

TODAY

In 1862, the New York Tribune published an open letter by editor Horace Greeley calling on President Abraham Lincoln to take more aggressive measures to free the slaves and end the South's rebellion.

In 1866, President Andrew Johnson formally declared the Civil War over, months after fighting had stopped.

In 1882, Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" had its premiere in Moscow.

In 1910, a series of forest fires swept through parts of Idaho, Montana and Washington, killing at least 85 people and burning some 3 million acres.

In 1940, exiled Communist revolutionary Leon Trotsky was assassinated in Coyoacan, Mexico by Ramon Mercader. (Trotsky died the next day.)

In 1953, the Soviet Union publicly acknowledged it had tested a hydrogen bomb.

In 1955, hundreds of people were killed in anti-French rioting in Morocco and Algeria.

In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Economic Opportunity Act, a nearly \$1 billion anti-poverty measure.

In 1968, the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact nations began invading Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring" liberalization drive.

In 1986, postal employee Patrick Henry Sherrill went on a deadly rampage at a post office in Edmond, Oklahoma, shooting 14 fellow workers to death before killing himself.

In 1988, a cease-fire in the war between Iraq and Iran went into effect.

In 1989, fifty-one people died when a pleasure boat sank in the River Thames (tehzm) in London after colliding with a dredger.

In 2020, accepting the Democratic presidential nomination, Joe Biden vowed to move the nation past the chaos of Donald Trump's tenure and return it to its leadership role in the world; capping a virtual convention amid the pandemic, Biden spoke to a largely empty arena in Delaware. Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny became ill on a flight to Moscow from Siberia and was hospitalized in a coma. (Navalny would spend five months in Germany recovering from a nerve agent poisoning that he blamed on the Kremlin; he was arrested after his return to Russia.)

Ten years ago: In a historic change at one of the world's most exclusive golf clubs, Georgia's Augusta National invited former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and South Carolina financier Darla Moore to become the first female members; both accepted.

Five years ago: Actor, comic and longtime television host Jerry Lewis died of heart disease in Las Vegas at the age of 91.

One year ago: President Joe Biden pledged to bring all Americans home from Afghanistan, along with all Afghans who aided the U.S. war effort there; his promise came as thousands more Americans and others seeking to escape the Taliban struggled to get past crushing crowds and Taliban checkpoints at the airport.

Today's Birthdays: Boxing promoter Don King is 91. Former MLB All-Star Graig Nettles is 78. Broadcast journalist Connie Chung is 76. Musician Jimmy Pankow (Chicago) is 75. Actor Ray Wise is 75. Actor John Noble is 74. Rock singer Robert Plant (Led Zeppelin) is 74. Country singer Rudy Gatlin is 70. Singer-songwriter John Hiatt is 70. Actor-director Peter Horton is 69. TV weatherman Al Roker is 68. Actor Jay Acovone is 67. Actor Joan Allen is 66. Movie director David O. Russell is 64. TV personality Asha Blake is 61. Actor Billy Gardell is 53. Rock singer Fred Durst (Limp Bizkit) is 52. Actor Jonathan Ke Quan is 52. Actor Misha Collins is 48. Rock singer Monique Powell (Save Ferris) is 47. Jazz/pop singer-pianist Jamie Cullum is 43. Actor Brant Daugherty is 37. Actor-singer Demi Lovato is 30. Actor Christopher Paul Richards is 19.

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, Aug. 17, 2022

Megabucks

12-18-20-25-37-47

Jackpot: \$4.9 million

Lucky Lines

4-7-11-14-20-22-28-29

Estimated jackpot: \$15,000

Powerball

23-28-41-50-55

Powerball: 24

Power Play: 2

Jackpot: \$80 million

Win for Life

17-28-32-76

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 1-4-6-6

4 p.m.: 7-7-0-9

7 p.m.: 0-7-4-9

10 p.m.: 8-6-6-3

Thursday, Aug. 18, 2022

Lucky Lines

4-8-12-15-19-24-28-30

Jackpot: \$16,000

Pick 4

1 p.m.: 3-6-5-5

4 p.m.: 8-4-9-6

7 p.m.: 4-5-5-0

10 p.m.: 1-9-6-1

Businesses join drive for school supplies

La Grande's finance companies team up to collect school supplies

By SHANNON GOLDEN

The Observer

LA GRANDE — With the first day of school just around the corner, families have started combing the aisles for school supplies. But with July's consumer-price index of 8.5%, how will back-to-school shopping fare against a nearly four-decade high pace of price increases?

According to a July survey by the National Retail Foundation and Prosper Insights & Analytics, more than one-third of consumers said they are cutting back on other spending to cover costs for the upcoming school year.

Financial businesses in La Grande are turning to supply drives as a way to support local families and schools. From colored pencils to backpacks, local credit unions, banks and mortgage offices are asking the community to donate whatever they can.

"Anything is better than nothing," said Corri Klebaum, sales manager at



Shannon Golden/The Observer

The school supply donation bin at Horizon Credit Union is filled to the brim with notebooks, pencils and backpacks on Aug. 17, 2022.

Adams Avenue's Finance for America Mortgage. "Even if we can help a couple of families it's worth it."

Klebaum and her assistant, Andi Warn, are teaming up with Re/Max Real Estate Team — their next-door neighbors on Adams Avenue — to collect Walmart gift cards and other school supplies for the upcoming school year. They will be collecting donations through Wednesday, Aug. 24.

According to Klebaum, the gift cards will go to foster families in the area, while coloring utensils, backpacks, lunch sacks and pails will help bolster

supplies in local school districts.

George Mendoza, superintendent of La Grande School District, said that while the district works to support those who might not have the funds to pay for yearly supplies and fees, donations can be a useful way to offset need.

He said donated supplies — from colored pencils and notebooks to tissues and backpacks — help fill resource gaps and allow schools to focus on supporting students in other ways, like providing free lunches and social-emotional support. He said that when students' needs are met, they

focus and learn better.

"I'm always thankful that we get donations," Mendoza said.

This year, there are several supply drives that have taken place around town. PIFCU wrapped up its "Stuff the Bus" event at the beginning of August, and the Bank of Eastern Oregon just finished a three-week drive. Horizon Credit Union is also accepting supply donations at its 209 Depot St. location through the end of the month.

"Our community is really generous," said Diana Burry, the branch manager at Horizon Credit Union.

Burry noted that the credit union has held its supply drive for several years, and that community members are continuously supportive in providing donations. Horizon's drive will continue through August.

Horizon Credit Union is accepting cash donations or school supplies, including pencils, coloring utensils, notebooks, backpacks, paper and more.

If you are interested in participating in these supply drives, please drop off donations at Finance for America Mortgage, Re/Max and Horizon Credit Union.

Early arrival of \$1 million from state gives fairgrounds project a boost

Funding will help effort to get water, sewer infrastructure project started

By DICK MASON

The Observer

LA GRANDE — It's always encouraging to receive a large sum of money earlier than anticipated.

Those leading the effort to raise \$3 million for the Union County Fairgrounds water and wastewater infrastructure project know this feeling firsthand after the Union County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously on Wednesday, Aug. 17, to pass Resolution 2022-19, authorizing the

county to accept \$1 million in funding from the state for the Union County Fair for infrastructure improvement.

The \$1 million is being provided through House Bill 5202, which the Legislature approved in March and Gov. Kate Brown signed into law on April 4.

Union County Commissioner Matt Scarfo said he and others in the county anticipated that Union County would receive the \$1 million in 2023 since it often takes about a year to get money from the state after it is approved. Scarfo is delighted that the funding arrived faster than expected.

"A check in the bank is better than a check in the mail," he said.

Union County Com-

missioner Donna Beverage is pleased with the early arrival of the \$1 million.

"It is really a positive thing. It shows that local fairs are a priority for the state," she said.

The campaign to raise the almost \$3 million needed for the project is now about halfway toward its objective. Scarfo is hoping that the Oregon Legislative Emergency Board will allocate a portion of the remaining money needed when it meets later this year.

"I will push for this funding," he said.

The water and sewer infrastructure the Union County Fair Board hopes to get installed would connect the fairgrounds with the city of La Grande's water and sewer systems,

allowing more permanent restrooms to be added at the fairgrounds. Presently, the fairgrounds have just one set of flushing toilets. This means that portable restrooms have to be brought in for events, creating a situation that is far from ideal, said Deb Cornford, a member of the Union County Fair Board.

Cornford said the link to the city of La Grande's water system is needed because the well fairgrounds' well is failing. "It is not dependable," she said.

To date, \$1.52 million has been raised for the project. Cornford said the arrival of \$1 million from the state is giving the project momentum.

"We are definitely moving forward," she said.

Suspect pleads not guilty in Island City car chase case

Two other suspects expected to plea later this month

By ISABELLA CROWLEY

The Observer

LA GRANDE — One of the three suspects arrested in connection with a high-speed car chase in July out of Island City pleaded not guilty on Wednesday, Aug. 17, in Union County Circuit Court to all charges against him.

Demus Montez was charged with attempted murder, first-degree attempted robbery, unlawful use of a weapon, possession of a firearm as a felon, criminal mischief, reckless endangering and misdemeanor fleeing.

Out of the three suspects, Montez was the only one who did not have his

hearing plea date rescheduled to later in the month. He is represented by his court appointed counsel — La Grande attorney J. Logan Joseph.

Montez, Jessica Spalinger and Ashtin Romine were arrested during July in connection to a burglary at Muzzleloader's and More and subsequent car chase out of Island City. According to law enforcement, the trio fled from the parking lot in a car driven by Spalinger, injuring the business owner's daughter, Randi Shafer. They were pursued in a high-speed chase where shots were fired at Oregon State Police. The chase ended in Elgin with all three suspects fleeing on foot into the underbrush near Indian Creek.

Spalinger and Romine were both taken into custody on July 17 and Montez was arrested on July 19.

Romine was arrested for reckless endangering and for misdemeanor and

felony fleeing, while Spalinger is in jail for first-degree assault, hit-and-run with injury, recklessly endangering and misdemeanor fleeing from police.

Both Spalinger and Romine's plea hearings have been pushed to later in August. Spalinger is represented by court appointed counsel — La Grande attorney James Schaeffer. She is scheduled to appear in court on Aug. 23 to enter a plea to the charges against her. According to the Union County Circuit Court schedule, Schaeffer also will be motioning for Spalinger's release.

Romine will be in court the following day for his plea hearing. Romine, who is represented by court appointed counsel Kathleen Dunn of Canyon City, has waived his right to have his case brought to trial within 60 days of arrest.

Montez will be back in court on Sept. 14 for a status check.

IN BRIEF

Wallowa council gets started on recovery after hail storm

WALLOWA — The Wallowa City Council got started Tuesday, Aug. 16, on what it needs to do to help the city recover from the Aug. 11 hailstorm when it met in regular session at City Hall.

"I was talking about how we were working on trying to get funding and other help," Mayor Gary Hulse said.

He said the council agreed to have a Zoom meeting Aug. 29 with various stakeholders, such as those in government agencies or others who can provide assistance.

"Anybody who can assist us in getting money," Hulse said.

He said that after the Zoom meeting, the council will hold a meeting to inform the public what it learned.

He said city Administrator Carolyn Harshfield, who has been instrumental in helping field calls both offering help and requesting it, was sick, so that's slowing things down a bit.

"Everybody was worn out and tired, I know that," Hulse said.

Man arrested in connection with La Grande woman's death after wrong-way crash

PENDLETON — Law enforcement booked a Washington state man in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on Wednesday, Aug. 17, in connection with the death of a La Grande woman.

Kari Lindeman, 49, was killed when the Ford Fiesta she was driving collided with a Dodge 3500 pickup driven by Gabriel Velasquez, 55, of Kennewick, Washington, who was traveling in the wrong direction in the eastbound

lane near milepost 216, 5 miles east of Pendleton, according to the investigation conducted by Oregon State Police.

Lindeman died at the scene, OSP reported. Velasquez suffered serious injuries. An emergency helicopter flew him to Providence St. Mary Medical Center, Walla Walla, Washington.

Velasquez has been charged with first- and second-degree manslaughter, driving under the influence, recklessly endangering another person. He has been appointed counsel by the court and is represented by Pendleton attorney Craig Russell.

According to court documents, Velasquez pleaded not guilty on all the charges against him. He is scheduled to appear in court for a pre-trial conference on Aug. 31.

—EO Media Group

Wallowa County voters to decide on ban

By BILL BRADSHAW

Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Wallowa County voters will have the chance to decide whether or not they want psilocybin distribution and use legal in unincorporated areas of the county, now that the county commissioners have agreed to put it on the November ballot.

The commissioners held the second of two required public hearings Wednesday, Aug. 17, when three people showed up in person and one via Zoom. The three at the meeting all were against banning psilocybin and the one on Zoom did not express an opinion but was seeking information.

The commissioners held the first hearing on the issue Aug. 3, at which Dr. Renee Grandi provided medical information on psilocybin therapy.

"Dr. (Renee) Grandi came in last time and gave a lot of good information for us," commission Chairwoman Susan Roberts said.

But, she emphasized, the government had stopped serious research on psilocybin several years ago, "and they're just now starting up again."

She emphasized that the ballot issue will not make it impossible to ever have psilocybin therapy, if research should definitively show the drug is helpful. But that's not the case yet, she said.

"I think what people are saying is they'd like to have more time on that research," Roberts said.

Personal experience

Matt Kurtz, of Joseph, one of the three who attended the hearing in person, said psilocybin therapy helped eliminate depression and suicidal tendencies he struggled with from childhood.

"It ended up changing my life. Eight years later now, I do not have a single bout of depression," Kurtz said. "Medically, it worked for me; it changed my life and that's why I had to show up today and speak to you guys."

He agreed psilocybin has its down side.

"Is it a drug that can be used to get high? Absolutely. But there's a lot of drugs around that allow people to do that," he said. "Psilocybin is quite different. If you want to take that every day in a high dose . . . you're not going to want it. It's an animal. It's powerful stuff, I will grant that. But it can be powerfully used in really positive ways. I think allowing it to be in a more regulated therapy setting is a great thing."

Kurtz said he didn't have a facility available. He took psilocybin at home on his family's ranch.

"I was alone and it was a little bit scary," he said. "But it changed my life. I would love for folks to have the opportunity to change their lives."

Not arrogant

Kurtz and Rusty Hogg recommended a couple documentaries Netflix has on psilocybin.

But Roberts said she's watched the documentaries and has become informed about the drug.

"Everybody assumes we're arrogant and we haven't done that and that's not true," she said.

A Vietnam-era veteran, Roberts also said she had acquaintances who've benefited from psilocybin.

"One thing I want to point out is it's not arrogance on our part," she said. "We represent all the people in the county and I understand your feelings. Having served in Vietnam in the Marine Corps, I also had a lot of friends who used it."