

HAWK

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absorbed life-threatening blows. “People don’t survive being hit trucks,” Tompkins said. “Think of what it can do to a 2-pound bird.”

She noted the bird suffered a second jolt when it fell to the ground.

“It was a one-two punch,” Tompkins said. “It was blunt-force trauma.”

Rainboth, who lives in Cove, learned of the injured red-tailed hawk when a man who had witnessed a truck hitting it brought the predator to her on May 9. The man told her the truck driver had not stopped after striking the hawk. Rainboth then helped get the bird to Blue Mountain Wildlife.

“I did not think it was going to make it to Pendleton,” she said.

The center housed the hawk first in an indoor hospital cage, where staff fed it dead mice and other animals, including quail. Tompkins said it often is hard to get injured birds to eat, but this was not a problem for the red-tailed hawk, especially after she started giving it quail.

The recovering hawk, which also received anti-inflammatory medication, was later moved to a small outdoor cage and finally to a flight pen when Tompkins thought it was ready to start testing its wings again.

“It did well in the flight pen,” Tompkins said, adding the Blue Mountain Wildlife does not name the animals it cares for unless they are for its educational program.

An Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife employee on Thursday brought the red-tailed hawk to

La Grande, where Rainboth picked it up and took it to Phys Point Road just off Highway 237, near the site of the raptor’s rescue.

Jenny Phelps of Summerville and her children, Colton and Myranda, also helped release the hawk.

The raptor, however, did not immediately come out of its travel box.

“I was worried,” Rainboth said, so she lifted the box.

Fortunately the bird was just a bit lethargic and appeared reenergized after Rainboth lifted it out.

Rainboth said the hawk’s tail feathers indicate it is at least a year old. And the bird had a brood patch — an area on its belly that becomes featherless during nesting seasons to allow it to better incubate eggs with body heat.

“It probably had a nest,” said Rainboth, who also is the coordinator of the La Grande School District’s science, technology, engineering and math education program.

The red-tailed hawk is one of about 10,000 birds Blue Mountain Wildlife has cared for since it opened around 1990.

Tompkins said about half of the birds that Blue Mountain Wildlife receives are released back into the wild. Most of those released are young birds.

Only about 10-15% of the birds released have been those injured in traumatic accidents, such as the red-tailed hawk released Thursday.

“Being able to release a bird like this (one hurt in a serious mishap) is always special,” Tompkins said.

HOWARD

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said. “He responded to the steroid drug quite well, but then the virus had a comeback on him. It’s a sleeping killer — a silent killer — I’ll say that.”

Paul Howard was readmitted to Grande Ronde, then transferred to Vibra Hospital of Boise, which his brother said had a wing specifically dedicated to coronavirus treatment.

“We could not be there with Paul at either location,” John Howard said. The family held a grave-

side service Monday.

“We’ll be quoting scripture from the Bible and talking about Paul, reminiscing,” John Howard said prior to the service.

Growing up, Paul Howard, who John said was a high school athlete, was known for racing, and he had a car that few could beat.

“(He) enjoyed his 1969 383 Magnum Roadrunner,” John said. “He loved to race other people with cars during the 70s and lived life to the fullest. It was one of the fastest cars in the valley at the time.”

John said Paul, who smoked for about four

decades, faced mental health issues beginning in his 20s that affected him, but didn’t stop him.

“He made the best of his life, even though he lived with that complication,” John said. “He lived independently, was able to socialize, was able to work, enjoy family events, and be a normal person, even though he was compromised with a mental illness. He never once complained about his illness, never felt sorry for himself or shameful.”

John called his brother a man who was dedicated to his work, which he said included a 25-year career

LOOP

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their revenue by adding things like on-farm lodging, RV camping and event venues, in addition to product sales,” Dodson said.

Agritourism is growing across the United States, and Dodson believes it is because of a deep-rooted curiosity that is greater today than it was decades ago when countless families were involved in farming or many people had close relatives who were involved in farming or ranching. Today people feel more distant from agriculture and want to get closer to it again.

“Fewer people grow up on farms today. They have an urge to see where their food comes from,” Dodson said.

Visiting farms also gives people a chance to make an organic connection in today’s high-tech world.

“They are getting in touch with nature,” Dodson said.

Dodson said interest in agriculture among the general public also may be up because of the coronavirus pandemic. She explained that people are expressing a greater interest in eating food produced locally because it is handled by fewer people, possibly

at the Center for Human Development Inc., and said he was “most proud” of what Paul did to help their mother, Carolyn.

“We always looked up to Paul for the courage he had. And he’ll be missed in our family for a very long time,” John Howard said. John spoke candidly about individuals needing to protect themselves and others in the community with the coronavirus present.

“We all need to do what we can to stop the spread of the virus,” he said. “We just need to be sensitive to those that have underlying health problems, whether they are

diabetic or have asthma. ... Some of us live without taking medication or are healthy, (but) we need to be cognizant of those that have health problems and are struggling.”

He’s especially adamant about it because he doesn’t want to see anyone face what his family has.

“I think it’s important we wear a mask when you’re in a store or in close quarters, and social distance outside to stop the spread,” he said. “I really don’t want any other community members to go through losing a loved one through COVID such as our family has.”

Fireworks red glare over Wallowa Lake



Photo by Ellen Morris Bishop/EO Media Group
Wallowa County residents funded a Fourth of July fireworks display Saturday that “shook” Wallowa Lake.

OUTBREAK

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zeroed in on one group home.

“They came to all the sites, all the employees, and all the clients were willing and able (to be tested),” she said. “One (client) refused a test. Public health gave us specific instructions for the next 14 days. We did all of those things. (The client) never showed signs or symptoms. The employees also were told they could get tested in the community (clinics).”

Slack said, to her knowledge, none of the staff had serious issues with the virus.

“The main thing I heard from someone is they had a fever. I’m so grateful for my employees,” she said.

The outbreak was one of four the Oregon Health Authority listed in the workplace outbreak category last week. The number of cases in the county, though, has not seen a drastic uptick in recent days.

Saturday was the first day the county did not report a new case since June 11. The Center for Human Development Inc., La Grande, reported just one case Sunday, and no new cases Monday. Union County now has 356 cases of COVID-19 with 21 recoveries, 333 active cases and two deaths.

Union County’s surge in cases led to Oregon Gov. Kate Brown on Thursday naming it among eight counties on a COVID-19

watch list, along with Jefferson, Lake, Lincoln, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla and Wasco counties.

“The spread of COVID-19 in these counties has risen to alarming levels in recent weeks,” the press release stated. “Analysis by the Oregon Health Authority showed alarmingly high per capita rates of case increases and community spread — cases where the infections are not attributable to a specific location or event. This community spread is a serious warning sign for health experts.”

State agencies will monitor counties on the watch list in the coming days while the Oregon Health Authority and local officials deploy additional resources to control the spread of the disease.

The the governor’s office also announced the Oregon Liquor Control Commission with support from Oregon Occupational Safety and Health field offices will conduct spot checks and inspections across Oregon during the holiday weekend to ensure restaurants, bars other businesses and their

patrons comply with state alcohol laws, OLCC rules and the requirement to wear a face covering in indoor public spaces.

That action comes after the state reached a record of 375 new cases of COVID-19 on Thursday. That was the first of four days in a row when there were at least 300 new cases in the state, adding 344 Friday, 303 Saturday and 301 Sunday. Sunday’s total moved the state past 10,000.

There were 165 cases added Monday, the lowest total since 171 were posted June 30.

Businesses that refuse to comply with requirements face fines and harsher penalties.

OSHA and OLCC staff have the authority to take administrative action, according to the press release, including issuing citations, fines and “Red Warning Notices,” which apply to businesses that appear to be in “willful violation” of the governor’s executive orders or that refuse to take corrective measures.

“Such businesses are closed until the hazardous

condition is remedied,” the press release stated. “Violation of a Red Warning Notice results in stiff penalties.”

And the city of La Grande in a press release Monday morning

announced City Manager Robert Strobe extended the city’s emergency declaration through Sept. 4 in conjunction with Brown’s extension of Oregon’s state of emergency declaration last week.

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