



**HERMISTON'S  
GROWING  
WATER NEEDS**  
REGION/3A

**LITTLE  
DARLINGS  
2017**  
PAGE 4A



**SENATE GOP  
SHELVES  
HEALTH BILL**  
NATION/8A



# EAST OREGONIAN

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2017

141st Year, No. 182

WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



## UNDER THE RAINBOW

The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

A pile of garbage prepared for pickup at the Rainbow Gathering on Monday.

### Impacts of gathering 'detrimental' to ecosystem

By SEAN HART  
EO Media Group

Rainbow Gathering attendees have vowed to leave the land better than they found it, but Forest Service officials said such a large group in such a small space will negatively impact the ecosystem.

As many as 20,000 attendees are expected at the loosely organized, unauthorized gathering July 1-7 in Flagtail Meadow off Forest Road 24 south of John Day. By Monday, more than 2,500 people had already gathered at the site.

Also at the location are a variety of sensitive resources — heritage, wildlife, botanical, range, aquatic — that will suffer from the influx, Forest Service Agency Administrator Ryan Nehl said.

"Despite best intentions, the amount of impact from that many people in that small of space is going to be detrimental," he said. "There will be impact, and that's what's been expressed to these individuals who profess their concern for the environment: It's a large forest, disperse."

Forest Service resource specialists have flagged off certain areas to try to protect resources. Blue Mountain district ranger Dave Halemeier and National Environmental Policy Act planner Sasha Fertig spent days trying to protect the site but said that many concerns remain.

"The unauthorized users admit that they cannot control each other and that once the masses show up all they can do is try to educate,"

See ECOSYSTEM/10A



The Eagle/Rylan Boggs

Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer Jay Norris chats with two Rainbow Gathering attendees at the Rainbow Gathering on Monday, June 26.

### Law enforcement set up for gathering

By GEORGE PLAVERN  
and PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

The U.S. Forest Service has made eight arrests, as of Tuesday afternoon, at the annual Rainbow Gathering on the Malheur National Forest near John Day.

Officers have also issued 192 warnings and 47 violations notices at the unauthorized

event.

Brian Ebert, one of two incident commanders assigned by the agency, said the figures only take into account law enforcement activity within the gathering site at Flagtail Meadow. Total arrests associated with the event could be larger due to coordination with local police, regional sheriff's offices and Oregon State Police patrolling highways along the route.

Stephen Baker, a Forest Service spokesman, said the arrests so far include one for disorderly conduct and another seven on warrants. With 2,670 Rainbow participants on hand, that amounts to one arrest for about 334 people.

If that rate holds and attendance peaks around 20,000 people by July 4 as the Forest

See POLICE/10A

### HERMISTON

## Community helps families displaced by duplex fire

East Oregonian

Two families are trying to get back on their feet after a fire Monday destroyed the duplex where they were living. No one was injured in the blaze, which started in a field near the Oxbow Trail. But a young couple with a child and a baby on the way, as well as an older couple, were displaced.

There are collections in progress for both families. The Hermiston Church of the Nazarene is collecting and storing items for Miguel and Rebecca Godoy. People can also make monetary donations through the Church of the Nazarene website. A GoFundMe page has been started for Ashlynn Beenblossom and her fiancée, Diego Lopez. The couple, who is expecting a baby this summer, is being put up in a hotel until mid-July by Red Cross. There are also Facebook campaigns started to help both families.

The fire started in a field beyond the homes on Northwest 13th Street and West Ridgeway Avenue, and is thought to have been sparked by fireworks. According to Umatilla County Fire District 1, it was pushed by wind from the field toward the homes, where it caught one duplex building on fire. The wind also steadily blew smoke over the homes for more than an hour, causing about 35 people to be evacuated from their homes.

See FIRE/10A

### PENDLETON

## Council approves agreement that moves Eighth Street bridge to Main

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

The remnants of the Eighth Street Bridge are one step closer to downtown Pendleton.

The Pendleton City Council met Tuesday to discuss one issue — signing a memorandum of agreement with the federal government, the state historic preservation office and the Pendleton Downtown Association to reuse the bridge's trusses as a decorative feature on the 500 block of South Main Street.

The Pendleton Enhancement Project, a group of nonprofits and

government officials that support new civic projects, has championed repurposing the trusses on Main Street.

According to report from City Manager Robb Corbett and Public Works Director Bob Patterson, the city has participated in weekly coordination meetings with Chuck Wood, a former city council and a leader of the Pendleton Enhancement Project.

Under the memorandum, the city will retain ownership of the trusses and store them on city property on Southeast Byers Avenue until they're installed on

Main Street.

The federal government will contribute up to \$55,000 to disassemble the trusses and transport them to the storage site. If the process ends up costing more than \$55,000, the highway administration will consider allocating more money.

Since the Pendleton Enhancement Project isn't a formal entity, the group is doing business through the Pendleton Downtown Association, a nonprofit associated with the group.

The association will be respon-

See BRIDGE/10A



7 294671 10001 5