TODAY

In 1861, during the Civil War, the first Battle of Bull Run was fought at Manassas, Virginia, resulting in a Confederate victory.

In 1925, the so-called "Monkey Trial" ended in Dayton, Tennessee, with John T. Scopes found guilty of violating state law for teaching Darwin's Theory of Evolution. (The conviction was later overturned on a technicality.)

In 1944, American forces landed on Guam during World War II, capturing it from the Japanese some three weeks later.

In 1954, the Geneva Conference concluded with accords dividing Vietnam into northern and southern entities.

In 1969, Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin blasted off from the moon aboard the ascent stage of the lunar module for docking with the command module.

In 1972, the Irish Republican Army carried out 22 bombings in Belfast, Northern Ireland, killing nine people and injuring 130 in what became known as "Bloody Friday."

In 1998, astronaut Alan Shepard died in Monterey, California, at age 74; actor Robert Young died in Westlake Village, California, at age 91.

In 1999, Navy divers found and recovered the bodies of John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife, Carolyn, and sister-in-law, Lauren Bessette, in the wreckage of Kennedy's plane in the Atlantic Ocean off Martha's Vineyard.

In 2002, Ernie Els won the British Open in the first sudden-death finish in the 142-year history of the tournament.

In 2008, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, one of the world's top war crimes fugitives, was arrested in a Belgrade suburb by Serbian security forces. (He was sentenced by a U.N. court in 2019 to life imprisonment after being convicted of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.)

In 2009, prosecutors in Cambridge, Massachusetts, dropped a disorderly conduct charge against prominent Black scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr., who was arrested by a white officer at his home near Harvard University after a report of a break-in.

In 2011, the 30-year-old space shuttle program ended as Atlantis landed at Cape Canaveral, Florida, after the 135th shuttle flight.

In 2016, Donald Trump accepted the GOP presidential nomination with a speech in which he pledged to cheering Republicans and still-skeptical voters that as president, he would restore the safety they feared they were losing, strictly curb immigration and save the nation from what he said was Hillary Clinton's record of "death, destruction, terrorism and weakness." The NBA moved the 2017 All-Star Game out of Charlotte because of its objections to a North Carolina law that limited anti-discrimination protections for lesbian, gay and transgender people.

Today's birthdays: Movie director Norman Jewison is 96. Singer Yusuf Islam (also known as Cat Stevens) is 74. Cartoonist Garry Trudeau is 74. Comedian Jon Lovitz is 65. Retired soccer player Brandi Chastain is 54. Reggae singer Damian Marley is 44. Former MLB All-Star pitcher CC Sabathia is 42. Actor Betty Gilpin is 36. Actor Rory Culkin is 33. Actor Jamie Waylett ("Harry Potter" films) is 33.

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

Monday, July 18, 2022
Megabucks
10-14-20-24-32-35
Estimated jackpot: $3.6 million
Lucky Lines
4-7-12-13-19-21-28-31
Estimated jackpot: $16,000
Win for Life
5-16-40-49
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 2-0-7-4
4 p.m.: 0-1-8-1
7 p.m.: 6-0-1-7
10 p.m.: 7-9-1-6
Tuesday, July 19, 2022
Mega Millions
2-31-32-37-70
Mega Ball: 25
Megaplier: 3
Estimated jackpot: $630 million
Lucky Lines
1-7-9-15-20-21-28-29
Estimated jackpot: $17,000
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 4-8-1-4
4 p.m.: 8-6-8-0
7 p.m.: 6-9-4-9
10 p.m.: 0-7-5-1

Hollywood actor visits Wallowa County

Jack Black spends weekend at Wallowa Lake

By JEFF BUDLONG
Wallowa County Chieftain

Wallowa Lake Marina/Contributed Photo

Actor Jack Black, fourth from left, visited Wallowa Lake over the weekend of July 16-17, 2022, with his family for some fishing, swimming and sightseeing.

JOSEPH — "School of Rock" star Jack Black proved to be a quick study when it came to fishing lessons during his weekend trip to Wallowa Lake.

Black and his family were in Wallowa County, where they dined and enjoyed a day on the lake with the help of marina staff.

"(Store manager) Duncan Christman met him down at the (Glacier Grill) and offered to have him come out on a pontoon boat with us the next day," said Brandon Keeling, who is the Wallowa Lake Marina Inc. vice president. "We took them around the lake, we took them fishing and they went swimming."

Black was there with his family — which included his parents, siblings and aunts and uncles — because his father had previously visited the area with a hiking group. A member of the group recently died, leading to the Blacks choosing Wallowa County as a place to come together as a family.

Keeling said the entire party picked up on fishing fast after he gave a quick lesson. Black snagged the biggest rainbow trout of the group and his father a close second. The entire family reeled in at least one fish, with Black's father snagging the first within 30 seconds of dipping his line.

And, yes, both Black and his father cleaned the fish they kept.

"The family was absolutely wonderful and a joy to be around," Keeling said. "He was out here picking up kids and taking pictures with everybody. He is out here spending hours out of his day doing photo ops around the community."

A quick search of Facebook reveals the numerous Wallowa County residents and visitors who got to snap a picture with the actor. Keeling credited Black for his down-to-earth nature and willingness to engage with everyone who approached.

Black isn't the first celebrity to take in the impressive nature views the area has to offer. Among them, "Napoleon Dynamite" star Jon Heder has hiked in the area, but did not make it to the marina.

The experience is something that the marina's staff, including Wallowa Lake Marina Inc. President Casey Barstad's daughter, Jaiden, won't forget anytime soon.

OSP to examine site where Jane Doe was found

Portions of the Finley Creek site could be excavated

By DICK MASON
The Observer

UNION COUNTY — A four-decade-old Union County mystery may be on the verge of being solved or taking another unforgettable twist.

The Oregon State Police are set, next month, to conduct an examination and possible excavations at a site near Finley Creek, 18 miles north of La Grande, where the remains of an unidentified woman were found in August 1978.

"We are planning on mid-August or late August," said Sgt. Sean Belding, a member of OSP's major crimes division.

Belding will be joined by Calvin Davis, director of the OSP's crime lab in Pendleton, and Dr. Nici Vance, from the State Medical Examiner's office, plus members of the Finley Creek Jane Doe Task Force.

Belding, Davis and Vance recently decided to conduct the examination and possible digs after learning of how a pair of cadaver dogs responded on Thursday, June 23, at the Finley Creek site. Each dog, trained to smell human bones and brought there by the task force, indicated they had found buried human bones at the same two places while operating separately.

Belding, who accompanied the task force on its June 23 visit, said he was impressed with the interest each dog showed in the two sites. The canines, one of which is a German shepherd, laid down at the same place, an indication they were positive human bones were underneath the location, said Melinda Jederberg of La Grande, a leader of the Finely Creek Jane Doe Task Force, which she founded in 2019.

This was the second time the cadaver dogs were brought to the Finley Creek site by the task force. They were also brought there in the summer of 2021, when they also indicated they detected human bones there.

The task force members have never dug at the Finley Creek site because it is a crime scene and thus it would be illegal to disrupt it.

A daughter who will not give up hope

Suzanne Timms of Walla Walla, Washinhton, who is assisting with the search as a volunteer, is elated that the OSP investigators will be examining the site because she is certain the Finley Creek Jane Doe is her mother, Patricia "Patty" Otto, of Lewiston, Idaho, who has been missing since Aug. 31, 1976.

"Oregon is giving resources toward the case. It gives me hope," she said.

Timms first suspected that the Finley Creek Jane Doe was her mother in 2021 when she saw an image created by a forensic artist in Massachusetts, Anthony Redgrave, the operator of Redgrave Research Forensic Services. Redgrave was assisting the Finley Creek Jane Doe Task Force, and the image he created looked very similar to Timms' mother. The images were created based on photos of the skeletal remains found in 1978 — those bones are believed to have been cremated by the state after they were found, Timms said.

Other details have contributed to Timms' belief that the Finley Creek Jane Doe is her mother. The remains were found with a white shirt and red pants, which is what Patty Otto was last seen wearing before she disappeared in 1976.

A possible Lewiston, Idaho, murder

Timms believes her mother was murdered in Lewiston by her father and then taken to Finley Creek where he buried her in a shallow grave.

The OSP's autopsy records for the Finley Creek Jane Doe, however, do not match those of Patty Otto.

Timms believes the discrepancy is due to an error made by the OSP's medical examiner while doing examinations of the skeletal remains of two Jane Does in his office at about the same time in 1978. She suspects he assigned his reports to the wrong remains, because his report for the second Jane Doe matches her mother's autopsy photos and dental records.

Should human bones be found at the Finley Creek site they will likely be tested by the state to determine if their DNA indicates they are those of Timms' mother. Should such bones turn out not to be those of Patty Otto, another layer of mystery will be added to the Finley Creek case.

Timms is striving to keep the memory of her mother alive with a ceremony in Lewiston, Idaho, set for Aug. 4, which would have been her 70th birthday. Seventy signs with Otto's name will be carried by 70 people for 24 minutes down main street in Lewiston. The time will symbolize Otto's age, for she was 24 in 1976 when she disappeared.

Timms is touched by the number of people who are volunteering to participate in the memorial.

"It shows that my mother is not forgotten," she said.

NEWS BRIEFS

'American Pickers' TV show is coming to Oregon

PORTLAND — "American Pickers" is coming to Oregon. The popular History Channel television series is filming in October. Until then, they are looking for stories and characters to highlight on their show.

While they've been to Oregon multiple times since the show's release in 2010, the "Pickers" team hopes to find large, rare collections of antiques and items they've never seen before.

The show only features private collections, so flea markets, antique stores and other businesses are excluded from consideration. Collectors interested in being featured can contact the show at 646-493-2184 or AmericanPickers@cineflix.com. Full name, city/state of residence, contact information and a brief description of their collection must be included.

Police chase in Union ends with wreck, arrest

UNION — Union County Sheriff's Office caught a Coos Bay man Monday, July 18, in Union after his effort to flee in a vehicle ended with a crash.

Ricky Leroy Potter, 35, then ended up in the Union County Jail on numerous charges.

Oregon State Police reported troopers at 10:22 a.m. that morning responded to assist a sheriff's deputy who was attempting to stop a vehicle that was traveling toward Union on Highway 302.

"The driver and sole occupant had a valid warrant and was known to flee," according to state police.

The deputy entered into a pursuit with the vehicle and it eventually crashed on the 200 block of Bryan Street in Union. Law enforcement officers chased the driver on foot and eventually located him at a residence in Union.

From there, the sheriff's office arrested Potter, the suspect, and booked him into the county jail. State court records show the Union County District Attorney's Office has brought initial charges against Potter for misdemeanor and felony fleeing, hit-and-run involving property, second-degree criminal trespass and second-degree criminal mischief. The sheriff's office also arrested Potter on two warrants. The criminal mischief count stems from Potter causing more than $500 to a city sign.

Court records show Potter has a hearing the afternoon of Aug. 15 to enter a plea.

— The Observer

Raising a glass for four-legged friends

By SHANNON GOLDEN
The Observer

LA GRANDE — With dozens of new puppies and kittens needing care, the Blue Mountain Humane Association is turning to a classically reliable fundraising tactic — tunes and brews.

The La Grande-based shelter aims to raise much-needed funds at their "Pints for Paws' fundraiser Saturday, July 23. The benefit concert will be held at HQ, 112 Depot St., La Grande, and will feature live music from local band Dr. J and the Easy Riders. A range of local beer, wine and cider selections will also be available during the festivities.

BMHA is working hard to make strides in its third year of new management but is still feeling the pandemic's strain. All profits from the evening — including spare change from HQ's tip jars — will go directly to the shelter.

"We're very much struggling financially," said Maria Carmichael, the board's vice president.

COVID-19 halted the shelter's volunteer system and tamped down on its fundraising efforts, leaving the new board scrambling to pick up the slack from negligent previous management.

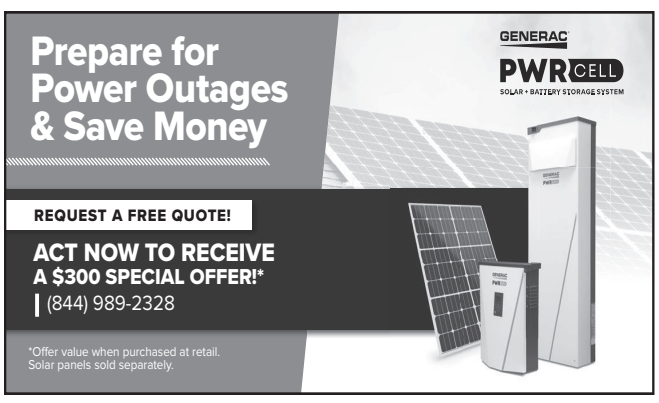
Carmichael said the money raised July 23 will go toward caring for a slew of new animals that BMHA recently rescued. Two weeks ago, the shelter received 11 border collie mix puppies ranging in age from four months to one year. She estimated that the cost for spaying, neutering, vaccinating and housing the puppies will cost up to $4,000.

Funds from the event will also go toward what Carmichael coined as the "huge backlog of maintenance" that the new management has wanted to address since BMHA changed hands in 2020. The animal shelter board hopes to repair, repaint and soundproof the kennels, as well as renovate parts of the facility that are open to the public.

The changes will be added to the long list of ongoing improvements BMHA has undergone over the last two years. When the new board first took over, members and volunteers hauled off more than 10,000 pounds of scrap metal, vehicles and about 20 pickup loads of garbage from the property.

Carmichael emphasized that this is hopefully the first of many opportunities for the La Grande community to support the shelter. The board is planning to hold a dog-friendly "Doggy Dash" fun run in September, revamping a fundraiser that the shelter held in previous years.

Tickets for "Pints for Paws" are $15 and can be purchased at La Grande Stereo & Music, the BMHA shelter or, if still available, at the door on Saturday. Tickets are limited, so BMHA recommends purchasing them in advance.

"This is the first event we've held since everything was shut down because of COVID," Carmichael said. "We're hoping for a lot of attendance."

For more information on the fundraiser, visit the Blue Mountain Humane Association's Facebook page. If you would like to support BMHA or adopt from the shelter, visit www.bmhumane.org.