon Bottle Bill, which Gov.

Tom McCall signed into law on July 2, 1971. It established the nation’s first beverage container redemption system, and it has helped keep Oregon clean and litter free for over five decades. Oregon’s Bottle Bill is also among the most successful in the nation. In 2021, OBRC’s redemption rate was 83.9%, with Oregonians returning nearly two billion containers for Grade-A domestic recycling.

“Our Hidden Bottle Hunt will be a fun opportunity for individuals and families to get outside and connect closely with the Bottle Bill’s mission of protecting public spaces,” Chambers said. “Best of all, the winners get to ‘redeem’ their bottle for a nice donation to one of over 5,000 participating nonprofits serving communities across Oregon.”

# Jury selection to begin July 7 for murder trial

Ronald Lee facing charges of second-degree murder, conspiracy to commit murder in wife’s 2018 death

By **DICK MASON**  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — A La Grande man accused of murder will soon face a Union County jury.

Ronald Lee is accused by the state of Oregon of killing his wife, Loretta Wil-

liams, in November 2018 at her home in Cove. The 74-year-old is facing charges of second-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder, while being held without bond in the Union County Jail. Lee has pleaded not guilty to the charges. Jury selection for

Lee’s trial is set to begin Thursday, July 7. The jury will be selected from a pool of about 100 prospective jurors, according to the Union County Circuit Court. A date for the trial has not been set but it is expected to be completed by Aug. 5, said Union County District Attorney Kelsie McDaniel.

Lee is being represented by Dean Gushwa, a Pendleton attorney. Union County Circuit Court

Judge Thomas Powers will preside over the trial, which has previously been delayed several times. It was delayed once after Lee suffered a stroke while in custody in January 2020.

The co-defendant in the case is Steve Hamilton, 68, of La Grande, who is being charged with murder and conspiracy to commit murder. Hamilton is also being held at the Union County Correctional Facility.

**IN BRIEF**

**Wallowa County sites receive grants from Oregon Heritage**

SALEM — A pair of Wallowa County properties received grants from Oregon Heritage, a division of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, according to a Friday, July 1, press release.

The Maxville Heritage Interpretive Center received a grant of \$10,000 for a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the former Maxville site. The Wallowa History Center received a \$20,000 grant to repair the exterior of the ranger’s office at the historical Bear-Sleds Ranger Station in Wallowa.

In all, Oregon Heritage awarded 20 grants totaling \$293,900 for historic properties and archaeology projects. Six of the grants were awarded in the Diamonds in the Rough category, which fund facade enhancements that restore the historic character of a property. The other 14 grants — including the two in Wallowa County — were in the Preserving Oregon category for properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and for archaeology projects.

The grants are approved by the State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation, a nine-member group that reviews nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. The members are professionally recognized in the fields of history, architecture, archaeology and other related disciplines.

**Roads projects scheduled for national forest**

BAKER CITY — A series of road projects on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest could mean slow travel during the month of July.

On the La Grande Ranger District, Forest Road 5125 at the Limber Jim Creek crossing to the junction with Forest Service Road 5130 will be closed from July 5 to July 31 to replace a culvert and construct an aquatic organism passage structure. Forest Service Road 5130 will remain open during construction.

Grant County Road 24 — the Granite Highway — from Blue Springs Summit to the 7370 Road, or Mount Ireland Road, approximately 5 miles southeast of Granite, will be closed to the public from 9 a.m. July 18 to 5 p.m. July 22 and from 9 a.m. July 25 to 5 p.m. July 29.

**Fast-Track Grants awarded to three organizations**

WALLOWA COUNTY — The Lewis-Clark Valley Healthcare Organization announced on Thursday, June 23 organizations in its service area that have received the third round of Fast-Track Grants, three of them are based in Wallowa County.

These grants are between \$2,500 and \$10,000, and are meant to provide a quick turnaround for small nonprofits who focus on health, wellness or disease prevention. A total of \$165,050 was awarded to 23 nonprofits.

The Wallowa County organizations that received these grants include the Rotary Foundation of Wallowa County in Enterprise, which intends to use the funds for the Imnaha Founders Program and the recruitment of new responders. The Wallowa Mountains Bicycle Club in Joseph will use its grant on a bikes for kids’ initiative, and another grant will fund the Wallowa County Air Room Air Purifier Distribution Program.