



EAST OREGONIAN

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One dollar



A fresh layer of snow covers Hermiston on Saturday.

Contributed photo by James Thomas

White Christmas for the region

About 5 inches of snowfall in Pendleton

By **TIM TRAINOR**
East Oregonian

A winter storm swept across much of northeast Oregon on Christmas Eve and into Christmas Day, covering the region in a blanket of snow.

It also contributed to plenty of car crashes, temporarily closed roads and one small house fire in Pendleton.

According to the National Weather

More inside

Rare Christmas snowfall causes crashes in Oregon **PAGE 2A**

Service in Pendleton, the city has had snowfall on Christmas Day just 8 percent of the time since record keeping began in the late 1800s. And Pendleton has celebrated a white Christmas — with snow covering the ground — just 10 percent of the time.

"I'd say that makes it an abnormal storm," said assistant meteorologist

Ann Adams of the National Weather Service's Pendleton office.

Snowfall totals of about 5 inches were measured in Pendleton, Mission and from Dayton, Wash., as well as Lostine. About 4 inches was measured in La Grande, and about 2-3 inches of snow in the Hermiston area.

"It was a fairly even, widespread storm," said Adams.

How long the snow will stick around is unclear. Temperatures are expected to rise into the high 30 and low 40s

See SNOW/8A

Counties to target opioid abuse

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
East Oregonian

Though opioid abuse is an epidemic across the nation, locals may have reason to take heart: four Eastern Oregon counties are receiving federal funds to fight opioid abuse, in a partnership with the Oregon Health Authority.

Umatilla, Union, Baker and Malheur counties will receive \$200,000 over two years, which health departments in those counties will use to target prescription drug abuse in the area.

"I'm sorry to say, our four counties are a priority," said Jim Setzer, Umatilla County's Public Health Director.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, deaths from opioid overdoses have quadrupled nationally since 1999. They also reported that rural areas are now seeing higher rates of death due to drug overdose than urban areas. But often, treatment is more difficult to access than in cities.

Along with Mike Stensrud, the new prescription drug overdose prevention coordinator for the four counties, Setzer is aiming to target several areas of opioid addiction: prevention, treatment and risk reduction.

In addition to community forums and education, the program will aim to increase local participation in Oregon's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program,

See OPIOIDS/8A

HERMISTON



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan

Community members enjoy a meal at the Community Fellowship Dinner on Christmas day.

Snow doesn't stop community dinner

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
East Oregonian

As snow fell outside on Christmas morning, inside Hermiston High School the Community Fellowship Dinner was in full swing.

Many benefited from the event without even leaving home, with volunteers delivering more meals to home-bound people from Irrigon to Echo.

Some still braved the roads to eat dinner and enjoy the company of others.

"Half of us live in Irrigon," said LeAnna Branson, who was at the dinner with her husband, son and daughter-in-law, and several other family members. "This is our first time for the dinner here, but it's

"It's really nice to see so many that weathered the storm."

— **Adrea Powers**, volunteer at the Community Fellowship Dinner

wonderful. We'd do it again in a heartbeat." Branson said she and her family will consider volunteering for the event next year.

"We came to participate in a community event," said Branson's son Lyman.

Many attendees end up returning to

See DINNER/8A



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan

Servers at the Community Fellowship Dinner on Christmas Day.

Musician and aspiring doctor find Pendleton hits the right note

Lincoln Barr fronted the band Red Jacket Mine

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Lincoln Barr and his wife Christian were at a point in their lives where there was a variety of places they could choose to reside.

They settled on Pendleton. While Christian was in the midst of a 12-hour clinical rotation, Barr, 35, explained the couple's winding road to Eastern Oregon at the Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co.

Having grown up in the Midwest and Southeast, the pair met in college at Southeast Missouri State University.

After graduating, they began looking toward the Northwest to help advance Barr's music career,



Our New Neighbors
Meet Eastern Oregon's newest residents

relocating to Seattle in 2004 over their second choice of Vancouver, British Columbia.

Barr formed and fronted a band called Red Jacket Mine while working a day job at a guitar store. One of his coworkers was a friend of Thomas Paul, a Boise musician who often performed in Pendleton.

Paul convinced Barr of the charms of Pendleton and Red Jacket Mine began doing shows in the Round-Up City in 2010. He met J.D. Kindle and began to integrate with the rest of the Pendleton music scene as the years

See NEIGHBORS/8A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Seattle musician Lincoln Barr moved to Pendleton last June with his wife, Christian, while she does her medical residency at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston.

