

**OSHA INVESTIGATING
ONION SHED FIRE**
REGION/3A

**DALAI LAMA
PREACHES
SAFETY**
FAITH/8A

**LA GRANDE
ADVANCES TO
CHAMPIONSHIP**
LITTLE LEAGUE/1B

EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2016

140th Year, No. 180

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar




Your Weekend



- **Wiener Dog Races**
- **Friday in Pendleton**
- **Hermiston Rely for Life at Umatilla Fairgrounds**
- **Hodaka Days at Athena City Park**

For times and places see **Coming Events, 5A**

Weekend Weather

Fri	Sat	Sun
		
71/48	81/51	90/55

ODF to declare fire season Tuesday

East Oregonian

Fire season is coming on private forestland in north-east Oregon.

The Oregon Department of Forestry will formally declare fire season on Tuesday, June 28 in the Northeast Oregon District, which spans roughly 2 million acres.

Matt Howard, unit forester in Wallowa, said the onset of hotter and drier weather should start curing grasses and fine fuels that help fires spread during the early portion of the summer.

"The grass is really tall in some areas," Howard said. "While the drought conditions aren't as severe as they might have been last year at this time, we are still asking people who work, play and live in the forest to use caution and prevent fires."

Once fire season is in effect, burn permits will be required for all open burning except campfires. Permits are available at local ODF offices in Pendleton, La Grande, Baker City and Wallowa. Campers are reminded to make sure their fires are dead out before they leave their sites.

Loggers must also meet requirements for fire prevention while working on ODF land. Details are available by contacting your local stewardship forester. The ODF Pendleton Office can be reached at 541-276-3491.

Jailed teen implicated in murder of Milton-Freewater man

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

The man who was shot after exchanging fire with Milton-Freewater police in April is a suspect in a murder.

Robert Gage Sregzinski, 19, of St. John, Washington, does not yet face any charges in Gabriel Ledezma

Rodriguez's death and police could be looking for others connected to the case.

The information comes from a May 19 search warrant affidavit Umatilla County sheriff's detective Kacey Ward wrote to investigate an arson at a Milton-Freewater home. The document states the Walla Walla Police Department identified Sregz-

inski as Rodriguez's killer.

On April 28, Milton-Freewater police stopped Sregzinski in a 2007 Ford Focus for a traffic violation, according to Umatilla County Circuit Court documents. When officers spotted guns in the car, he took off.

Police pursued and Sregzinski fired a shotgun at police. One officer used his car to stop the Ford, and

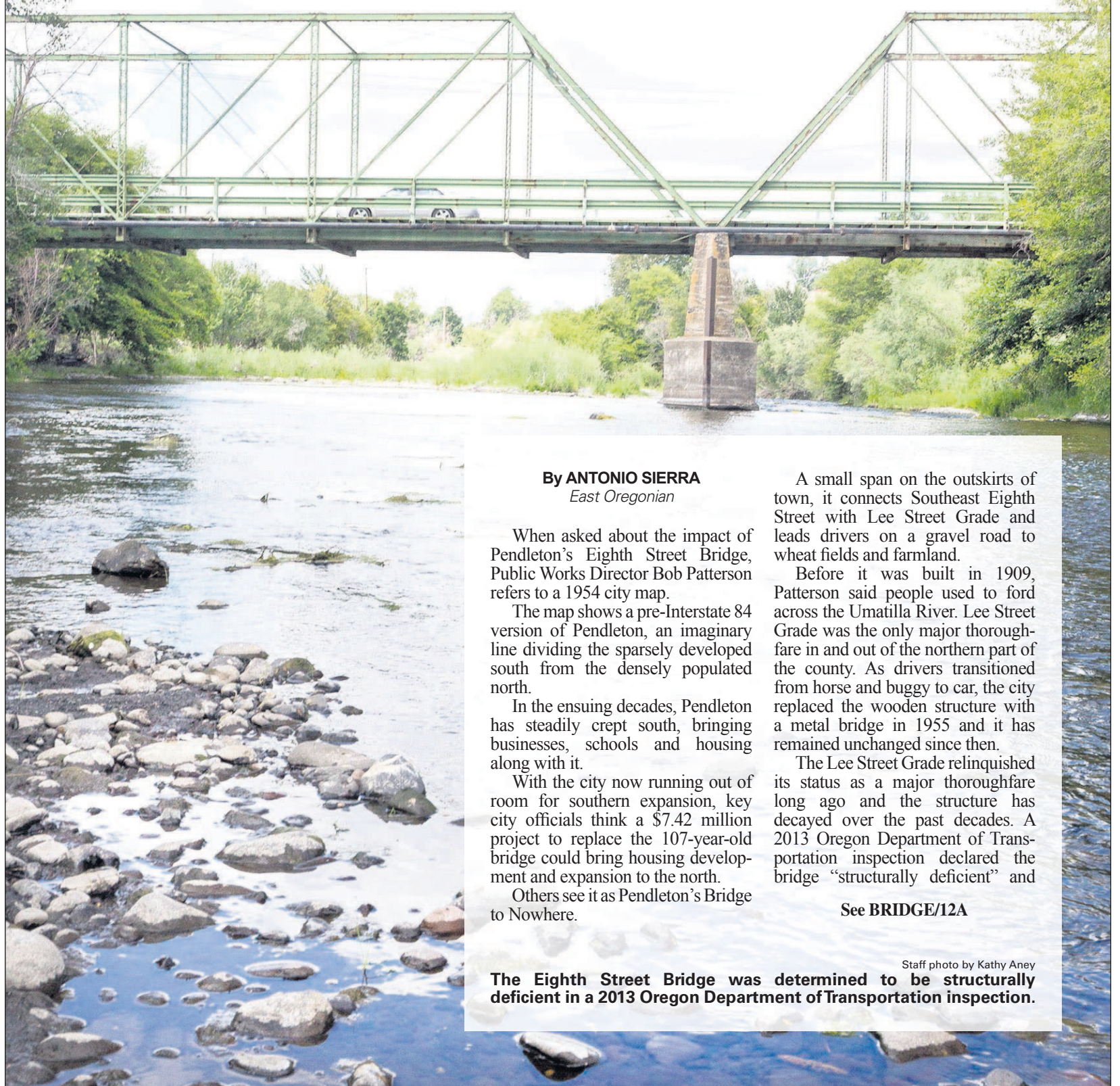
police shot and wounded Sregzinski. He is in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on 12 charges stemming from the incident, including attempted aggravated murder and unlawful possession of a short-barreled shotgun.

A search of the Ford turned up

See **HOMICIDE/12A**

Bridge to somewhere

107-year-old span targeted for multi-million dollar investment



By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

When asked about the impact of Pendleton's Eighth Street Bridge, Public Works Director Bob Patterson refers to a 1954 city map.

The map shows a pre-Interstate 84 version of Pendleton, an imaginary line dividing the sparsely developed south from the densely populated north.

In the ensuing decades, Pendleton has steadily crept south, bringing businesses, schools and housing along with it.

With the city now running out of room for southern expansion, key city officials think a \$7.42 million project to replace the 107-year-old bridge could bring housing development and expansion to the north.

Others see it as Pendleton's Bridge to Nowhere.

A small span on the outskirts of town, it connects Southeast Eighth Street with Lee Street Grade and leads drivers on a gravel road to wheat fields and farmland.

Before it was built in 1909, Patterson said people used to ford across the Umatilla River. Lee Street Grade was the only major thoroughfare in and out of the northern part of the county. As drivers transitioned from horse and buggy to car, the city replaced the wooden structure with a metal bridge in 1955 and it has remained unchanged since then.

The Lee Street Grade relinquished its status as a major thoroughfare long ago and the structure has decayed over the past decades. A 2013 Oregon Department of Transportation inspection declared the bridge "structurally deficient" and

See **BRIDGE/12A**

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

The Eighth Street Bridge was determined to be structurally deficient in a 2013 Oregon Department of Transportation inspection.

Union Pacific blamed for fiery oil train derailment

By MATTHEW BROWN
and GILLIAN FLACCUS
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Federal investigators on Thursday blamed Union Pacific Railroad for a fiery oil train derailment in the Columbia River Gorge, saying the company failed to properly maintain its track.

Preliminary findings on the June 3 derailment in Mosier raise questions about why the company didn't find the broken bolts that triggered the wreck when it inspected the tracks right before the derailment. Union Pacific faces potential penalties for safety violations, officials said.

The Associated Press obtained the findings ahead of their Thursday

release.

Advanced electronic brakes proposed by regulators could have made the derailment less severe, Federal Railroad Administrator Sarah Feinberg said. The brakes could have reduced the number of cars that went off the tracks and prevented the one that first burst into flames from being punctured, officials said.

"We're talking about upgrading a brake system that is from the Civil War era," Feinberg said. "It's not too much to ask these companies to improve their braking systems in the event of an accident so fewer cars are derailing."

The railroad industry, through the

See **TRAIN/12A**

**ONE DAY
SALE**

SATURDAY
JUN
25

20% OFF Clothing and Footwear
10% OFF Everything Else

**D & B
SUPPLY**

Some Exclusions Apply



7 294671 10001 5