

Senators urge support for rural air service

Pendleton airport cited as example of benefits

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Oregon Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley are going to bat for rural air service, citing the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport in Pendleton as one facility that benefits strongly from the program.

In his budget proposal, President Donald Trump has called for eliminating the Essential Air Service, part of a 13 percent decrease in the U.S. Department of Transportation budget. The program provides federal subsidies to guarantee small communities maintain a minimum level of scheduled air service.

Eastern Oregon Regional Airport is the only EAS airport in Oregon, with the subsidy paying for daily flights to Portland. Wyden and Merkley, both Democrats, wrote a letter Wednesday to Elaine Chao, secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and Michael Huerta, administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, urging them to support an adequate budget for EAS.

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Wyden



Merkley

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— **Senators Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley,** in a letter to DOT and FAA

nities at a serious competitive disadvantage when working to attract or retain business,” the senators wrote. “Air service is also a safety and health care concern. Many rural seniors travel for specialty health care, and the flights to Portland create opportunity for them to remain in their homes and communities and still access the care they need.”

Pendleton is one of 113 rural communities across the country that receive a EAS subsidy to provide flights to and from a “hub” airport in a larger city, according to a previous *East Oregonian* report. The Department of Transportation is paying Boutique Airlines \$2.3 million to operate flights between Pendleton and Portland through 2018.

“The airport has been quite responsive, and in recent months contracted with a new provider to improve enplanements and ensure that federal investments are well spent,”

the senators wrote.

Wyden and Merkley also pointed to the Contract Tower Program as a crucial investment. In addition to commercial air service, the senators wrote that the program has supported the creation of the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range, part of the UAS Pan-Pacific Test Range.

The Contract Tower program has averaged around 10,000 operations per year in Pendleton, but is forecast to see around 50,000 operations because of the increased traffic due to drone tests, according to the senators. That includes the ArcticShark, an \$800,000 system owned by the Department of Energy that will eventually gather climate data over the Arctic coast of Alaska.

Drones may also provide future uses in application, business, package delivery and search and rescue, say Wyden and Merkley.

“The state of Oregon has invested in airport infrastructure, and the airport is beginning to forecast significant revenues, not only for the airport and test range but also for the city, which is hosting UAS companies and events,” they write.

Greg Walden, Oregon’s lone Republican congressman, also represents Pendleton’s district in Washington, D.C. In an email Thursday to the *East Oregonian*, Walden’s spokesman, Andrew Malcolm, said they have worked many years to preserve commercial air service in Pendleton.

“(Walden) will continue to work closely with the Trump administration and his colleagues in the House to preserve this important economic link for northeast Oregon,” Malcolm said.

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

BRIEFLY

SUV theft in Hermiston leads to pursuit

HERMISTON — A Hermiston man is in custody after stealing a 1999 gold Ford Explorer SUV from Hermiston and leading police on a car chase through Hermiston, Helix, Pendleton and Milton-Freewater before ending near Burbank, Washington.

Bradley Griffin-Hadley, 30, was arrested on counts of driving while suspended, malicious mischief, possession of a stolen vehicle and attempting to elude a police officer, according to Deputy Shanda Zessin of the Walla Walla County Sheriff’s Department. He is currently lodged in the Walla Walla County Jail.

L. Chuck Byram of the Pendleton Police Department said an officer saw the vehicle, which had been reported stolen out of Hermiston earlier that morning, passing by on Highway 207 at 5:31 a.m., and an officer started following the vehicle.

A Tribal police officer attempted to stop the vehicle, which then fled, leading the officer on a chase on Highway 11.

Byram said the officer terminated the pursuit after determining the thief was driving erratically. Griffin-Hadley was arrested east of Burbank after running out of gas.

Flashing stop signs installed in Hermiston

HERMISTON — New flashing stop signs have been installed at two intersections on Orchard Street, aimed at keeping drivers more alert.

The new signs are at South First Street and Orchard, across from the police station, and at Seventh and Orchard, next to West Park Elementary School.

Hermiston street superintendent Ron Sivey said the signs were installed by the state, a result of some federal grant money for safety corridors.

“We’ll see how well they last,” Sivey said. “They’re solar-powered, so they’re supposed to be maintenance-free.”

If those signs hold up well, Sivey said the city may look at putting in some more.

Sivey noted those intersections are both busy when school gets out, warranting some additional safety measures.

Sivey said if other flashing signals at four-way stops start to fail, they may be replaced with these, but the signs are expensive at \$2,500 each.

“The other flashers lasted 40 to 50 years, so we’ll see how these do,” Sivey said.

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, MARCH 31
PENDLETON MASTERS SWIM CLUB, 5-6 p.m., Roundup Athletic Club pool, 1415 Southgate, Pendleton. \$5 per session coaching fee; non-RAC members pay \$8 pool fee per session. (Tania Wildbill 541-310-9102)

PENDLETON EAGLES LADIES AUXILIARY KITCHEN, 6-8 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. St. Patrick’s Day feast includes corned beef, cabbage, sides and dessert for \$10 per person. Members and guests welcome. (541-278-2828)

SATURDAY, APRIL 1
PENDLETON EAGLES STEAK AND LIVE MUSIC, 6-11:30 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. Dinner from 6-8 p.m., music from 8 p.m. to midnight. Members and guests welcome. (541-278-2828)

SUNDAY, APRIL 2

PENDLETON EAGLES BREAKFAST, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. Open to members and guests. (541-278-2828)

PFLAG PENDLETON, 4 p.m., location varies, Pendleton. No-host lunch followed by meeting. Everyone welcome. (Vickie Read 541-966-8414)

MONDAY, APRIL 3
IRRIGON MOOSE LODGE TACOS AND BINGO, 6-9 p.m., Irrigon Moose Lodge, 220 N.E. Third St., Irrigon. Tacos from 6-9 p.m., bingo from 6:30-9 p.m. Open to members and guests. (541-922-1802)

UMATILLA COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY, 6 p.m., Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center conference room, 73265 Confederated Way, Pendleton. All Umatilla County Democrats and those interested in participating in the Democratic Party are encouraged to attend. (Sue Peterson 541-276-4569)

GREATER HERMISTON AREA

TEA PARTY, 7 p.m., Stafford Hansell Government Center, 915 S.E. Columbia Drive, Hermiston.

HERMISTON CLASSICS CAR CLUB, 7 p.m., 31120 Baggett Lane, 31120 Baggett Lane, Hermiston. (541-571-5960 or 541-571-3252)

PENDLETON AMATEUR RADIO CLUB, 7 p.m., Pendleton City Hall community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton. (Michael Califf 541-276-8132)

HEPPNER GARDEN CLUB, 7 p.m., St. Patrick’s Senior Center, 190 N. Main St., Heppner.

AMERICAN LEGION POST 37, 7:30 p.m., Hermiston VFW, 45 W. Cherry Ave., Hermiston. Members, transfers and interested veterans welcome. (Bob Daniel 541-571-5882)

TUESDAY, APRIL 4
PENDLETON TOASTMASTERS NO. 154, 6:30 a.m., Pendleton City Hall community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton.

TOPS CHAPTER OR 1110, 8 a.m., Missionary Baptist Church, 125 E. Beech St., Hermiston. 8 a.m. weigh-in followed by meeting at 8:45 a.m. (Margaret Wetterling 541-720-0276)

GREENFIELD GRANGE PINOCHLE, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Greenfield Grange 579, 209 N.W. First St., Boardman. (541-481-7397)

BIBLE STUDY, 10 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 352 S.E. Second St., Pendleton. (Rev. Jim Pierce 541-276-2616)

OREGON RETIRED EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION UNIT 9, 11:30 a.m., Eastern Oregon Regional Airport, 2016 Airport Road, Pendleton. April program: Steve Chrisman will give a presentation on the drone program. Everyone welcome. (Bill Mayclin 541-276-4540)

“THE LIFE MODEL: LIVING FROM THE HEART JESUS GAVE YOU” BOOK STUDY GROUP, 1-2:30 p.m., Bowman Building, 17 S.W. Frazer Ave., Pendleton. (Pat 541-276-6671)



HEALTH FAIR SCREENING

April 8, 2017
8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Community Health Fair
Pendleton Convention Center

Health Fair Panel \$45.00

Broad screening tool to evaluate organ function and check for conditions such as coronary heart disease, diabetes, liver and kidney disease
**** 12-hour Fasting Required****

- Comprehensive Metabolic Panel
- Lipid Panel
- TSH – Thyroid
- CBC – Complete Blood Count

Hemoglobin A1c \$20.00

Determines how well your diabetes is being controlled

PSA \$20.00

A screening test for males to detect prostate cancer

Testosterone \$20.00

A test to detect abnormal testosterone levels

Vitamin D \$25.00

Measures Vitamin D levels that are attributed to numerous health conditions



Payment due at time of service
Results reviewed and interpreted by an Oregon-licensed provider

CHI ST. ANTHONY HOSPITAL PRESENTS

HEALTH FAIR

PASSPORT TO WELLNESS

SATURDAY APRIL 8
9AM - 3PM
PENDLETON CONVENTION CENTER



Activities for all ages!

- Teddy Bear Clinic** ☆ **Seed Planting for Kids**
- Blood Pressure Checks** ☆ **Vision Screening**
- Yoga Demonstration** ☆ **Drawing for Prizes**
- Health Insurance Information**
- And MUCH more!**

FREE ENTRY



For more information: 541-278-2627