

RAIN: Later-than-usual fall moisture forced some farmers to re-seed

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Growers must also plant deeper into the soil when it's this dry, in order to reach moisture that's built up underground from the previous year's fallow. The goal is to raise an early stand of wheat that has had more time to absorb water and nutrients before harvest, increasing yield.

This year's later-than-usual fall rain has actually forced some farmers to re-seed, Wysocki said, since the moisture causes soil to crust up at the surface after it dries.

"That's the risk you always run seeding early," he said.

Farmers would like to see at least average to above-average precipitation through the winter to buck the ongoing drought, Wysocki said. They will also watch closely for the critical spring rains in May and June that can make or break a wheat field.

"There's still a lot of things that can happen between now and then," he said.

Marilyn Lohmann, hydrologist with the National Weather Service in Pendleton, said a cold front is expected to move into the region Sunday followed by more storm systems into next week.

Lohmann said she

expects overall precipitation to be close to average for November and December, with El Niño settling in after January. From there, winter should become warmer and drier than usual.

El Niño tends to push storms either north or south, leaving Oregon — and especially Eastern Oregon — in no-man's land for rain and snow.

"We won't see an abundance, or much more than what we'd normally see," Lohmann said. "That's not to say we won't have any storms, but precipitation amounts will be below normal."

The good news is that once El Niño cools off, more seasonal precipitation could return by March, April and May, Lohmann said.

"Unfortunately on our side, we won't have a clear picture on what we can expect until springtime," she said.

Coming out of drought is a slow process, Lohmann said, and was only exacerbated by the record-breaking heat of last summer.

"Coming out of such an extremely dry year ... it makes it even harder for us to come out of that hole," she said.

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PLAY: 20 girls, 3 boys tried out at auditions

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"It's really different because I'm playing a guy," senior Deshon Dick said bluntly about playing Dr. Lyman.

Taking a break from rehearsal Tuesday, the cast alternated between humor and earnestness when describing an unintentionally new take on an old play.

Sophomore Cameran Miltenberger, who plays the sage ranch hand Virgil Blessing, said the challenge of acting in an opposite gender isn't just the way the character talks or the clothing he wears, but in the way men carry themselves.

Miltenberger said she plops her hip out when standing idly and constantly has to remind herself to stand up straighter.

Although O'Rourke appreciates how close the girls have grown since they were cast in September, she



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Sophomore Cameran Miltenberger, left, playing Virgil Blessing, speaks to junior Hannah Mossman, playing Cherie, while rehearsing for "Bus Stop" on Tuesday.

didn't stage an all-female rendition of "Bus Stop" because of a personal preference, or to make a political statement.

O'Rourke was familiar with the play from her time as a student teacher assisting with a production in 2001. And she thought a drama would be a good change of

pace after a spate of comedies in recent years.

Although the cast of characters was fairly balanced between men and women, the auditions were not — 20 girls went out for parts, compared to three boys.

O'Rourke said the gender of the students interested in the school play is cyclical,

oscillating between casts heavy on males and females.

The gender makeup of the actors has sometimes informed the plays chosen in the past, like staging the male-heavy "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest." O'Rourke leaned into it.

"I didn't want to (cast) a guy just for the sake of having a guy," she said.

Throughout the audition process, O'Rourke found that the girls were better at embodying the masculine qualities of the characters than the boys were, convincing her to go with the all-female slate of actors.

The play opened Thursday and runs through Saturday at the Pendleton High School Auditorium. Shows start at 6:30 p.m. and the cost is \$6 for adults and \$4 for students.

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Sixth-grader Taylor Mach rides a tricycle in front of her classmates during the Veterans' Day parade in Echo.

PARADE: New this year

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as Marines, and a recruiter from the Corps visited the class on Tuesday. Student Mateo Gutierrez said he liked the recruiter's uniform and hearing about the places he had been. His "Papa" was in the Coast Guard, and he wanted to join the military "so I can fight for America," he said.

First-grader Jude Winkler said she asked the recruiter about the badges on his uniform. He had 12, she said, and explained he received them for serving in different places. She said she enjoyed honoring veterans and was happy to have an American flag at her house.

First-grade teacher Kara Mackenzie, whose

grandfather served in the military, said the students also worked with their parents to create family trees identifying relatives who served in the military. She said many were unaware they had grandparents who were veterans.

Principal Keith Holman said the teachers and students put a lot of work into the parade, which was new this year. He said recognizing veterans was important.

"We always need to say thank you to the veterans. The students don't understand what kind of sacrifice goes on," he said. "I think it's something else that brings the community and school together, and I think that's great to see."

ORACLE: Brown's office sent over about 1,000 pages

Continued from 1A

Kitzhaber's private emails that were relevant to state business and stored on state servers; the company says they're relevant to pending litigation over Cover Oregon.

Kitzhaber resigned from office last February, in the wake of influence-peddling accusations. The former governor contends his emails were accidentally archived and are illegally in the state's possession. He has threatened to sue the governor if the emails are reviewed or released.

In October, Brown's office passed on to Oracle approximately 1,000 pages provided to her by Kitzhaber. Nearly half of those pages were excerpts from two books, according to the suit.

"This production appears to be designed to allow Governor Brown to create the impression that she is complying with the (records law)," says the complaint, "when in fact she has neither

"It appears Oracle is just wasting the public's money and time by filing yet another lawsuit."

— Kristen Grainger, Gov. Brown spokeswoman

reviewed nor produced even a single record..."

Oracle spokeswoman Deborah Hellinger said in a statement that approach doesn't match Brown's image as a transparent governor.

"Despite numerous commitments to greater transparency and public disclosure in government dealings, Kate Brown has not lived up to her promises," said Hellinger.

Brown spokeswoman Kristen Grainger says the matter is already in court, making the current legal move redundant.

"It appears Oracle is just wasting the public's money and time by filing yet another lawsuit," Grainger said.

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