

# EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2016

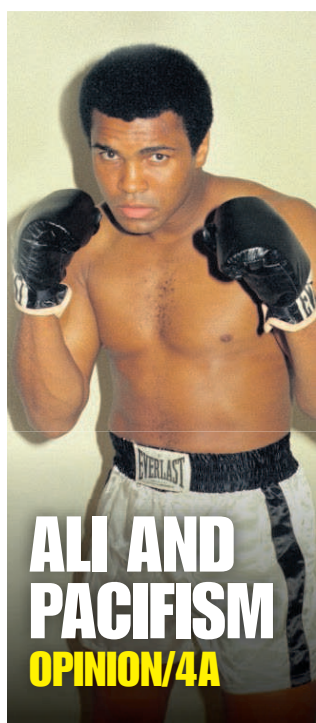
A large storm cell moves north toward Pendleton Wednesday as an area of low pressure rushed into the region. Thunderstorms rolled through Eastern Oregon Wednesday afternoon, breaking the heat wave and dropping golf ball-sized hail in some places.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

140th Year, No. 169

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



## Rain is welcome sight, wheat farmers seek more

### Crop is maturing ahead of schedule

By **GEORGE PLAVER**  
*East Oregonian*

Eastern Oregon wheat fields are already turning shades of amber in the wake of unusually warm weather that kicked off the month of June.

Temperatures in Pendleton reached 96 degrees on Sunday and 100 degrees on Monday, which has the crop maturing about two weeks ahead of schedule.

But Mike Flowers, extension cereal specialist for Oregon State University, said there's still time before harvest and the next few weeks could go a long way toward making or breaking this year's production.

"This is a critical period," Flowers said. "If we get cooler temperatures, I think we'll end up much better than we did last year."

So far, the forecast looks promising. Marilyn Lohmann,

hydrologist with the National Weather Service in Pendleton, said a low pressure system has moved in for the weekend, which should push temperatures back down into the 60s and 70s through the end of next week.

Lohmann said the system could also bring rain, though how much is still to be determined.

"It looks like everybody should get something," Lohmann said.

Every drop

of June water counts for dryland farmers. Flowers said this is what's known as the grain-fill period for wheat, when plants divert moisture and nutrients to make plump, healthy kernels. Without precipitation, the grain becomes pinched, resulting in a lower test weight and overall yield.

"We need to have moisture during that grain-fill period," Flowers said. "That's the million dollar rain."

Pendleton typically

See **WHEAT/8A**

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

**Heads of wheat turn from green to gold Wednesday in a field outside Mission.**



### UMATILLA

## Graduating senior ready to leave cancer behind

Kuykendall overcomes brain tumor, surgeries

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
*East Oregonian*

Graduating from high school always involves overcoming some obstacles, but Umatilla High School grad Tieler Kuykendall overcame a pretty big one: a softball-sized tumor in his brain.

During his sophomore year, while friends were sitting in classrooms and playing sports, Kuykendall was undergoing a series of surgeries to remove that tumor. On Saturday, however, he will walk across the stage



**Kuykendall**

and receive a diploma on time, just like the rest of the class of 2016.

For Kuykendall, returning his life to normal after so much time at the hospital was important to him, and today he has the hallmarks of a typical teenage boy. He likes hanging out with friends, he procrastinates his math homework as long as possible and he can't wait to get out of high school.

"I just want my diploma," he said. "That's all I want."

Some cancer survivors embrace the label after they go into remission,

See **CANCER/8A**

### HERMISTON

## Family loses home to fire after graduation

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
*East Oregonian*

Community members are collecting donations for a Hermiston family working to rebuild their lives after losing their home to a fire on Saturday.

Ayden Prewitt, a Hermiston High School senior, had walked with his class earlier in the day and was going home to get ready for the school-wide graduation party when he was greeted by a wall of thick black smoke at his front door.

He called 9-1-1, then his parents, Cyndi and Jeremie Prewitt, who were at another graduation party a half-mile away.

His parents drove home, arriving before the fire department got there. They ran into the house to try and grab what they could and search for the family's two dogs, but the smoke and flames pushed them back out again before they could save the Pomeranians.

"There was just nothing we could do," Cyndi said.

The insurance adjuster has ruled the house a total loss, although the family is still working to salvage a few items the fire skipped over or they pulled out when they first arrived.

"We lost a lot of photos, but there are still some left,"

See **FIRE/8A**



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