

Cooler weather slows Phillips Creek Fire

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

Slightly cooler weather helped slow the spread of the Phillips Creek Fire Wednesday, though up to 90 homes remain on preliminary evacuation alert.

The blaze, which started Aug. 1, held steady at 1,582 acres in the Blue Mountains northwest of Elgin. It is burning primarily on the Umatilla National Forest and adjacent private lands along the fire's southern flank.

An interagency team of 586 personnel took over management of the fire Tuesday, and crews have been working to complete fire lines around the north and southeast perimeters near Highway 204.

The fire is now 5 percent contained, and the cause is still under investigation.

Residents of Gordon Creek Road were added to the list of Level 1 evacuation notices by Union County. A Level 1 evacuation notice means people should be ready to leave the area at a moment's notice.

Level 1 notices are also posted for Ruckle Road and Sanderson Springs Road; Highway 204 between Phillips Creek Road and Valley View Road; and on Valley View Road between the highway and Gordon Creek. There are no evacuations posted within Elgin city limits.

Jeanne Klein is a recreation planner for the Bureau of Land Management in Medford and fire information officer with the interagency team. She said the most active portion of the fire appears to be along the west end of Middle Ridge at the fire's north side, in an area that's all federal land with no structures to be threatened.

Fire lines at the south end of the fire on private property need to be cleaned up, Klein said, and it is possible crews will conduct controlled burns from the

highway — depending on the weather.

Temperatures recently dropped from the mid-80s to low 80s, which she said provided firefighters some relief. Long-term forecasts are calling for more of the same conditions.

"The weather has really helped to moderate the fire behavior," Klein said. "It's slowed considerably from 2-3 days ago."

A public meeting was held Wednesday evening in Elgin to discuss fire activity and operations. The fire is now mostly creeping and smoldering, with isolated groups of trees burning, as opposed to earlier in the week when flames went on a major run to the east, Klein said.

Phillips Creek is considered the fifth-most significant of 10 large fires in the Pacific Northwest, according to the Boise-based National Interagency Coordination Center.

"When they assign resources, they can go through and determine which has the most need based on size and complexity," Klein said.

Highway 204 remains open to the public, though travelers are advised to take alternate routes to avoid firefighter traffic and smoke. Numerous forest roads are closed for public and firefighter safety.

The fire danger has been increased to extreme, and Phase B public use restrictions on chainsaws and campfires are in effect on the Umatilla, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur national forests.

Updates on the fire are posted online at www.blue-mountainfireinfo.blogspot.com. For more information about public use restrictions, call the Umatilla National Forest information hotline at 1-877-958-9663.

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

BRIEFLY

Motorcyclist suffers serious injuries in crash

PENDLETON — A 75-year-old Idaho man broke both legs Tuesday in a motorcycle crash south of Pilot Rock.

Oregon State Police reported James Edward Yarbrough of Post Falls was southbound on Highway 395 on a Yamaha motorcycle a little before noon when he came around a corner about eight miles south of Pilot Rock and saw a truck in the opposite direction had drifted over the center line.

Yarbrough moved to the shoulder of the roadway to miss the truck and hit a fog marker, according to state police, drove on and struck a second fog marker. That impact threw him from the machine.

Yarbrough suffered "compound fractures with both legs broken," according to the report from state police, and an ambulance took him to St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton. He was then flown to Providence Sacred Heart Hospital, Spokane, where officials said he is in satisfactory condition.

Registered sex offender in jail after touching girl

PENDLETON — A 20-year-old Pendleton man faces charges after he touched a 9-year-old girl.

Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts reported Mitchal Dawnivun Phillips was visiting Willowbrook Terrace, a nursing and rehabilitation center, on Sunday when he touched the girl's bare breast and her mother reported that to police.

Officers took a description of the suspect and soon caught Phillips. Police questioned the man, according to Roberts, and arrested him the same day on one count of first-degree sexual abuse. Roberts also reported that records indicate Phillips is a registered sex offender.

Umatilla County Circuit Court records show Phillips faced an arraignment Monday, and Judge Lynn Hampton set his bail at \$100,000. His next court hearing is Friday morning, probably after a grand jury reviews the state's evidence.

Phillips remains in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton.

PENDLETON

Still rocking after 10 years

Rock & Roll Camp celebrates decade of cultivating musicians

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
East Oregonian

Peter Walters practically has to pinch himself when talking about the upcoming Pendleton Center for the Arts Rock & Roll Camp.

Walters and others expanded upon the center's Garage Bands 101 class to offer the weeklong camp in 2006. Now in its 10th year, the camp has flourished while continuing to offer the experience at no charge to its participants.

"I never thought I'd be doing anything for 10 years," Walters said. "I was barely out of high school when we started this and now I'm 30 years old."

Addison Schulberg, a recent Willamette University graduate, has come full circle with the camp. As a teen, Schulberg attended each year, and then later was invited back as a counselor.

"I remember they first had me as a junior counselor — that was one of the greatest honors," Schulberg said.

A lot of the credit for the continuance of the camp, Walters said, goes to Pendleton. The community and businesses, he said, have helped cover costs that make the camp possible. In addition, he said people like Schulberg are an asset.

"He's a great bridge," Walters said. "He's kept with it and it's been really great to have him."

Schulberg played guitar and bass in high school. Attending the camp, Schulberg said, helped plug him into new possibilities.

Currently recording and producing his own music, as well as that of friends, Schulberg said he learned a lot about the processes of songwriting, recording, producing and distribution



Contributed photo
Peter Walters, far right, works with campers as they practice a new song during the inaugural Rock & Roll Camp in 2006. In its 10th year, this year's free event starts Monday at Pendleton Center for the Arts.



Contributed photo
Addison Schulberg, left, began as a camper at the annual Rock & Roll Camp, and eventually became a counselor at the annual event.

by participating each year.

"Rock and Roll Camp showed me that you can do everything yourself," Schulberg said. "It makes it seem like much less of a hurdle to be in a band."

Walters points out that the camp includes more than just writing music and performing. Workshops also focus on behind-the-scenes aspects of the music industry, including rock journalism, album designing and promoting.

"We offered something

interesting for every kid that came to camp," Walters said. "Not everyone wants to be a rock star. We wanted to show kids there are still ways to be involved in the music world."

Word of mouth seems to have spread regarding Pendleton's rock camp, as it has attracted participants from other states. In addition, counselors include musicians from across the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

Although the camp is free, participants must register

"Rock and Roll Camp showed me that you can do everything yourself. It makes it seem like much less of a hurdle to be in a band."

— **Addison Schulberg,** Rock & Roll Camp attendee turned counselor

in advance. The camp is Monday, Aug. 10 through Friday, Aug. 14. The sessions run daily from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the arts center, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton.

The camp crescendos with a free concert Friday, Aug. 14 at 7 p.m. in the 400 block of Main Street, Pendleton.

For more information or a registration form, contact 541-278-9201, info@pendletonarts.org, stop by the arts center or visit www.pendletonarts.org.

Contact Community Editor Tammy Malgesini at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539

UMATILLA

City council still stumped on marijuana

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

More than a year after first taking up the issue, the Umatilla City Council still isn't sure what to do about medical marijuana dispensaries.

The council voted Tuesday to table an ordinance banning the dispensaries until its Aug. 18 meeting, and couldn't get enough votes to even read an alternative ordinance that would have regulated them instead. Its moratorium on dispensaries runs out Aug. 20.

Before the council took up the issue it heard public testimony from several residents. One resident said Umatilla was too small of a town to need a medical marijuana dispensary and he wanted the city to have an image he felt proud of. But the rest of the testimony was in favor of dispensaries.

William McMillan told the

council he uses medical marijuana to help combat his daily pain from a chronic form of Guillain-Barre Syndrome that attacks his nervous system and creates a constant "pins and needles" feeling in his limbs.

A former Department of Corrections employee, McMillan said he used to be completely against all marijuana use. But after being struck with his neurological disorder in January 2013 he said he has found that occasional use on days his pain is particularly bad is a preferable alternative to addictive opiates or alcohol.

Right now he has to go to Portland to legally obtain medical marijuana from a dispensary, and he said it takes him two days to recover from the trip.

"I plead with you to make it available here," he said.

Tammy Williams, a registered nurse who has

mostly worked in intensive care during her career, said she also supported Umatilla allowing dispensaries. She said she often sees people in terrible pain who aren't taking prescription medications for it because they can't afford insurance. She has seen some of those people helped by medical marijuana.

"I'm still not saying it's safe and I'm not saying it doesn't have problems and need more studies, but it's an option," she said.

Councilors Mary Dedrick and David Lougee expressed concern about allowing marijuana-related businesses into the city, however, saying that it was hard to foresee every possible problem while

writing regulations.

"We need to ask ourselves why this isn't being discussed in the region, in Hermiston," Lougee said.

In the end the council chose not to take a vote on the set of regulations that had been prepared, and voted in favor of tabling the ordinance banning dispensaries until Aug. 18. Before that point the council also agreed to have a work session on Thursday at 6 p.m. to discuss what direction the council wants to give the planning commission concerning their work to overhaul the city's commercial zone rules.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.



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