

## TODAY

It's Sunday, Jan. 31, the 31st day of 2021. There are 334 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**  
In 1865, the U.S. House of Representatives joined the Senate in passing the 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution abolishing slavery, sending it to states for ratification. The amendment was adopted in December 1865.

In 1863, during the Civil War, the First South Carolina Volunteers, an all-Black Union regiment composed of many escaped slaves, was mustered into federal service at Beaufort, South Carolina.

In 1919, baseball Hall-of-Famer Jackie Robinson was born in Cairo, Georgia.

In 1929, revolutionary Leon Trotsky and his family were expelled from the Soviet Union.

In 1945, Pvt. Eddie Slovik, 24, became the first U.S. soldier since the Civil War to be executed for desertion as he was shot by an American firing squad in France.

In 1950, President Harry S. Truman announced he had ordered development of the hydrogen bomb.

In 1956, the creator of "Winnie-the-Pooh," British author A.A. Milne, died at 74.

In 1958, the United States entered the Space Age with its first successful launch of a satellite, Explorer 1, from Cape Canaveral.

In 1971, astronauts Alan Shepard, Edgar Mitchell and Stuart Roosa blasted off aboard Apollo 14 on a mission to the moon.

In 2000, an Alaska Airlines MD-83 jet crashed into the Pacific Ocean off Port Hueneme, California, killing all 88 people aboard.

In 2001, a Scottish court sitting in the Netherlands convicted one Libyan, acquitted a second, in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi was given a life sentence, but was released after eight years on compassionate grounds by Scotland's government. He died in 2012.

In 2005, jury selection began in Santa Maria, California, for Michael Jackson's child molestation trial. Jackson was later acquitted. SBC Communications Inc. announced it was acquiring AT&T Corp. for \$16 billion.

**Ten years ago:** A federal judge in Florida declared the Obama administration's health care overhaul unconstitutional, siding with 26 states that argued people cannot be required to buy health insurance. In 2012, the Supreme Court would uphold most of the health care law, including the requirement that nearly every American have health insurance.

**Five years ago:** A triple bombing killed at least 45 people in a predominantly Shiite Muslim suburb south of the Syrian capital. Israel's Cabinet voted to allow non-Orthodox Jewish prayer at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, marking a historic show of support for liberal streams of Judaism. Novak Djokovic maintained his perfect streak in six Australian Open finals with a 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (3) victory over Andy Murray.

**One year ago:** The United States declared a public health emergency over the new coronavirus, and President Donald Trump signed an order to temporarily bar entry to foreign nationals, other than immediate family of U.S. citizens, who had traveled in China within the past 14 days. Three U.S. airlines suspended all flights between the U.S. and China. The U.S. government ordered two weeks of quarantine at a California military base for the nearly 200 Americans who'd been evacuated on a charter flight from the Chinese city of Wuhan. Author Mary Higgins Clark, known as the "Queen of Suspense," died in Florida at 92.

**Today's Birthdays:** Composer Philip Glass is 84. Former Interior Secretary James Watt is 83. Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands, the former queen regent, is 83. Blues singer-musician Charlie Musselwhite is 77. Actor Glynn Turman is 74. Baseball Hall-of-Famer Nolan Ryan is 74. Actor Jonathan Banks is 74. Singer-musician Harry Wayne Casey (KC and the Sunshine Band) is 70. Rock singer Johnny Rotten is 65. Actor Kelly Lynch is 62. Actor Anthony LaPaglia is 62. Actor Minnie Driver is 51. Actor Portia de Rossi is 48. Actor-comedian Bobby Moynihan is 44. Actor Kerry Washington is 44. Singer Justin Timberlake is 40. Folk-rock singer-musician Marcus Mumford (Mumford and Sons) is 34.

— Associated Press

## LOCAL, STATE &amp; REGION

## COVID-19: Effect on youth

## Lawmakers push mental health days

BY SOPHIA EPPOLITO

The Associated Press/Report for America

**SALT LAKE CITY** — When she was growing up, Sophie Corroon struggled to get through a ballet class or soccer tryout without having an anxiety attack.

The idea of going to sleepovers or being home alone left her feeling panicked. Corroon's anxiety grew even more during high school in Salt Lake City, when the pressures of getting into college left her in tears at school or toiling for hours on assignments.

Corroon, 20, has struggled with her mental health since fourth grade, and she's not alone. And now, the coronavirus pandemic has multiplied the pressures on kids — many have spent almost a year doing remote learning, isolated from their friends and classmates. The portion of children's emergency-room visits related to mental health was 44% higher in 2020, compared with the year before.

State lawmakers are increasingly seeking more support for kids. This year, legislation proposed in Utah and Arizona would add mental or behavioral health to the list of reasons students can be absent from class, similar to staying out with a physical illness. Similar laws have passed in Oregon, Maine, Colorado and Virginia in the past two years.

Offering mental health days can help children and parents communicate and prevent struggling students from falling behind in school or ending up in crisis, said Debbie Plotnick, vice president of the nonprofit advocacy group Mental Health America. Plotnick said



Elaine Thompson/AP

**Sophie Corroon, a sophomore at the University of Washington, helped work on proposed legislation in her home state of Utah to allow students to take mental health days to lessen stigma and help reduce suicide.**

mental health days can be even more effective when paired with mental health services in schools.

"We know that this year has been extra hard, and we know that it's hard for young people," Plotnick said. "That's why it's so essential that students feel comfortable to come forward and say ... 'I need to take some actions to support my mental health.'"

In Arizona, Democratic Sen. Sean Bowie has introduced a mental health day measure for the second time after legislation stalled in March as the pandemic took hold. Republican Gov. Doug Ducey has taken an interest in youth suicide and mental health, and Bowie said he's confident it will be signed into law. The bill

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passed the state Senate unanimously Thursday.

Conservative Utah passed a law in 2018 letting kids take time off school for a mental

illness. A new proposal from Republican Rep. Mike Winder would allow absences for students to deal with other kinds of mental pressures to further normalize treating a mental health concern like a physical one.

Under the Utah bill, which passed out of committee Friday and will move to the House floor, mental health days would be treated like any other excused absence, Winder said. Parent would need to excuse their children, and students would still be expected to make up their schoolwork.

Theresa Nguyen, a licensed clinical social worker, said she's concerned about the potential long-term mental and academic effects that students may face from the pandemic.

In addition to growing reports of anxiety and depression, Nguyen said, many students say they don't feel like they're absorbing class material virtually and they're not getting enough support.

For the last few years, Utah leaders have searched for ways to reduce an alarming rate of youth suicides. The pandemic has lent urgency, with many young people isolated from friends and school activities.

Winder's bill is modeled after a similar program in Oregon that his daughter, Jessica Lee, found through her work on a youth-focused committee with the Utah chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. In Oregon, students are given five excused absences every three months, and those can be either physical sick days or mental health days.

Lee, who is a senior at Southern Utah University studying clinical psychology, said she was inspired by youth activists who successfully championed the Oregon bill in 2019.

Lee and Corroon both work with the committee to help teenagers navigate their mental health. Over the years, Corroon learned to manage her anxiety with medication and therapy and is now a sophomore at the University of Washington, where she plans to study public health.

Part of her routine is taking a step back to prioritize her mental health — a chance she says other kids deserve, too.

"I definitely needed those days to just stay home or seek out a resource rather than forcing myself to go to school and putting more stress on my mental health," Corroon said.

## Oregon will cut certain extended jobless benefits

JAMIE GOLDBERG

The Oregonian

Oregonians who are out of work will receive fewer weeks of extended jobless benefits starting next month due to the state's unemployment rate.

The state has been offering jobless Oregonians who exhaust their regular unemployment benefits an extra 13 weeks of extended benefits because the state's unemployment rate has been above 6.5% over the preceding three-month period.

Although Oregon's unemployment

rate climbed to 6.4% in December, rising for the first time since April, the rate has still been below 6.5% for the last three months.

That prompted the federal government to inform Oregon officials they could no longer offer the extended benefits. The change will go into effect Feb. 20.

If Oregon's unemployment rate rises to 6.5% or higher, the state will be able to offer the extended benefit program again.

However, jobless Oregonians who

have exhausted their regular unemployment benefits will still be able to receive extended benefits for the time being through a separate pandemic relief program, funded by the federal government.

Once the current extended benefits programs expires on Feb. 20, claimants will be automatically transferred to the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation program for an additional 11 weeks.

David Gerstenfeld, acting director of the Oregon Employment Department,

said the switch could require manual changes that could delay some of the extended payments, but that all payments will be made retroactively and claimants won't lose out on any weeks of benefits they are eligible for.

The Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation program will expire March 14.

Those who still have money left on their claim at that point will continue receiving benefits through April 10, according to the employment department.

## Homeowners sue Astoria to hurry window replacement

BY EDWARD STRATTON

The Astorian

A retired couple has sued Astoria to force the approval of window replacements in a historic house over the objections of the Lower Columbia Preservation Society.

Thomas and Priscilla Levy bought the house in August and retired from Portland.

The couple submitted an application in September to replace 19 white pine window frames in the house with Fibrex, a composite of reclaimed wood fiber and thermoplastic polymer made by Andersen Windows & Doors. Thomas Levy argued that the old windows were beyond repair, with black mold and deterioration.

"The same building materials that were available in the 19th century are no longer available," he said. "You can't get clear white pine anymore, and if you could get clear white



Edward Stratton/The Astorian

**Thomas and Priscilla Levy want to replace 19 wooden windows in their historic house with Fibrex, a composite of reclaimed wood fiber and thermoplastic polymer.**

pine, it would be ridiculously expensive."

State law requires cities to make a decision on such land use applications within 120 days. City staff initially recommended denial. Hearings on the project lasted three months

while staff gathered more information from the Levys and the window manufacturer.

The Historic Landmarks Commission ultimately approved the newer window materials in December, finding the old windows beyond repair

and Fibrex a suitable replacement. The approval required the Levys to match the old style of windows precisely.

The preservation society, a nonprofit promoting historical architecture, appealed the approval to the City Council. Doug Thompson, the chairman of the board for the preservation society, said they believe the Historic Landmarks Commission erred in not following a city ordinance that prioritizes repair of the windows first.

"People move to Astoria from other areas, and they buy historic homes, and they do so because they want to live in and own a historic home," said Thompson, who used to serve on the City Council. "And Astoria doesn't look the way it does by accident. That's why we've had this ordinance on the books for more than a quarter of a century."

The city scheduled an appeals hearing for Jan. 19, one business day beyond the 120-day deadline. Missing the deadline allowed the Levys to seek a legal remedy in Circuit Court to compel the city to finalize the Historic Landmarks Commission's approval of replacing the windows, and to pay their attorney fees.

Priscilla Levy said there should be disclosures by real estate companies about the ramifications of buying a historic home and financial support for people being forced to make historically accurate repairs.

Thompson argued that such resources exist, such as special assessments to freeze the value of historic properties while they undergo repairs. He argued that repairing the existing windows or replacing them with the original materials would ultimately cost less than using Fibrex.

## STATE BRIEFING

## 1 found dead in Salem crash was shot to death

A person found dead inside a crashed car two weeks ago in

Salem was shot to death, police said Saturday.

Officers who checked on a report of shots fired Jan. 16 found two people inside a

car that had hit a tree on Savage Road near Ladd Avenue Northeast, the Salem Police Department reported.

One of them, the driver, was

pronounced dead at the scene. A second occupant was injured and taken to a hospital.

Police determined the driver was hit in an earlier shooting at

Hoover Park. The driver died of a gunshot wound. Two people have been arrested for their alleged involvement.

— Bulletin wire report