

TODAY

In 1619, the first representative assembly in America convened in Jamestown in the Virginia Colony.

In 1729, Baltimore, Maryland, was founded.

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union forces tried to take Petersburg, Virginia, by exploding a gunpowder-laden mine shaft beneath Confederate defense lines; the attack failed.

In 1916, German saboteurs blew up a munitions plant on Black Tom, an island near Jersey City, New Jersey, killing about a dozen people.

In 1918, poet Joyce Kilmer, a sergeant in the 165th U.S. Infantry Regiment, was killed during the Second Battle of the Marne in World War I. (Kilmer is remembered for his poem “Trees.”)

In 1945, the Portland class heavy cruiser USS Indianapolis, having just delivered components of the atomic bomb to Tinian in the Mariana Islands, was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine; only 317 out of nearly 1,200 men survived.

In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed a measure making “In God We Trust” the national motto, replacing “E Pluribus Unum” (Out of many, one).

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed a measure creating Medicare, which began operating the following year.

In 1980, Israel’s Knesset passed a law reaffirming all of Jerusalem as the capital of the Jewish state.

In 2008, ex-Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic was extradited to The Hague to face genocide charges after nearly 13 years on the run. (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 2010, the Afghan Taliban confirmed the death of longtime leader Mullah Mohammad Omar and appointed his successor, Mullah Akhtar Mansoor.

In 2016, 16 people died when a hot air balloon caught fire and exploded after hitting high-tension power lines before crashing into a pasture near Lockhart, Texas, about 60 miles northeast of San Antonio.

In 2020, John Lewis was eulogized in Atlanta by three former presidents and others who urged Americans to continue the work of the civil rights icon in fighting injustice during a moment of racial reckoning. Herman Cain, a former Republican presidential candidate and former CEO of a pizza chain who became an ardent supporter of President Donald Trump, died in Atlanta of complications from the coronavirus at the age of 74; he was hospitalized less than two weeks after attending Trump’s campaign rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he was photographed not wearing a mask.

Today’s birthdays: Former Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig is 88. Blues musician Buddy Guy is 86. Feminist activist Eleanor Smearl is 83. Singer Paul Anka is 81. Jazz musician David Sanborn is 77. Former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is 75. Actor Frank Stallone is 72. Actor Ken Olin is 68. Actor Delta Burke is 66. Law professor Anita Hill is 66. Singer-songwriter Kate Bush is 64. Country singer Neal McCoy is 64. Movie director Richard Linklater is 62. Actor Laurence Fishburne is 61. Actor Lisa Kudrow is 59. Actor Vivica A. Fox is 58. Actor Terry Crews is 54. Actor Simon Baker is 53. Actor Donnie Keshawarz is 53. Movie director Christopher Nolan is 52. Actor Tom Green is 51. Rock musician Brad Hargreaves (Third Eye Blind) is 51. Actor Christine Taylor is 51. Actor-comedian Dean Edwards is 49. Actor Hilary Swank is 48. Olympic gold medal beach volleyball player Misty May-Treanor is 45. Actor Jaime Pressly is 45. Alt-country singer-musician Seth Avett is 42. Actor April Bowlby is 42. Former soccer player Hope Solo is 41. Actor Yvonne Strahovski is 40. Actor Martin Starr is 40. Actor Gina Rodriguez is 38. Actor Nico Tortorella is 34. Actor Joey King is 23.

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, July 27, 2022
Megabucks
4-7-20-27-28-33
Jackpot: \$4 million
Lucky Lines
3-6-9-13-17-24-26-30
Estimated jackpot: \$25,000
Powerball
1-25-44-55-57
Powerball: 26
Power Play: 2
Jackpot: \$170 million
Win for Life
1-23-62-75
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 2-9-1-6
4 p.m.: 2-5-9-9
7 p.m.: 0-2-5-9
10 p.m.: 4-8-5-7
Thursday, July 28, 2022
Lucky Lines
2-5-11-15-19-21-26-30
Jackpot: \$27,000
Pick 4
1 p.m.: 0-8-5-2
4 p.m.: 1-5-2-2
7 p.m.: 4-5-0-9
10 p.m.: 2-8-5-7

New building could be up in about 18 months

Contractor awarded bid for La Grande School District project will have 420-day window to complete construction

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The new academic and athletic center La Grande School District voters approved a \$4.845 million bond for in May, could be 1-1/2 years from becoming a reality.

Construction of the new building may start in late May or early June of 2023 and could be finished by late 2023 or early 2024, according to Joseph Waite, the La Grande School District’s facilities manager.

“We want the building to be occupied in the fall of 2023 as early as possible,” Waite said.

Proposals by contractors bidding for the building project will be accepted by the school district through Tuesday, Aug. 30. The La Grande School Board will award a bid to a contractor in the early fall. Waite said the contractor will have 420 days to design and construct the building after being awarded the contract.

“That is when the clock will start ticking,” Waite said.

The company selected may do its own design work or partner with another firm.



Dick Mason/The Observer, File

The La Grande School District’s aging maintenance and grounds building will be torn down to help make room for a new academic and athletic center, funded by a bond voters approved in the May 17, 2022, election. The adjacent Annex gym also will be removed.

The La Grande School District will have a total of \$8.845 million available to construct the academic and athletic center, which will include two gyms, because it will also receive a \$4 million Oregon School Capital Improvement Matching program grant from the state to help fund the construction of the new building. The school district would not have received the matching grant if the bond levy, Measure 31-105, had failed.

The new building the bond package will fund will replace the current Annex gym, next to the La Grande Middle School. The Annex building, which is about nine decades old, will be torn down. In addition, the school district’s maintenance building,

which is connected via a sky bridge to the Annex and was built around 1910, will also be removed.

The maintenance building facilities will be moved in early 2023 to the Adams Professional Plaza on Adams Avenue, which the school district has purchased. Half of the building space the school district has purchased there will be leased to La Grande Light Truck, Waite said.

It has not been determined when the Annex gym will be removed. Waite said it would be best if it can remain up until the new academic and athletic center is constructed, for this would mean gym space at the site would be available to the school district and the public while the academic and athletic

center is being built. Waite said though that the Annex gym may have to be torn down before the new structure is built to provide the space needed for its construction.

The new structure — which in addition to two gyms will have locker rooms and multiple classrooms — will be a pre-engineered building, one for which parts will be manufactured before construction starts. Constructing a pre-engineered building will take less time. One reason is that it is designed to have the frame and roof put up first, Waite said. This will allow construction crews to do interior work much earlier because the structure’s interior will be protected from inclement weather.

Rappellers rescue woman in Eagle Cap Wilderness

The 78-year-old woman is flown to La Grande after suffering an ankle injury

By DICK MASON
The Observer

UNION COUNTY — A 78-year-old woman may owe her life to the U.S. Forest Service’s Grande Ronde Rappellers.

The Grande Rappellers, who are based at the Union County Airport, rescued the woman, who suffered an ankle injury after she fell in the Eagle Cap Wilderness on Wednesday, July 27.

The woman was in the East Eagle Drainage of the wilderness on the eastern edge of Union County, 39 miles southeast of La Grande when she was injured at about 10 a.m. on July 27.

Union County Search and Rescue was notified of the accident at 11 a.m. on July 27, and requested a hoist capable helicopter in Western Oregon from the National Guard to help in rescuing the patient. The request was made because of the remoteness of the location the patient was in, her age, the extreme heat at the time and the extended



Grande Ronde Rappellers/Contributed Photo

First responders load a woman injured in the Eagle Cap Wilderness onto a Life Flight helicopter Wednesday, July 27, 2022.

amount of time it would take to get to the site using vehicles and other ground resources, said Union County Emergency Manager Nick Vora.

After the request was made the Union County SAR officials began checking to see what local aviation resources were available and discovered that the Grande Ronde Rappellers, who specialize in firefighting, could be sent to rescue the woman. Vora said often the GR Rappellers would not have been available because they are fighting fires but they were not on July 27.

The rappellers were sent to rescue the woman but their Forest Service helicopter was not able to land near the patient due to a steep slope, so four rap-

pellers, including trained wilderness first responders and paramedics, rappelled out of the helicopter and began assessing the patient and preparing a plan to transport her out. The Forest Service crew was able to identify a landing zone approximately 1,200 yards away by a trail where a medivac helicopter could land, and requested that one be dispatched.

A Union County Search and Rescue coordinator, working with dispatch personnel at the Blue Mountain Interagency Dispatch Center, then ordered a Life Flight helicopter to attempt landing at the location identified. A Life Flight helicopter responded from La Grande, while the rappel crew placed the patient in a sked litter and

initiated transport down a steep hillside to the landing zone. The National Guard helicopter was kept en route from Western Oregon in case the Life Flight helicopter was unable to land but later was turned back.

The Life Flight helicopter landed at the designated helispot and subsequently transported the patient to the Union County Airport where a city of La Grande Fire Department ambulance took her to Grande Ronde Hospital.

The woman was treated for nonlife threatening injuries, Vora said.

Both the Life Flight and the Forest Service helicopters returned to the area after the patient was transported and picked up all of the remaining personnel involved in the rescue.

Vora said the Life Flight Network’s staff and Forest Service staff involved, especially the Grande Ronde Rappellers, deserve much credit for the rescue.

“Without their professional assistance, this call would have taken many more hours to resolve and may have resulted in a different outcome for the patient,” Vora said.

The total rescue process took about five hours, Vora said, adding that without helicopters the process could have taken about 14 hours.

LG City Council to discuss psilocybin facilities

Council may ban psilocybin facilities within city limits at next meeting

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The La Grande City Council will consider adopting an ordinance banning or temporarily banning psilocybin service centers and manufacturing of psilocybin products within city limits during the regular council session on Tuesday, Aug. 3.

In November 2020, Oregon voters passed

Ballot Measure 109 with a 56% majority.

Currently, there are four options available to the city council. First, the council could not refer the issue to the voters and allow the measure to go into effect. This would give the city the least amount of control over psilocybin within La Grande.

Option two, again not refer the issue to the voters, but establish time, place and manner restrictions, which was allowed by the measure.

Third, refer voters to a total ban on psilocybin facilities within city limits.

The fourth option would be to refer voters to a two-year ban on psilo-

SHROOMS AND MEASURE 109

Psilocybin is the active ingredient in hallucinogenic mushrooms, and research has indicated it may be a useful drug in treating a variety of conditions, including post-traumatic stress disorder.

The Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research has treated psychiatric and behavioral disorders with psilocybin, as well as on healthy patients, saying positive results extend for up to a year, according to its website. But psilocybin’s greater use has been as a recreational hallucinogenic drug.

Oregon voters legalized supervised therapeutic use of psilocybin in 2020, and the law is intended to go into effect January 2023.

cybin facilities within city limits in order to see how other counties handle the situation.

Both option three and four would require the city council to pass the ordinance with an emergency clause because the deadline to get titles onto the upcoming ballot is Aug. 19.

The meeting will be open for public comment.

The regular session meeting will be open to the public at La Grande City Hall, with the meeting set to begin at 6 p.m. on Aug. 3. The meeting will be streamed on the La Grande Alive website and on Facebook.

Wallowa County energy planning launched

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Community input is being sought for a comprehensive Community Energy Strategic Planning process to proactively plan and manage Wallowa County’s energy future, according to a press release.

The effort is being launched in a collaboration between the Wallowa County Board of Commissioners and Wallowa Resources Community Energy Program, with funding from the Energy Trust of Oregon.

The move comes after years of quiet discussion, energy development and energy challenges, the release stated, and focuses a special eye on lowering energy costs and stabilizing energy access for the county’s “end of the line” communities.

The effort will use the tagline “We have Good Energy.”

Early estimates show county residents currently spend up to \$40 million annually for various types of energy, according to Nils Christoffersen, Wallowa Resources executive director. He said most of those dollars currently leave the county.

“Finding ways to keep some of (those dollars) working here creates real opportunities for all of us,” he said.

The plan takes a hard look at how all kinds of energy are used in the county right now and then figuring out what residents can do to lower energy costs for everyone, how to put those saved dollars to work locally, how to ensure having stable and reliable access to energy for critical services in times of emergency and, at the same time, how to be good stewards of the environment, according to Joe Basile, plan manager and Wallowa Resources community energy program manager.

Critically important too, Basile said, “this energy plan will also deliver a comprehensive prioritized list of local energy opportunities with short-term and long-term strategies and funding to make projects happen.”

“This is a community-generated plan,” Wallowa County Commissioner John Hillock said. “We are wanting input and assistance from interested groups and individuals from every sector of the community — from homeowners and renters to ag to business and beyond.”

An 11-member leadership team has been established and team members are now beginning to identify key stakeholder groups and interested individuals willing to contribute some time and expertise in small group work sessions over the next several months, Basile said.

The team is headed by Mike Hayward, a former county commissioner and past general manager of Wallowa County Grain Growers. He said the plan is intended as a blueprint for the next 20 years.

“We want the people who will be impacted to be part of the planning. Stay tuned,” he said.

JOIN IN THE PLANNING

For more information on the planning process and how to become involved, contact members of the leadership team or Joe Basile, plan manager, at joe@wallowa-resources.org or 541-426-8053, ext. 52.