

Subzero Seneca among coldest places in U.S.

By RYLAN BOGGS
EO Media Group

Already tied for the record of the coldest recorded temperature in Oregon, the small town of Seneca can now boast it is one of the coldest places in the United States.

Between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2016, Seneca was the coldest place in the contiguous United States on 20 different nights, according to Dennis Hull, a meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Pendleton. Only the Yellowstone Park area of Wyoming and Bodie State Park in California had more nights in which either was coldest, he said.

At an elevation of 4,666 feet, Seneca is situated in the lowest part of Bear Valley — a bowl in the mountains in southern Grant County — which leads to the frigid temperatures, Hull said.

“Cold air from the surrounding hills settles and deepens in the valley during the night,” he said. “On some of the coldest mornings, the temperature is 15 to 20 degrees lower than ... John Day located just 20 miles to the north.”

The locals, however, don't seem to mind the cold weather. “When you get out, you bundle up,” 82-year-old Bob Turner said, adding it is a “dry



Contributed photo/Winnie Browning
Seneca was the coldest place in the contiguous United States 20 nights between July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016. Only Yellowstone Park in Wyoming and Bodie State Park in California were colder more nights.

cold,” which is tolerable.

He said the coldest temperature he has experienced in Seneca is -34, which he jokingly attributed to global warming.

Seneca and Ukiah tied for the state record for coldest recorded temperature, -54 Fahrenheit, in February 1933, according to the National Weather Service.

“I remember hanging my little brother's diapers on the line, and they would freeze before I could get them hung up,” 86-year-old Seneca resi-

dent Leonard Rider said.

He said, as a child, he lived in half a boxcar with no water and no power for several years. He remembered ice skating with his family despite subzero temperatures.

“We didn't pay much attention to it really,” he said.

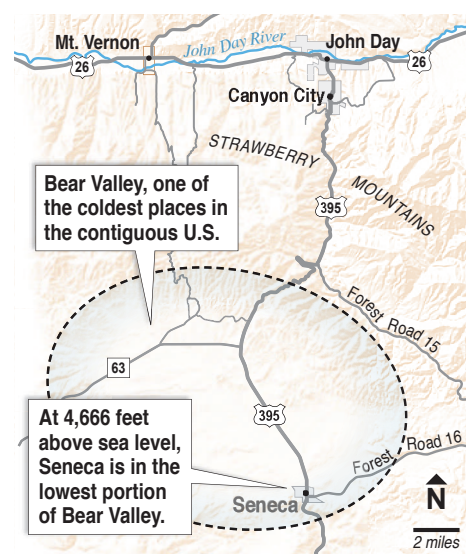
Turner left California for Seneca after he retired and, despite the cold weather, likes the slow pace of life in Grant County.

“It's too nice here,” he said. “I don't think I could take California again.”

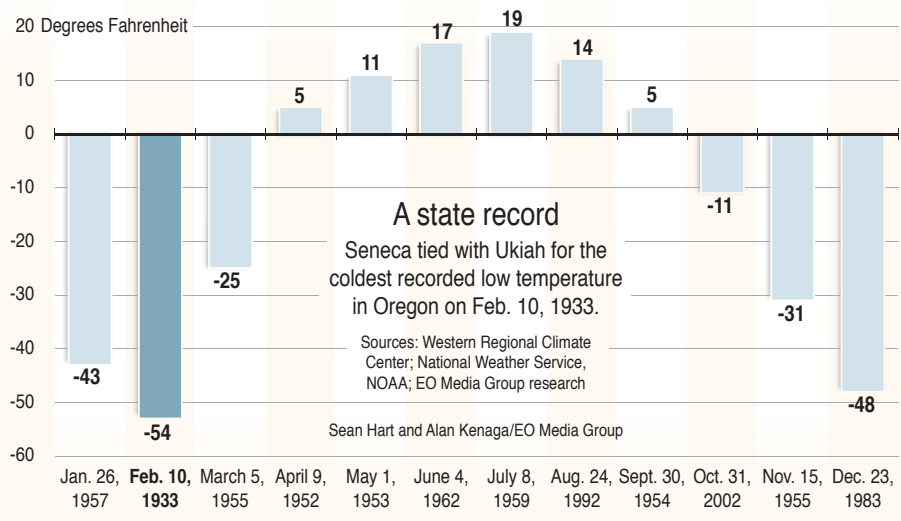
Record cold in Seneca

Seneca was the coldest place in the contiguous United States 20 nights from July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016. Only Yellowstone Park in Wyoming and Bodie State Park in California had more nights in which either was the coldest.

At an elevation of more than 4,600 feet, Seneca is situated in the lowest portion of Bear Valley. Cold air from the surrounding hills settles in the valley at night, leading to temperatures up to 20 degrees colder than John Day 20 miles to the north.



Lowest recorded temperatures in Seneca by month, 1933-2006



Trooper warns drivers to slow down on slick roads

Snowplow crashes after hitting ice on I-84

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Icy conditions Friday morning on state roads near Hermiston contributed to toppling a snow plow and a crash that injured two people.

Oregon State Police trooper John Lombardi said the Oregon Department of Transportation plow crashed around 7:30 a.m. when it hit a patch of ice on the eastbound side of Interstate 84 near milepost 175. The driver lost control, Lombardi said, and the large vehicle rolled to one side, slid to the median and rolled onto its top.

The plow was heavy, he said, with a large snow blade on the front and hauling a full load of gravel. The driver, though, got out and was uninjured. State road workers removed the plow by noon or so.

In a separate crash, two Utah residents were injured in a crash at 9:28 a.m. on the westbound side of Interstate 82 near mile post 6.

Lombardi said a commercial tow truck was parked there from the night before when a Toyota Highlander slammed into the rear of the truck. Ambulances took the victims to Good Shepherd



Photo contributed by John Ballard
A snowplow rolled Friday morning near milepost 175 on Interstate 84 west of Hermiston.

Medical Center, Hermiston. Wintry roads contributed to the crash.

“Please,” Lombardi urged drivers, “slow down during these kinds of road conditions.”

Slush and ice on I-84 near Pendleton also played a part in two semi crashes.

Senior trooper Dan Chichester said one big rig was westbound when it wiped out near milepost 197, crossed the median and didn't stop until it was on the eastbound side. The other semi wrecked near milepost 192, also westbound, and the driver went to the hospital.

Chichester also said the calls for emergency services let up when the state shut down long sections of I-84 in Eastern Oregon due to the dangerous driving conditions.

For road closure information, visit tripcheck.com or call the following:

5-1-1 for free within Oregon;
1-800-977-6368 for free within Oregon;
and 503-588-2941 outside of Oregon.

Contact Phil Wright at pwright@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0833.

BRIEFLY

Ski bus to cruise to Anthony Lakes Resort for a day

HERMISTON — Catch a ride to Anthony Lakes Resort for a day of skiing or boarding through Hermiston Parks & Recreation.

The Ski & Snowboard Days are Jan. 7, 21 and Feb. 4 and 18. The cost is \$30 per ride or \$100 for all four dates. In addition, discount lift tickets are available for \$17 or \$12 for the bunny hill. Lift tickets are free for ages 3-6 and those 70-and-older. Discount equipment rentals are \$17.

The bus ride is open to ages 3 and up, but those 13-and-younger must be accompanied by an adult.

The school bus will depart at 6 a.m. from Hermiston City Hall, 180 N.E. Second St. The anticipated return time is 7 p.m.

For more information or to register, call 541-667-5018 or stop by the parks office.

Pendleton arts center offers guitar classes for kids

PENDLETON — A solid introduction to guitar covering chords, rhythm and music reading is featured in a class at Pendleton Center for the Arts.

Open to ages 8-12, the class will provide a foundation for students to go on to play all styles of music — from rock to classical to folk. It's a great class to get kids started in music and for students who already have experience playing.

The sessions begin Monday, Jan. 9 from 5-6 p.m. at the arts center, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. The cost is \$70-\$75. There is a member discount.

For more information or to register, contact info@pendletonarts.org, 541-278-9201 or visit www.pendletonarts.org.

HERMISTON Pregnancy Care Services moving Jan. 3

East Oregonian

Pregnancy Care Services' Hermiston location is getting a new home.

On Jan. 3 the service will move from its location at the Cornerstone Plaza to 105 SW Second Street next to Bi-Mart. The public can take a tour of the new location during a ribbon cutting on Jan. 12 at noon.

Director Debbie Cissna said the benefit of the move is that the new space is more centrally located.

“It's more accessible, it's closer to the high school, there's more foot traffic,” she said.

Cissna said the building is slightly smaller, but still has enough space for “everything we need.”

Pregnancy Care Services offers education about options available in an unexpected pregnancy, mentoring, peer counseling, pregnancy tests, parenting classes, referrals to resources, maternal supplies and abstinence education.

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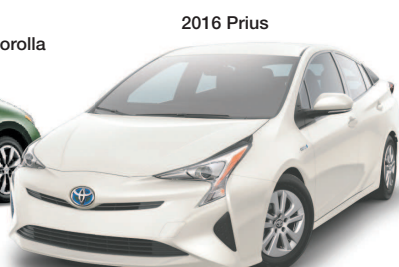
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