



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
An excavator drops a load of dirt into a dump truck near the top of the McKay Reservoir Dam on Tuesday in Pendleton. The Bureau of Reclamation is replacing a toe drain that collects water seepage from the dam and redirects the water into McKay Creek.

BRIEFLY

Health advisory issued for Willow Creek Reservoir

HEPPNER — The Oregon Health Authority issued an advisory Tuesday for high levels of toxins related to blue-green algae in Willow Creek Reservoir near Heppner.

Exposure to toxins can be harmful to humans and animals, with children and pets especially at risk. Symptoms might include numbness, tingling and dizziness that can lead to serious breathing or heart problems, and require immediate medical attention.

People are warned against drinking water directly from the reservoir. Residents who draw in-home water from the reservoir are advised to use an alternative water source, since private treatment systems are not proven effective at removing algae toxins.

Toxins also cannot be removed by boiling or using camping-style filters. However, public drinking water systems can reduce algae toxins through filtration and disinfection. Residents should contact their water supplier with questions.

People can still visit Willow Creek Reservoir to camp, hike, bike and fish. Boating is safe as long as speeds do not spray too much water that could be accidentally inhaled.

Anyone choosing to eat fish from the reservoir should remove all fat, skin and organs before cooking.

The public will be notified when there is no longer a risk. For more health information or to report an illness, contact the Oregon Health Authority at 971-673-0400.

PSD hires consultant for superintendent search

PENDLETON — The Pendleton School Board will receive some outside help to find a new superintendent.

Board Chairwoman Michelle Monkman recommended the district spend \$8,750 to hire West Linn consultant Greg McKenzie to coordinate the search for outgoing Superintendent Jon Peterson's replacement.

The board unanimously approved the recommendation.

Monkman said McKenzie will spend the coming weeks working with school board members, district staff and the community to help identify the best candidate for the job.

Board Vice Chair Debbie McBee said the board's executive committee chose McKenzie over another consulting firm.

"In talking to people who used Greg McKenzie's firm, they were universally hyper-enthusiastic about the services and the job they did for their districts and not a negative comment amongst them," she said. "The other firm did have some good comments as well as some concerns and Greg McKenzie's firm was the least expensive."

Peterson announced his retirement in June but decided to stay on an extra year while the school board conducted its search.

Cemetery group meets in Paisley

PAISLEY — Special events in cemeteries and Oregon archaeology laws are among the agenda items during the upcoming meeting of the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries.

The gathering is Friday, Oct. 16 at 1 p.m. at the Paisley Community Center. The public is invited to ask questions and make comments.

The seven-member Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries maintains a listing of all historic cemeteries and gravesites in Oregon. In addition, it promotes public education on the significance of historic cemeteries.

For more information, contact Kuri Gill at 503-986-0685, kuri.gill@oregon.gov or visit www.oregonheritage.org.

Arts center kicks off Folk Night

PENDLETON — The public is invited to enjoy western-style dancing, including square and contra dancing at Pendleton Center for the Arts.

Folk Night, which features live music and callers, is Friday at 7 p.m. at 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. The cost is \$5 or \$8 for a couple.

Whether you've danced before or have two left feet, everyone is welcome. Instructions will be provided by the caller and a quick walk-through is provided prior to each dance.

For more information, contact 541-278-9201 or classes@pendletonarts.org.



Next Crop Project raises money for local FFA

HERMISTON — The Next Crop Project will raise money for the Heppner, Hermiston and Ione FFA chapters.

Licensed drivers 18 and older are invited to test drive a new Ram truck and \$20 will be donated to the area FFA chapters for each qualifying test drive. The event is Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Tom's Country Dodge, 81143 N. Highway 395, Hermiston.

Also, all test drive participants will be entered into a contest for a national giveaway to win \$45,000 toward any eligible Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Ram Truck, Fiat or Alfa Romeo vehicle.

Launched in 2014, The Next Crop Project is Ram Truck brand's way of turning the focus directly on the future leaders of agriculture. It is a celebration of, and investment in, tomorrow's biologists, chemists, veterinarians, business leaders, entrepreneurs and farmers. During its inaugural year, the project raised more than \$100,000 in a single day for the National FFA Organization in support of chapter leadership programs.

For more information about The Next Crop Project, visit <http://blog.ramtrucks.com/features/next-crop-project>.

Damaged drain pipe to be replaced at McKay Dam

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Construction is underway to replace a damaged drain pipe at McKay Dam south of Pendleton.

Boris Belchoff, field manager for the Bureau of Reclamation, said the perforated line — known as a toe drain — collects water through the earthen dam and diverts it back into McKay Creek.

In 2001, workers inspecting the pipe found it had been partially crushed under the weight of gravel

and rocks. Belchoff said the drain is not completely blocked, but needs to be replaced for safety.

"On a dam, it's better to be safe than sorry," Belchoff said.

Belchoff estimated the project will cost approximately \$500,000. Work should be finished in December.

Water is not currently flowing through the toe drain, since McKay Reservoir is just 20 percent full. At capacity, seepage can reach several hundred gallons per minute.

The drain provides a path of least resistance for water, and prevents breaches elsewhere along the dam. Belchoff said workers will replace the line with a sturdier pipe, and cautioned people to stay away from taped-off construction areas along the downstream face of the dam.

"This is a preventative repair," he said. "The safe course of action is to repair this now."

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

House from old bomb case burns down

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Fire destroyed a house over the weekend at 120 N.W. Columbia Ave. in Boardman after a "fairly large" explosion in a nearby outbuilding on the property — the same building where police found a pipe bomb in 2013.

Boardman Fire Chief Marc Rogelstad said they do not know what exactly caused the blast Saturday morning. The explosion reportedly rattled windows up to a block away.

Nobody was hurt in the fire, which displaced two adults. Firefighters were

warned there might be black powder inside the home and kept back for safety, Rogelstad said.

In May 2013, Oregon State Police executed a search warrant at the house and found a pipe bomb, guns, ammunition and stolen items in the outbuilding. Jeremy Carroll, now 34, was sentenced in 2014 by a federal judge to nearly 10 years in prison after pleading guilty to charges of felon in possession of firearms and possession of a destructive device.

On Saturday, crews had to tear down the house with an excavator in order to put

out the blaze, due to extreme hoarding and the possibility of explosives inside. Boardman Police Chief Rick Stokoe said they are talking to witnesses and continue to investigate the incident.

"Unfortunately, it's going to be very hard to determine (what happened)," Stokoe said. "Part of our efforts to go into the building were hampered because there could be remains of explosive devices."

The fire did not spread to any other structures. Firefighters from Irrigon provided mutual aid.

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



Photo contributed by Dave Gibson
The Inland Northwest Chorale will perform a pair of concerts — in Ukiah and Athena — this weekend.

Inland chorale to perform pair of concerts

East Oregonian

A pair of free performances are planned this weekend featuring the Inland Northwest Chorale.

Under the direction of R. Lee Friese, the first performance is Saturday at 4 p.m. at Ukiah High School, 201 Hill St. The other concert is Sunday at 4 p.m. at the Blue Mountain Valley Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 78600 First St., Athena.

The program will include "Visions of St. John" by John Ness Beck, "When the Saints Go Marching In" by John Rutter and "Alleluia" by Randall Thompson.

A reception will follow each performance. The public is invited to enjoy refreshments and visit with the performers.

The chorale is one of the ensembles of the Inland Northwest Musicians. The group began in 1999 when a number of instrumentalists and vocalists were interested in forming a classical music organization with a central core value that music is for everyone.

The group doesn't hold auditions. People are invited to participate and are encouraged to increase their skill level as they perform.

For more information, contact 541-289-4696, inwm@machmedia.net or visit www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com.

SUBMIT COMMUNITY NEWS

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 3:30 PM

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For more information or to RSVP, call us at (541) 276-1987 or visit us today!

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