

Pot supporter
rolls giant joint
NORTHWEST/2A



EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2015

139th Year, No. 190 WINNER OF THE 2013 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar



Going all in

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Makayla Walker, 16, and Brooke Marshall, 16, both of Pendleton, wade and fish the McKay Reservoir south of Pendleton Tuesday evening.

PENDLETON

It's not easy staying green

In times of drought, tactical use of water is crucial to sustain parks

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

With 98 percent of the state in a drought, there's an increasingly high price to keep Oregon lawns green.

Public parks are no exception, but Pendleton interim parks and recreation director Donnie Cook said the Pendleton park system's water usage is in line with the usual consumption rate.

For a town of about 17,000, Pendleton has a relatively robust collection of parks.

Covering 190 acres with 21 parks, the Pendleton park system is larger than many other cities of similar sizes.

Comparatively, Hermiston has 12 parks and 101 acres despite having a slightly higher population.

Of those 190 acres, Cook estimated the city is responsible for watering 175 of them. In a deal struck with the city's water department, Cook said parks can use a certain number of acre feet of water per year before the costs come out of the parks budget.

Despite the wide swaths of grass the parks department is responsible for watering, Cook said the parks department has never exceeded the limit.

The parks department uses a number of



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A group of children build a castle out of cardboard on Wednesday at Roy Raley Park in Pendleton, one of the city's 21 parks. The Pendleton Library and the Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon combined to put on the event.

tactics to keep the system water consumption efficient.

Cook said half of the city's parks utilize a computerized irrigation system, which automatically performs tasks like turning the sprinklers on and off, shutting off the sprinklers when water lines break and using more or less water depending on the weather.

While the city continues to add parks piece by piece to the computerized system,

those still on the manual system require more active attention.

Cook said his first order of business each morning is to check the latest forecast from the National Weather Service and tell his crews to use more or less water accordingly.

Brown patches spotted by maintenance crews also prompts adjustment from parks employees.

See PARKS/8A

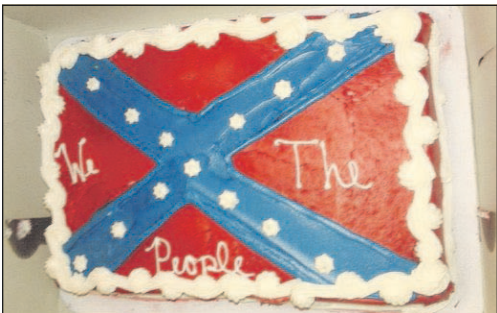


Photo contributed by Joy Castleton

Joy Castleton served a Confederate battle flag cake on the Fourth of July to honor her ancestors, who fought for the Confederacy in the Civil War.

Confederate flags are in demand after controversy

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Controversy over the symbolism of the Confederate battle flag may be prompting some people to distance themselves, but it is provoking an opposite reaction in others.

Janet Johnson, owner of Columbia Outdoor and Surplus in Hermiston, said she has always included the Confederate flag in the selection of flags she sells.

Since people across the country began calling for the flag's eradication in June, however, she has gotten a steady stream of requests.

"I sold out in the first four days after it was in the news," she said.

The Civil War-era banner came under fire after a shooter killed nine people in an

"The flag for me does not represent hate. It represents defiance to a tyrannical government that led to the Civil War."

— Joy Castleton, of Hermiston, has South Carolina ancestors

See FLAG/8A

Funds approved for dangerous stretch of I-84

By JONATHAN BACH
East Oregonian

One of the more dangerous stretches of freeway in Oregon was allocated \$11.5 million for safety projects on the last day of the legislative session.

If House Bill 5006 is signed by Governor Kate Brown, \$4 million will go to a snow zone safety project on Interstate 84 between Pendleton and La Grande and \$7.5 million to build a new maintenance station in Meacham, according to ODOT public relations officer David House.

Interstate 84 between Pendleton and La Grande "experiences a two- to three-times greater number of crashes than the statewide average for interstates, likely due to inclement winter weather conditions," read the bill.

See FUNDING/8A

Tech disruptions hit three major businesses

By JONATHAN FAHEY
AP Business Writer



James Borchuck/The Tampa Bay Times via AP

Passengers check into the United ticket counter at Tampa International Airport, Wednesday. A "router issue" at United Airlines suspended all of the company's flights for nearly two hours, leading to 800 flight delays and 60 cancellations.

NEW YORK — It was a rough day for tech: The nation's biggest airline, its oldest stock exchange, and its most prominent business newspaper all suffered technology problems that upended service for parts of the day.

Government officials said that it did not appear that the incidents were related, or the result of sabotage, counter to an endless stream of jokes and conspiracy theories posted on Facebook and Twitter — and even the suspicions of FBI director James Comey.

"In my business, you don't love coincidences," Comey told Congress Wednesday. "But it does appear that there is not a cyber intrusion involved."

First a "router issue" at United Airlines suspended all of the company's

flights for nearly two hours, leading to 800 flight delays and 60 cancellations.

Then at 11:32 a "technical problem" at the New York Stock Exchange halted trading. In the midst of that, the Wall Street Journal's website, WSJ.com, had "technical difficulties" that sent readers to a temporary site while the paper worked to fix the problem.

"The problem is humans can't keep up with all the technology they have created," said Avivah Litan, an analyst at Gartner. "It's becoming unmanageable by the human brain. Our best hope may be that computers eventually will become smart enough to maintain themselves."

Technology makes life easier and the economy more efficient, allowing for nearly instantaneous flow of information

See TECH/8A



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