

PENDLETON

Crews battle early morning blaze

Fire burns 10 acres north of river

East Oregonian

Fire crews fought a 10-acre blaze early Tuesday on the north side of the Umatilla River in Pendleton.

Pendleton Fire and Ambulance Services at 1:47 a.m. received the call-out for the fire. Pendleton Fire Capt. Dave Baty said the blaze was in multiple areas, east of the Eighth Street Bridge behind Washington School. Firefighters from the Pilot Rock Fire District, the

Bureau of Indian Affairs and others contributed to the effort.

“We put out the help call to everybody who could come,” he said. “A lot of guys walked across that river a lot of times.”

Crews got the burn under control and around 7:30 a.m. a second team from Pendleton soaked the site to make sure nothing would flare up.

Baty said an investigation is underway to determine the fire’s point of origin and cause.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
A Pendleton firefighter picks up hose line after mopping up at the scene of a grassfire on the north side of the Umatilla River in Pendleton.

PENDLETON

Round-Up exhibit features EO photographers

Opening reception is Thursday at arts center

East Oregonian

Photojournalists use the art of photography to tell a story, and the Pendleton Round-Up provides local professionals with imagery for some of their most dynamic and exciting tales.

Images from five staff and freelance photographers who work for the *East Oregonian* will be on exhibit at Pendleton Center for the Arts. “The East Oregonian Captures the Round-Up” opens Thursday with a reception from 5:30-7 p.m. at the arts center, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. The event is free and open to the public.

“The rodeo, animals, parades, night show, Indian village, Main Street, carnival and thousands of visitors provide a never-ending number of subjects for our photographers, day and night for a week every September,” said *EO* publisher Kathryn Brown.

The featured photographs were shot by E.J. Harris, Kathy Aney, Rachael Owen, Joe Duty and Cody Duty between 2010 and



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Jesse Wright of Milford, Utah, leaps onto the back of a pick-up rider during saddle bronc riding during a past Pendleton Round-Up. The work of E.J. Harris and other staff photojournalists and freelance photographers are featured in a new exhibit that opens Thursday at Pendleton Center for the Arts.

2015. They were selected by Brown for their artistic quality.

“The *EO* is fortunate to have such a strikingly photogenic event take place right here in Pendleton every year,” Brown said.

“The Round-Up offers our staff photographers and freelance photographers a chance to blur the line between

photojournalism and visual artistry.”

When the *East Oregonian* covered the first Pendleton Round-Up in 1910, it had already been in business for 35 years. Each year since, the paper has delivered an up-close view of the iconic event.

The exhibit is made possible through the

support of The Ford Family Foundation. It will remain on display through Friday, Sept. 30.

The arts center is open Tuesday through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from noon to 4 p.m. Admission is free.

For more information, call 541-278-9201 or visit www.pendletonarts.org.

Athena burglary defendant could face more charges

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

An Athena man could face more charges following the results of a search warrant.

The Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office in a written statement reported deputies on Aug. 14 investigated a burglary at storage sheds on East High and South Water streets, Weston. The victims reported their storage unit was broken into and ransacked, and several items valued at thousands of dollars including tools, sporting goods, trading cards, ammunition, glassware, porcelain dolls and family photographs were taken.

Deputy Nathan Rankin discovered plywood on the interior wall between the neighboring storage unit was pried loose and provided a point of entry for the burglar. The property manager told deputies that Shane Purcell, 31, of 304 N. Fourth St., Athena, was renting the neighboring unit.

Purcell’s disabled vehicle was in front of his storage unit, according to the sheriff’s office, and deputies saw the victim’s property inside the vehicle. Other witnesses also told the deputies they saw Purcell in possession of the victim’s property.

Deputy John Reitz arrested Purcell on Aug. 15 and booked him into the

county jail, Pendleton, for the burglary and for possession of methamphetamine. Court records show the district attorney’s office charged him with second-degree burglary, a felony, and second-degree theft, mischief and trespass, all misdemeanors.

The district attorney’s office on Aug. 22 asked the court to release Purcell and postpone hearings after a witness in the theft case did not show up for a grand jury. Circuit Judge Christopher Brauer on Aug. 24 approved the release and continuance.

The next day, according to the sheriff’s office, Rankin conducted a legal search on

Purcell’s storage unit and vehicle and found several more items of the victim’s property. The sheriff’s office also stated Purcell is a suspect in other pending investigations. And Purcell has criminal cases pending in Umatilla County Circuit Court for interfering with police, skipping court on a violation of driving while suspended, and possession of methamphetamine.

Missing hunter found alive

Man spent 48 hours wandering Ochocos

By GEORGE PLAVEN
East Oregonian

A 75-year-old hunter who went missing for two days in the Ochoco National Forest was found alive and safe Tuesday morning on a ranch near Mitchell.

Wheeler County Chief Deputy Michael Boyd said the man walked roughly 10-15 miles through dense, rugged terrain before making it out of the woods and finding his way to the Antone Ranch, where he was located. The hunter was treated for a pre-existing medical condition and complained of being sore, but was otherwise in relatively good health, Boyd said.

Boyd did not release the hunter’s name, but said the man is from Bend and largely unfamiliar with the area. He was bow hunting in the forest with a partner, but left by himself early Sunday and became lost. His partner reported him missing that evening, and authorities assembled a search team to try and find him.

More than 30 people participated in the search from Wheeler, Grant and Crook counties, as well as the Mountain Wave Search and Rescue group from Portland. The Oregon Army National Guard and Life Flight also flew over in helicopters, though Boyd said the forest is too thick to see much from the air.

“If he was lying on the ground, you’d have to be within a step or two to see him, especially if you’re wearing camouflage clothing,” he said.

Boyd said the hunter was not carrying a GPS locator and did not have any overnight camping gear with him. Overnight temperatures are starting to dip into the low 40s in the Ochoco Mountains — cold enough for hypothermia to set in.

Boyd said the incident once again shines a light on the importance of being prepared when entering the wilderness. He said it was fortunate this case didn’t end in tragedy.

“After days go on, the odds are ... against you,” he said.

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

AFSCME offering associate degrees to members, families

East Oregonian

A free associate degree is now a possibility for thousands of Eastern Oregon residents.

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) has partnered with Eastern Gateway Community College in Ohio to offer online classes for an associate degree to all AFSCME members and their families across the country. There are about 1,700 members of the union in the area, and the benefit is available to their spouses, domestic partners, children, stepchildren, grandchildren and stepgrandchildren as well. It also applies to retired AFSCME members.

Participants must fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and take advantage of education benefits that their employer

offers, and then AFSCME will pick up the tab for all additional tuition, fees and books after that.

Two-year programs for associate of the arts, associate of criminal justice and associate of business management degrees are currently available and in the spring an associate of early childhood education degree will be added. All requirements can be completed online.

The fall semester at Eastern Gateway Community College began Aug. 22 and some local AFSCME members are already enrolled in classes. The benefit will continue to be available for members and their families, as well as future new members who get hired for current openings at places like Two Rivers Correctional Institution.

Registration and additional information is online at freecollege.afscme.org.

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.

BRIEFLY

Police respond to a domestic disturbance

HERMISTON — Hermiston police responded to the 400 block of Elm Avenue Tuesday morning shortly before 8:30 a.m. after a neighbor reported hearing gunshots, but did not find evidence of a shooting.

Police Chief Jason Edmiston said it appeared to be a domestic disturbance between a man and a woman. The male had left the scene before police arrived. The woman had a small cut on her hand from breaking a window but was otherwise unharmed. No casings, holes or other evidence of gunfire were located at the scene.

Two guns were located in the home. They were confiscated and the woman was taken into custody for a probation violation.

Motorcyclist dies in highway crash

A 45-year-old man was killed Tuesday after crashing his motorcycle into a commercial truck on Highway 395 near Ritter Butte in Grant County.

Kelly Wortman, of Puyallup, Washington, was pronounced dead at the scene. The truck driver, 47-year-old Matthew Gilliland of Pendleton, was not injured.

Oregon State Police responded to the scene at approximately 10:30 a.m. A preliminary investigation shows Wortman was traveling south on the highway near milepost 78 when he crossed the centerline trying to negotiate a corner. Wortman then collided with a trailer being towed by a Peterbilt truck heading northbound.

No other information has been released. OSP was assisted by the Grant County Sheriff’s Office and Oregon Department of Transportation.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

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