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**RANGERS SNAP
MARINERS'
STREAK** SPORTS/1B

EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3, 2017

141st Year, No. 208

WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Air quality declines as temps rise



A blood-red sun dips below a set of utility wires Wednesday evening on a ridge west of Pendleton. The sun appears red due to heavy smoke from wildfires that has blown into the Columbia Basin.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

DEQ issues advisory for portions of region

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

The Columbia Basin has been socked in by heavy smoke from multiple large wildfires across the Northwest, and it may be a few days before hazy skies begin to clear.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has issued an air quality advisory for portions of Umatilla, Morrow, Gilliam, Sherman and Wasco counties until noon Saturday, with air quality alternating between good and unhealthy depending on factors such as wind direction and time of day.

Tom Hack, air quality

specialist for DEQ in Pendleton, said the smoke is coming primarily from wildfires burning in British Columbia, Canada, and western Montana. There are no major fires burning locally, according to the Blue Mountain Interagency Dispatch Center.

Pollutants in smoke can cause burning eyes, runny nose and aggravate other serious health problems. Children, the elderly and people with respiratory problems are especially at risk, and should limit outdoor activities if conditions are smoky.

In addition, the region is dealing with an intense heat wave that is expected to bring triple-digit temperatures through the end of the week. An excessive heat advisory remains in effect through Friday, when temperatures may reach as high

as 107 degrees in Hermiston.

Elsewhere in Oregon, the lightning-sparked Whitewater Fire in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness east of Detroit has grown to 1,500 acres and is 10 percent contained. The Diamond Creek Fire in northern Washington is nearly 7,000 acres and was ruled to be human-caused. In Montana, the Lolo National Forest is dealing a number of blazes covering tens of thousands of acres, including the 12,775-acre Sapphire Complex.

Anyone experiencing respiratory difficulties due to the smoke should speak with their doctor.

Contact George Plaver at gplaver@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4547.

HERMISTON

Spray park hours cut for safety concerns

East Oregonian

Hermiston's spray park will operate on shorter hours the rest of the summer after complaints about children slipping and falling.

The splash pad at Butte Park will be open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. seven days a week through the rest of August to allow for an attendant from the Hermiston Family Aquatic Center to supervise.

Parks and recreation director Larry Fetter said when the city painted the cement surface a few years ago, they mixed sand into the paint for traction. But the water has since worn down the surface. Barefoot children dripping slippery sunscreen over the smoother surface and then running over it have caused some spills this summer.

After a few parents called to complain, Fetter said the department will add more traction to the cement in the off-season and look for other ways to increase safety, but he didn't want to completely close down the spray park during the year's hottest weather to perform the work.

The new hours were selected via informal feedback from parents on Facebook. Fetter said some people have complained about the shortened hours, but overall seem glad the city is trying to address the problem.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Morgan Brown, 13, of Hermiston positions Sadie, a 4-year-old mini Australian shepherd, during the master showmanship class at the Umatilla County Fair 4-H dog show on Wednesday in Hermiston.

Start with a bark

Dog show kicks off early 4-H events for Umatilla County Fair

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The first scheduled event for the 2017 Umatilla County Fair went to the dogs.

Dogs were sitting, dogs were standing and dogs were heeling during the 4-H dog show at McKenzie Park on Wednesday morning. In between bouts of showing off their obedience and skill, the dogs' owners were trying to keep them cool and hydrated.

Redbear, a three-year-old golden retriever, lapped up water from a bowl in the shade after

being judged on his obedience. His owner, Devin Fisher of Hermiston, patted him on the head and told him he was a good boy for staying put each time he was asked to.

Devin said it was his first year showing a dog through 4-H, after his family adopted Redbear from their grandmother. The dog and owner have been meeting with other 4-H members at the park each Monday to practice the skills required to gain a high score from the judges.

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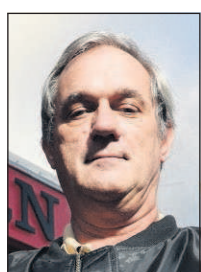


Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Alyssa Long, 12, of Hermiston leads Asta, a 2-year-old golden retriever, during the master showmanship class of the Umatilla County Fair 4-H dog show.

PENDLETON

Councilors praise UAS range, ask for more data



Abling

'Water bomber' to be tested in October

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Pendleton City Council continues to voice its support for the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range, but they want evidence that it's

making an economic impact.

Range Manager Darryl Abling delivered a report updating the council on the UAS range's latest business Tuesday, hoping to prove that case.

Abling noted that Project

Vahana — an air taxi project from A³, the Silicon Valley subsidiary of Airbus — is moving forward at the test range.

After the city revealed that Vahana would be the first tenant of its new hangar in June, A³ agreed to rent the range's mobile command center on a six-month lease.

Abling said two Vahana vehicles are being built in Santa Clara, California, with testing in Pendleton expected to begin in November.

Another drone that will be tested at the range is the Flyox, a 8,800-pound "water bomber" capable of carrying 4,000

See DRONES/8A



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