

Storm helps shatter average June rainfall

By **GEORGE PLAGEN**
East Oregonian

Monday's severe thunderstorm that rumbled over northeast Oregon and prompted flash flood warnings across the region set a record for rainfall and helped to shatter the monthly average for June precipitation, according to the National Weather Service.

The storm dumped 1.1 inches of rain in a single afternoon around Pendleton, raising the total precipitation for the month to 2.15 inches. That's exactly 1 inch more than the area usually experiences throughout the month of June.

Janet Koch, who lives on a ranch near Rieth, said the storm made a mess of her property, knocking down tree branches and throwing patio furniture all the way across the street. It took multiple trips with a loaded 14-foot trailer to finish clearing out the mess.

Fortunately, Koch said they did not sustain any property damage or vehicle damage.

"This is a wind funnel through here anyway, all the time, but this was something different," Koch said.

With wheat harvest just



Staff photo by George Plagen

A severe thunderstorm Monday, June 26 knocked down tree branches and threw patio furniture at a ranch near Rieth.

"This is a wind funnel through here anyway, all the time, but this was something different."

— **Janet Koch**, lives on a ranch near Rieth

around the corner, it does not appear the storm produced any widespread crop damage.

"If anything did happen, it's probably pretty localized," said Don Wysocki, extension soil scientist

for Oregon State University Extension Service. "Certainly, there's no widespread effect."

July and August are typically the driest months of the year for Pendleton, with just

a half-inch of precipitation for both months combined on average.

Contact **George Plagen** at gplagen@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4547.

BRIEFLY

Wallowa County rancher sentenced for killing elk

A Wallowa rancher accused of killing 24 elk on his property received a hefty fine and supervised probation after he pleaded guilty to six of the killings in Wallowa County Circuit Court Wednesday. Judge Thomas Powers presided.

Larry Michael Harshfield, 69, pleaded guilty to six counts of taking, angling, hunting, or trapping in violation of wildlife law or rule. The incidents occurred between Dec. 1, 2016 and Feb. 11 of this year when Oregon State Police game wardens appeared at the Harshfield ranch after receiving an anonymous tip about the killings.

On April 14, Harshfield was charged with the killings. Law enforcement officials arrested him, but he was released on his own recognizance later in the day.

After Harshfield's plea, Powers ordered the rancher to pay \$18,000 in total restitution. The rancher lost his hunting privileges for three years and received 24 months of supervised probation. He will also work with the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife and the Wallowa County District Attorney's office to make three public presentations on programs available in the county for landowners to deal with the elk population.

Judge denies release of Hermiston rape defendant

HERMISTON — Rape defendant Jose Marvin Antonio Perdomo Funez of Hermiston will remain behind bars.

Funez, 31, has been in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, since Hermiston police arrested him on Nov. 30, 2016. He has filed two requests seeking release from jail, the most recent on May 18, according to court records. The Umatilla County District Attorney's Office objected to his release.

Circuit Judge Dan Hill presided over Tuesday's hearing in Hermiston on Funez's release. Hill denied the request.

The state accused Funez of committing first-degree rape and first-degree sexual assault against one woman on Aug. 5, 2016. His next court appearance is Oct. 30 for a trial readiness hearing.

Editor's note: An April 3 story on Funez incorrectly stated he had been released from jail.

One ejected in fatal Irrigon crash

IRRIGON — An Irrigon man died and a woman was injured Thursday in a single car crash in Irrigon, according to the Morrow County Sheriff's Office.

The sheriff's dispatch reported the vehicle was traveling west on Columbia Lane around 5:20 p.m. Thursday when the driver lost control for unknown reasons near the intersection with West Eighth Road.

The vehicle rolled twice, and the crash ejected one person, according to the latest information from the sheriff's office, which Thursday night reported two people were ejected. The victim was not wearing a seatbelt.

Rafael Garza, 23, of Irrigon, died at the scene.

Katelyn Tolar, 18, also of Irrigon, suffered serious injuries and was transported

to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston.

The sheriff's office said the crash remains under investigation and would not specify who was driving or what caused the crash.

State penalizes contractor for violations in Gilliam County

ARLINGTON — Eugene Graeme and his company WCI Construction of Madras agreed to pay \$20,000 for wage and payroll violations while working on Arlington High School.

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries also announced Friday the company and Graeme are ineligible to receive public works contracts in the state for 10 years.

The bureau previously recovered \$9,257 in wages after a worker filed a complaint in December 2015.

BOLI wage compliance specialists found prevailing wage violations and failure to maintain timely, accurate and complete payroll records, according to the announcement.

"It's critical that contractors on taxpayer-funded projects follow the rules, pay fair wages and keep accurate records for their workforce," said Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian in the written statement. "Today's settlement bars a repeat offender from public projects for a decade after it once again failed to meet its basic requirements."

BOLI placed Graeme's previous company, Wrangler Construction Inc., on the debarment list from May 2012 to May 2015 for other wage and hour violations.

PENDLETON

Motorcycle race coming to Round-Up Grounds

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

The rumble of Pendleton Bike Week is getting a little extra thunder this year.

To complement the Nitro in the Blues hill climb event, a promoter is adding Thunder in the Blues, a July 21 flat-track motorcycle race in the Round-Up arena.

Ron Dillon of Boise-based R&R Promotions said this was the first motorcycle race at the Round-Up since 1940.

Dillon started organizing the hill climb event last year and thinks the motorcycle race will be a good compliment to Pendleton Bike Week, which will be headquartered at the Pendleton Convention Center next door.

Although the race isn't officially affiliated with Pendleton Bike Week, Dillon said it should be a mutually beneficial relationship — Pendleton Bike Week has another event it can send attendees and Thunder in the Blues has a built-in audience of motorcycle enthusiasts.

"They're going to kind of scratch our back and we'll scratch theirs," he said.

Dillon anticipates 3,000 people will watch 150 contestants race around a hardened track in the Round-Up arena, with the "sacred" grass remaining off limits.

The race will be divided between amateurs in the day and professionals in the evening.

From 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., amateurs will be competing in several categories, including races for kids, women and vintage bikes.

As the sun begins to set, the professionals will come out to race for a \$10,000

purse. From 7:30 to 10:30, professionals will race in contests divided between motorcycles with engines 750 cubic centimeters and below and an unlimited class.

The professional portion of the contest will also feature "hooligan" races, which are centered around larger, street-legal motorcycles from brands like Harley Davidson, Triumph and BMW.

With the explosive motors and vehicles that will reach speeds of up to 80 miles per hour, Dillon expects it to be a unique event.

Thunder in the Blues adds another event to a busy July event calendar that also features the Pendleton Whisky Music Fest on July 15.

Pendleton Public Works Director Bob Patterson recently wrote to the Oregon Department of Transportation to determine how the road work on Westgate might affect some high congestion events.

Tyrel Burns, ODOT assistant project manager, wrote back that all paving work on Westgate from Airport Road to Southwest 19th Street should be completed by July 14.

ODOT will continue to work on Interstate 84 ramps through the evening of July 15, but Burns wrote that ODOT is instructing the contractor to focus on the eastbound on-ramp and westbound off ramp on Exit 207, which would create the least amount of impact for concert attendees coming from west.

Contact **Antonio Sierra** at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

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Family Fun!

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- Rotary Breakfast
- Vendor Booths
- Classic Car Show in the Park
- Eastern Oregon Art Show
- Club 24 Glow Run
- Chain Saw Wood Carvers
- KOHU/The Q Cash Machine
- Kids Zone
- Cultural Event to follow Fun Fest

Main St. Stage Entertainment

9:00 Gems & Gents
9:30 Big Top the Clown
10:00 Abigail Hernandez
10:30 Bram Brata Steel Band
12:15 Josephine Relli/Joseph Konty
2:00 Wood Carver Auction

10:00/12:00/2:00 **3rd St & Main**
Lawn Mower Drag Races

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Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon

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The CMEO would like to thank all of our sponsors and the local businesses that contributed to the success of the 11th Annual Dogtona 400.

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All proceeds from this event will be use to maintain and update the exhibits at the Children's Museum.