

**TODAY**

It's Saturday, May 1, the 121st day of 2021. There are 244 days left in the year.

**Today's Highlight in History:**

In **2011**, President Barack Obama announced the death of Osama bin Laden during a U.S. commando operation. Because of the time difference, it was early May 2 in Pakistan, where the al-Qaida leader met his end.

In **1707**, the Kingdom of Great Britain was created as a treaty merging England and Scotland took effect.

In **1915**, the RMS Lusitania set sail from New York, headed for Liverpool, England (it was torpedoed and sunk by Germany off the coast of Ireland six days later).

In **1941**, the Orson Welles motion picture "Citizen Kane" premiered in New York.

In **1945**, a day after Adolf Hitler took his own life, Admiral Karl Doenitz effectively became sole leader of the Third Reich with the suicide of Hitler's propaganda minister, Josef Goebbels.

In **1960**, the Soviet Union shot down an American U-2 reconnaissance plane over Sverdlovsk and captured its pilot, Francis Gary Powers.

In **1963**, James W. Whittaker became the first American to conquer Mount Everest as he and Sherpa guide Nawang Gombu reached the summit.

In **1971**, the intercity passenger rail service Amtrak went into operation.

In **1975**, Hank Aaron of the Milwaukee Brewers broke baseball's all-time RBI record previously held by Babe Ruth during a game against the Detroit Tigers (Milwaukee won, 17-3).

In **1992**, on the third day of the Los Angeles riots, a visibly shaken Rodney King appeared in public to appeal for calm, pleading, "Can we all get along?"

In **1998**, Eldridge Cleaver, the fiery Black Panther leader who later renounced his past and became a Republican, died in Pomona, California, at 62.

In **2009**, Supreme Court Justice David Souter announced his retirement effective at the end of the court's term in late June. President Barack Obama chose federal judge Sonia Sotomayor to succeed him.

In **2015**, Baltimore's top prosecutor charged six police officers with felonies ranging from assault to murder in the death of Freddie Gray, who'd suffered a spinal injury while riding in a police van.

**Ten years ago:** Pope Benedict XVI beatified Pope John Paul II, moving his predecessor a step closer to sainthood in a Vatican Mass attended by some 1.5 million pilgrims.

**Five years ago:** A wildfire broke out near Fort McMurray, Alberta, Canada; in the days that followed, the blaze destroyed 2,400 homes and other buildings and forced more than 80,000 people to evacuate. Elephants performed for the last time at the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus in Providence, Rhode Island.

**One year ago:** A security guard at a Family Dollar store in Flint, Michigan, was shot and killed after a confrontation with the family of a woman he had told to leave the store because she wasn't wearing a face mask. Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer said the state's stay-at-home order would remain in place for two more weeks; her statement came on the same day that President Donald Trump tweeted that she should "make a deal" with protesters who gathered at the state Capitol a day earlier, some carrying assault weapons. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced a ban on the sale and use of assault-style weapons in Canada, two weeks after a gunman killed 22 people in Nova Scotia.

**Today's Birthdays:** Singer Judy Collins is 82. Actor Stephen Macht is 79. Singer Rita Coolidge is 76. Pop singer Nick Fortuna (The Buckingham) is 75. Actor-director Douglas Barr is 72. Singer-songwriter Ray Parker Jr. is 67. Hall of Fame jockey Steve Cauthen is 61. Actor Maia Morgenstern is 59. Actor Scott Coffey is 57. Actor Charlie Schlatter is 55. Country singer Tim McGraw is 54. Rock musician Johnny Colt is 53. Rock musician D'Arcy Wretzky is 53. Movie director Wes Anderson is 52. Actor Julie Benz is 49. Actor Bailey Chase is 49. Gospel/rhythm-and-blues singer Tina Campbell (Mary Mary) is 47. Actor Darius McCrary is 45. Actor Jamie Dornan is 39. Actor Kerry Bishe is 37. Actor Lizzy Greene is 18.

—Associated Press

**LOCAL, STATE & REGION****From Idaho fields to the opera stage**

*With drive and talent, Cecilia Violetta Lopez bridges both worlds*

BY LILIANA FRANKEL

Malheur Enterprise

ONTARIO — Cecilia Violetta Lopez comes from a musical family.

She can remember her grandmother in Mexico bursting out in song when summoned by a customer in her shop: "Ya voooooy" — "I'm coooming!"

Her father would sing her mother all manner of silly improvised songs when returning from a day of work in the Idaho fields.

And then there was her mother, who taught Lopez and her brother old classics while they played in the irrigation ditches and later when working sugar beets.

By the time Lopez was a teenager, it was clear she had a gift. Wherever she went, people began to expect her to sing.

At events like weddings, quinceañeras, and rodeos, Lopez's mother would offer, "I'll talk to the mariachi band and I'll have them play it in a certain key so you can sing it."

So it wasn't a complete surprise when Lopez left a budding career in the medical field to become a vocal performance major.

It took her multiple tries to pass the program audition at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

"The transition from singing mariachi music to singing classical music was hard for me because it's such a different vocal technique," she said in an interview with the Enterprise. "The production of the voice is so different."



Courtesy of Cecilia Violetta Lopez

**Music infused Cecilia Violetta Lopez's life growing up in Idaho, where her father worked in the farm fields. Now she is a sought-after soprano.**

But Lopez now is a sought-after soprano, finding great success in the world of opera. She regularly performs as her tocaya, or name twin, Violetta, in Giuseppe Verdi's "La traviata" — a famously complex role, she said.

She shared the story of her journey from the fields of Rupert, Idaho, to stages around the country in a recent event at Treasure Valley Community College's Farmworker Appreciation Week April 1.

"It was important for Cecilia to share her work because her journey as a farmworker to an opera singer is proof that coming from a farm-working background is not a barrier. It is something to be proud of," said Valeria Guadarrama, an adviser and retention specialist with Treasure Valley's College Assistance Migrant Program. "There are a lot of sacrifices at-

tached to farm work, but it is work that has given so many of us access to different opportunities."

"It was also important to continue to build that sense of community for our students that share those similar backgrounds," she added. "After all, we are here to support one another and help each other succeed."

As a child, "I too got the calloused hands, the achy back, the abnormally toned arms for a 10-year-old" working in the fields, said Lopez.

Now based in New Mexico, Lopez said that before the pandemic, she spent a significant portion of each year living out of a suitcase as she traveled to participate in productions.

"It's been interesting that I've been one of the Latina singers out there that's been performing regularly," she said.

About the rehearsal process, she said, "It's complete strangers meeting up in a rehearsal hall, but we meet up with the same intention of putting a show together."

A lot of bonding happens, a lot of dipping into our personal experiences. We become vulnerable to make the story come to life."

For Lopez, using her experiences has sometimes been as literal as recognizing the art songs she's being asked to sing in Spanish as elevated versions of the classics her mother taught her to sing in the fields, like "La Borrachita," by Ignacio Fernández.

"She taught us the songs that she sang as a kid," said Lopez. "The rows in the fields" magically got shorter song after song."

"Working in those fields is what taught me to work hard

*"Look at me, I grew up in the fields; I sang mariachi. If I can learn to love it, so can you — you just need to give it a chance."*

— Cecilia Violetta Lopez, soprano

for whatever I wanted in life," Lopez said. Opera "is not the same as farm work, but it's still challenging and I worked hard for it. If you work hard for something, you'll reap the benefits of that hard work that you put in. If my story serves to inspire someone feeling sad or feeling like they can't overcome an obstacle, then I've done my job."

Lopez said that while opera may have a reputation as inaccessible, her story proves that's not necessarily so.

"Look at me, I grew up in the fields; I sang mariachi," she said. "If I can learn to love it, so can you — you just need to give it a chance."

"There's a little bit of intimidation maybe because we're up on the stage 'screaming,'" she said, describing her family members' initial impressions of her work. "But an opera is like a telenovela. I try to make it more relatable to them."

Lopez said that she tries to always stay conscious of the sacrifices her parents have made for her, as well as the sacrifices she's currently making for her own child.

"I try to make every performance count and worth it for them," she said.

"I hope students were able to take away that they, too, can accomplish great things," said Guadarrama. "No matter how far they may seem to be from their goals, those goals are not unobtainable."



Incivweb

**The Beachie Creek Fire burned nearly 200,000 acres on both sides of state Highway 22 in September, leaving scars in the land and burned trees.**

**Lawmaker asks Brown to halt post-wildfire hazardous tree removal**

BY TED SICKINGER

The Oregonian

Sen. Jeff Golden, D-Ashland, has asked Gov. Kate Brown to suspend Oregon's post-fire hazard tree removal program and initiate an "inquiry" to vet allegations of mismanagement and excessive harvesting by the contractors on the job, which is being overseen by the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The action follows a damning two-hour hearing Wednesday of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery Committee in which whistle-blowers, landowners and others described a program with little oversight, unqualified staff, constantly evolving standards for what constitutes a hazard tree, rampant drug use by workers and instances of possible fraud.

"The testimony was alarming," Golden, the chairman of the committee, said in his letter to Brown. "There are multiple allegations that core elements of the project's stated purpose and specifications are being violated. Questions have also arisen as to the project's fiscal integrity (including the possibility of jeopardizing FEMA funding for the project) and the

rights of citizens with burned trees on their properties. If any of these allegations are substantially true, the negative consequences for our state would be grave in a number of ways."

Golden asked Brown to immediately suspend work on the project pending an investigation of the allegations by a well-qualified neutral party.

"No more trees should be felled in connection with these contracts (subject, perhaps, to very narrow exceptions for compelling and well-documented reasons) until these allegations are competently vetted," he wrote.

Charles Boyle, a spokesman for the governor, said the office is reviewing Golden's letter and has contacted the senator about his concerns.

"My understanding is that ODOT is working with legislative offices to provide the information they need about appropriate oversight of this contract, and that there will be another hearing on this subject in the House tomorrow," Boyle said in an email. "Agencies are fully participating so that the legislative branch's questions can be answered and concerns addressed."

**ENGLERT**  
**LeafGuard®** is the permanent, clog-free gutter solution!\*

\*Guaranteed not to clog for as long as you own your home, or we will clean your gutters for free

QUALITY TESTED  
**GOOD HOUSEKEEPING**  
SINCE 1959  
ACCREDITED BUSINESS  
A+  
BBB  
LeafGuard  
16 YEARS BACKED BY THE SEAL

**"HOME IMPROVEMENT DAYS!"**

**We'll give you \$500 for your old gutters! We'll even take them down & haul them away with purchase of a complete LeafGuard system!**

**CALL DURING THIS PROGRAM & RECEIVE A FREE \$50 VISA GIFT CARD**

WITH IN-HOME ESTIMATE!†

541-366-4118

CALL TODAY FOR YOUR FREE ESTIMATE!

- THE ONLY ONE-PIECE SEAMLESS DEBRIS SHEDDING GUTTER SYSTEM
- MADE ONSITE SPECIFICALLY FOR YOUR HOME
- SCRATCHGUARD® PAINT FINISH
- LIFETIME NO-CLOG WARRANTY

\*All participants who attend an estimated 60-90-minute in-home product consultation will receive a \$50 Visa gift card. Retail value is \$50. Offer sponsored by LeafGuard Holdings Inc. Limit one per household. Company procures, sells, and installs seamless gutter protection. This offer is valid for homeowners over 18 years of age. If married or involved with a life partner, both cohabitating persons must attend and complete presentation together. Participants must have a photo ID, be able to understand English, and be legally able to enter into a contract. The following persons are not eligible for this offer: employees of Company or affiliated companies or entities, their immediate family members, previous participants in a Company in-home consultation within the past 12 months and all current and former Company customers. Gift may not be extended, transferred, or substituted except that Company may substitute a gift of equal or greater value if it deems it necessary. Gift card will be mailed to the participant via first class United States Mail within 10 days of receipt of the promotion form. Not valid in conjunction with any other promotion or discount of any kind. Offer not sponsored by Visa and is subject to change without notice prior to reservation. Expires 05/31/2021. †New orders only. Offer sponsored by LeafGuard Holdings, Inc. Limit one per household. Company procures, sells, and installs seamless gutter protection. This offer is valid for homeowners over 18 years of age. The following persons are not eligible for this offer: employees of Company or affiliated companies or entities, their immediate family members, and all current and former LeafGuard customers. Discount may not be extended, transferred, or substituted except that Company may substitute an item of equal or greater value if it deems it necessary. Discount will be received after completion of the installation and payment in full. Not valid in conjunction with any other promotion or discount of any kind. Offer is subject to change without notice prior to reservation. Expires 05/31/2021. LeafGuard operates as LeafGuard of Oregon in Oregon under license number 223377.