

TODAY

It's Saturday, Jan. 23, the 23rd day of 2021. There are 342 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

In **2020**, Chinese state media said the city of Wuhan would be shutting down outbound flights and trains, trying to halt the spread of a new virus that had sickened hundreds of people and killed at least 17. The World Health Organization said the viral illness in China was not yet a global health emergency, though the head of the U.N. health agency added that "it may yet become one."

In **1812**, the second New Madrid Earthquake struck, with an estimated magnitude of 7.5, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

In **1845**, Congress decided all national elections would be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

In **1937**, 17 people went on trial in Moscow during Josef Stalin's "Great Purge." All were convicted of conspiracy; all but four were executed.

In **1950**, the Israeli Knesset approved a resolution affirming Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

In **1962**, Jackie Robinson was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility. Tony Bennett recorded "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" in New York for Columbia Records.

In **1964**, the 24th Amendment to the United States Constitution, eliminating the poll tax in federal elections, was ratified as South Dakota became the 38th state to endorse it.

In **1973**, President Richard Nixon announced an accord had been reached to end the Vietnam War, and would be formally signed four days later in Paris.

In **1977**, the TV mini-series "Roots," based on the Alex Haley novel, began airing on ABC.

In **1998**, a judge in Fairfax, Virginia, sentenced Aimal Khan Kasi to death for an assault rifle attack outside CIA headquarters in 1993 that killed two men and wounded three other people. Kasi was executed in November 2002.

In **2002**, John Walker Lindh, a U.S.-born Taliban fighter, was returned to the United States to face criminal charges that he'd conspired to kill fellow Americans. Lindh was sentenced to 20 years in prison after pleading guilty to providing support for the Taliban; he was released in May, 2019, after serving more than 17 years.

In **2009**, President Barack Obama quietly ended the Bush administration's ban on giving federal money to international groups that performed abortions or provided information on the option.

Ten years ago: Allies and adversaries of President Hugo Chavez took to the streets of Caracas by the thousands, staging rival demonstrations to commemorate the 53rd anniversary of Venezuela's democracy. Fitness guru Jack LaLanne died in Morro Bay, California, at 96.

Five years ago: A blizzard with hurricane-force winds brought much of the East Coast to a standstill, dumping as much as 3 feet of snow, stranding tens of thousands of travelers and shutting down Washington D.C. and New York City. Gracie Gold bounced back from a shaky short program with a flawless free skate to win her second U.S. Figure Skating title at the championship in St. Paul, Minnesota.

One year ago: In a second day of opening arguments at President Donald Trump's impeachment trial, Democratic prosecutors made the case that Trump had abused power like no other president in history, swept up by a "completely bogus" theory about Ukrainian interference in the 2016 U.S. election. "Sopranos" actor Annabella Sciorra confronted Harvey Weinstein from the witness stand at his New York trial, testifying that Weinstein had overpowered and raped her; she was the first of Weinstein's accusers to testify at his sexual assault trial.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Chita Rivera is 88. Actor-director Lou Antonio is 87. Jazz musician Gary Burton is 78. Actor Gil Gerard is 78. Actor Richard Dean Anderson is 71. Rock musician Bill Cunningham is 71. Former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is 68. Princess Caroline of Monaco is 64. Singer Anita Baker is 63. Reggae musician Earl Falconer (UB40) is 62. Actor Mariska Hargitay is 57. R&B singer Marc Nelson is 50. CBS Evening News anchor Norah O'Donnell is 47. Actor Tiffani Thiessen is 47. Rock musician Nick Harmer (Death Cab for Cutie) is 46.

— Associated Press

LOCAL, STATE & REGION

EASTERN WASHINGTON



Grant County (Washington) Sheriff's Office photos

A potato processing plant in Warden, Washington, burns Thursday. The image was taken from a drone video shot by the Grant County (Washington) Sheriff's Office.

Fire destroys potato processing plant

BY MATTHEW WEAVER

Capital Press

Fire destroyed a Warden, Washington, potato processing plant Thursday night and prompted the evacuation of a third of the town.

The blaze was reported in the dehydrator at the Washington Potato Co. plant at 5:30 p.m., said Kyle Foreman, public information officer for the Grant County Sheriff's Office in Washington.

A representative of the parent company, Oregon Potato Co., in Pasco, Washington, declined to comment.

No injuries or deaths were reported, Foreman said.

"Right now, the assessment from command is it's a 100% loss," he said.

Firefighters discovered the fire had spread from the dehydrator to other parts of the building and its structure, Foreman said. They summoned more resources from throughout Grant and Adams counties.

At 8:30 p.m., there were concerns that a large anhydrous ammonia tank at the facility could explode. Officials or-



Firefighters battle the blaze.

dered firefighters to pull back from the blaze, and a third of the town of 2,800, was evacuated, Foreman said.

Sheriff's deputies and Warden police officers went door-to-door to notify residents and posted the evacuation on social media.

Concerns about a potential explosion subsided, and residents were allowed to return to their homes about 1:30 a.m. Fri-

day, Foreman said. No further evacuations are anticipated.

Firefighters remained at the scene all night, pouring water onto the fire.

"People in the Warden area will probably see smoke coming from the fire until the fire extinguishes itself," Foreman said.

Foreman said the cause of the fire is under investigation.

"It appears it was accidental," Foreman said.

COVID-19 | Inmate vaccinations

7 prisoners ask federal judge to intervene

ANDREW THEEN

The Oregonian

Seven inmates at Oregon correctional facilities who first filed a class action lawsuit in federal court in April seeking protection against the spread of COVID-19 upped the ante Thursday, demanding the federal government intervene and immediately compel the state to vaccinate all prisoners against COVID-19.

The prisoners filed a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction citing what they said was "deliberate indifference" to the health and well-being of thousands of prisoners across the state. The legal case, in part, says the state's decision to proceed with vaccinating healthier members of the public violates the Eighth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

The lawsuit names Gov. Kate Brown, Corrections Division Director Colette Peters, Oregon Health Authority Director Ken Allen and others. The lawsuit specifically states Brown and Allen "have interfered with the delivery of medical care" by prioritizing other members of the population — like teachers — that don't have the same risk level as inmates.

"Defendants cannot deny that they understand the necessity to vaccinate their population as soon as possible, just as they understood the necessity to enforce mask wearing, social distancing, and effective testing were necessary at the start of the pandemic," attorneys wrote, citing the state's attempt to, belatedly, enforce mask wearing at facilities across Oregon in 2020.

"As with those important components, Defendants have taken to half-measures and gestures towards complying with the Eighth Amendment. Taking no action to have AICs (adults in custody) placed within a timely vaccination window means they have been deliberately indifferent."

Two more inmates die of COVID-19 at Two Rivers prison

East Oregonian

UMATILLA — Two more inmates, who tested positive for COVID-19 in the ongoing outbreak at Two Rivers Correctional Institution in Umatilla have died, according to a press release from the Oregon Department of Corrections, raising the death toll among adults in custody at the prison to nine since January began.

The newly reported deaths come as reported cases at the prison continue to spike, with 133 inmates and 17 staff reportedly testing positive between Jan. 12 and Tuesday, Jan. 19, according to corrections department data.

Both of the inmates who reportedly died after contracting the virus at Two Rivers were between 70 and 80 years old. Each died at a local hospital, the press release said, with the first on Wednesday and the second on Thursday.

Statewide, 36 inmates have died of COVID-19 since the outbreak began, according to the department.

The Oregon Attorney General's office declined comment, citing the ongoing legislation.

SNAKE RIVER PRISON

Records chronicle events leading to Dec. 9 melee

BY LILIANA FRANKEL

Malheur Enterprise

ONTARIO – A fight between two inmates at Snake River Correctional Institution last month escalated into one of the largest disturbances in recent times at the prison, according to records obtained by the Malheur Enterprise.

Documents released by the Oregon Department of Corrections after a public records request show the episode put the prison in lockdown, required corrections officers to deploy pepper spray and sent

two inmates to the hospital.

The Dec. 9 nighttime fight in Complex C eventually involved 37 inmates and required 37 corrections officers to quell.

The fight was contained in Unit C, a housing unit for 80 inmates. The arrival of a new inmate led corrections officer Brandon Kropp to report "an intangible sense of an increase in tension" among the inmates and a "change of tone on the unit," according to an incident brief by Capt. Robert Campbell.

Kropp moved to conduct a standard inmate count the

evening of Dec. 9 when at 9:16 p.m. he radioed other prison workers that a fight had broken out.

"The incident began in the dayroom, when adult in custody (AIC) Torren Cooksey was verbally disrespectful to AIC Alec Imel," according to Jennifer Black, communications manager with the Corrections Department. "The two men decided to resolve their issue with a one-on-one fight inside a cell. After they fought, other AICs on the unit did not agree that there was resolution

to the fight and the larger fight ensued."

Cooksey said in a recent letter to the Enterprise that it was a "bum beef" — prison slang for a false charge — and the fight "could've been hours or even days before this spoken of disturbance."

Cooksey said that the disturbance was really a gang fight between the WhiteBoys and the Paisas, two ethnic factions in the prison.

Black confirmed that members of ethnic gangs participated in the fight.

Kropp estimated that 25 inmates were "actively fighting and not complying with staff directives to stop fighting and other AICs were joining in the fight," an incident report recounted.

Kropp gated the housing unit, and his backup, Sgt. James Kenyon, arrived with two teams of corrections officers. Within three minutes, the entire prison was put on lockdown.

The reports show that by 9:50 p.m., the officers had successfully quelled the fighting between inmates.

Join The Bulletin Editor for a morning Q&A



LIVE
STREAM

Gerry O'Brien, Bulletin Editor, and Al Getler, of Advantage Newspaper Consultants, will chat **weekdays at 9 a.m. on Facebook Live starting Monday, Jan. 25** to bring you a daily news update and answer your questions.

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