

UFO: East Oregonian was the first to report 1947 'flying saucer' sighting

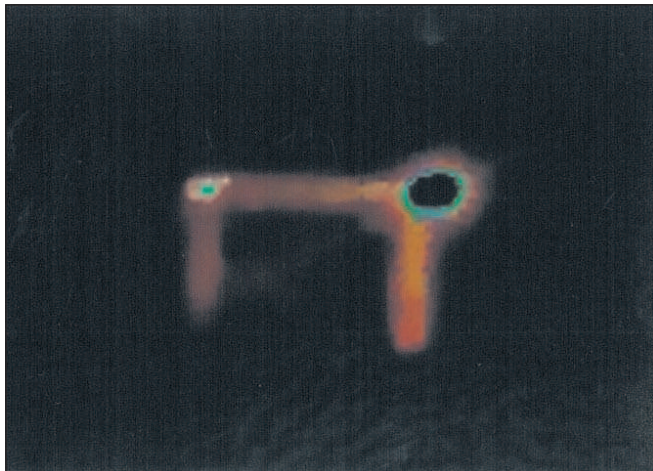
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sky for more than 10 minutes near Pendleton on May 17 at 10:50 p.m.

"I was on the phone with my wife when I first spotted the light," the report reads. "I pulled off into the west bound truck scale and proceeded to look at the light through 7x50 binoculars. I couldn't make out much detail as I was unable to hold the binoculars steady. To the naked eye it appeared to be diamond shape."

Other reports on the website detail a "silver-ish object" near Pendleton in March, a "ball with four orange lights" near Umatilla in 2014 and a "very large object" streaking across the sky above Hermiston in 2013.

Umatilla County has a connection to one of the most famous UFO sightings in the United States. The *East Oregonian* was the first newspaper to report a sighting by Kenneth Arnold in 1947. The Arnold sighting is described as the "dawn of the modern UFO era" in several books and websites



This unidentified flying object was captured by a cell phone camera by Ivan Dame from his yard on Townsend Road in Hermiston at about 4:30 a.m. on Oct. 15.

dedicated to UFOs, and the incident gave rise to the term "flying saucer."

Arnold, an experienced fire control pilot, was on a search and rescue mission over Mt. Ranier when he saw what he described as "nine saucer-like aircraft flying in formation at 3 p.m. yesterday, extremely bright — as if they were nickel plated — and flying at an immense rate of speed."

"It seemed impossible," he told *East Oregonian*

reporter Bill Bequette the next day. "But there it is — I must believe my eyes."

The story ended up on the Associated Press wire and spread to newspapers across the country, sparking hundreds of reported UFO sightings over the next year, including the infamous "crash landing" near Roswell, New Mexico, that the Army maintains was actually a weather balloon.

The limited technology of 1947 meant there were fewer

man-made objects in the air in Arnold's day. Today, a set of lights in the sky is more likely to be dismissed as an unmanned aerial vehicle, airplane, helicopter or satellite.

Law enforcement agencies do get a UFO report from time to time, however. Umatilla Police Chief Darla Huxel told the *East Oregonian* recently that her department does follow up on reports when they are received. In December 2011 Hermiston Police Department received two separate calls reporting a large UFO with orange lights, but Chief Jason Edmiston said he wasn't aware of any recent reports to his department.

There are still people like Ivan Dame, however, who believe what they are seeing could be alien in origin but don't call the police. Instead, Dame snapped a few photos with his cell phone and has been showing them around.

"It's nothing I've ever seen before," he said.

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HOUSING: Most commute from more than 25 miles away

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Tri-Cities.

Housing has been a priority in Boardman since community leaders convened with the governor's Regional Solutions team in 2010 to capture an influx of industry at the port.

At the time, the port claimed 1,600 employees, though that figure has since swelled to 4,000-plus. Boardman's population is roughly 3,400.

The Regional Solutions team conducted a survey of employees at Columbia River Processing, Greenwood Resources, ReKlaim Technologies and the Morrow County School District. Of those 69 workers surveyed, about 70 percent said they commuted to work, most from more than 25 miles away.

Access to retail, recreation, entertainment and activities for kids were identified as the top areas where employees felt Boardman could improve. But Barry Beyeler, community development director, said they were quickly confronted with a chicken or the egg scenario: do more amenities draw new residents, or do more residents draw new amenities?

Ultimately, he said the city focused its efforts getting new homes built in town. The current housing stock in Boardman is approximately 900 living units, he said. There is a shortage of rentals.

Progress has come slow and steady, Beyeler said. In particular, he is excited about a relatively new home buying incentive program through the Boardman Community Development Association that provides \$5,000 grants to potential homeowners.

"The ball is rolling, but it's not an avalanche," Beyeler said. "We're starting to get to the place where commercial entities can look at us and say

there's a market here."

Jill Parker, president of the community development association, said they have already awarded 45 grants in just 13 months. Of those, 65 percent are moving into the community from outside Morrow County.

"We like to think our program has helped people make the decision to invest in Boardman," Parker said. "We just continue to try and improve every day."

Kim Travis, who worked as project manager with the Oregon Solutions and Regional Solutions team, said livability is another major thing for cities like Boardman to consider in attracting new residents. She was encouraged to hear the city passed a \$12 million bond to build a new community recreation center.

"It seems like these things are starting to come together in tandem," Travis said. "I think (Boardman) is on a really good path. The city is definitely open to working with new development."

Riverwood Homes will sell houses in the Tuscany and Chaparral Park neighborhoods as the market calls for them. Tuscany can eventually be built out to 160 lots, and 18 townhouses in the first phase of Chaparral Park.

Beyeler said things are starting to happen on the retail front as well. He was approached by one outlet — he didn't say who — that had him walking away doing a happy dance.

There are still hurdles to clear, Beyeler said. The solution for now is getting more roofs in town, he said.

"There's been a little change in the dynamic we've been laboring through over the last 15 years," he said. "It's starting to look like it might be steady."

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PRISON: Multnomah County has already reduced the number of prison intakes

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created in House Bill 3194 in 2013 to give resources to counties to set up support services for offenders on probation and parole. The bill also restructured the state's sentencing guidelines to try to ebb the flow of offenders into the prison system.

"What we hear from judges and prosecutors is there are folks they send to prison because there are no supervision resources locally," said Mike Schmidt, executive director of the Criminal Justice Commission. "This justice reinvestment is building the infrastructure so we can keep offenders out of prison and actually give them a shot."

The Criminal Justice Commission doled out \$15 million from the fund in 2013-2014. About \$40 million was earmarked for the fund for 2015-2016. The \$9.5 million expansion at Deer Ridge would come out of the \$40 million amount.

It's unclear whether each county's grant would shrink proportionally or whether the balance of grant money would be awarded according to merit.

"My concern is that would end justice reinvestment in Oregon," said Heidi Moawad, Gov. Kate Brown's public safety policy adviser. "It was a hard-won battle ... to get our \$40 million fund this biennium."

Since funding started last year, some jurisdictions, such as Multnomah County, have already reduced the number of prison intakes. The counties need more time to see how the programs affect recidivism, said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Caroline Wong.

Multnomah County's grant funds pay for offender housing, drug treatment, employment development, mentorship, parenting classes, probation officers and other services for



The Deer Creek Correctional Institution in Madras. DOC wants to renovate the facility to accommodate an increase in inmate population. The \$9.5 million needed to expand and staff the facility would come from a program designed to keep parolees out of prison.

offenders in the community. Dale Primmer, Umatilla County community corrections director, said he is concerned the program may be gutted before it has had a chance to show results.

Umatilla County applied for a \$914,251 justice reinvestment grant for this year. The county plans to use some of that money to establish a program to connect offenders with treatment centers before they are released from jail. The shorter the time between jail and treatment the more likely it is that offenders will complete diversion programs and avoid recidivism, Primmer said.

The fear is that the counties will start new programs this year and then lose funding in 2016 because the state needs to expand Deer Ridge, Primmer said. That kind of uncertainty makes it difficult for counties to plan because they craft their budgets in advance, he said.

Brown strongly supports continuing the fund, Moawad said. The governor plans to meet with county officials from 9 a.m. to noon Nov. 10 to discuss ways to immediately reduce the prison population and stave off the need for the expansion. The meeting is scheduled at the Department

of Public Safety Standards in Training Hall of Fame, 4190 Aumsville Highway in Salem.

The Deer Ridge expansion plan entails moving the existing 787 minimum-security prisoners from the minimum-security building to the vacant medium-security facility. The medium-security building has 200 additional beds to accommodate the statewide spike in prisoners projected for March, Peters said.

Moving the prisoners and repairing and furnishing the medium-security facility would cost about \$2.5 million. Hiring people to serve the additional prisoners would cost about \$7 million, Peters wrote in a letter to the Oregon Public Safety Task Force.

The Department of Corrections director said the new sentencing guidelines and Justice Reinvestment Fund have been working to slow growth in the prison population, just not as much as anticipated.

She said she is still hopeful that counties may be able to work together to stave off the projected growth of 150 prisoners in time to avoid expanding Deer Ridge.

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