

STANFIELD



A Stanfield motorcyclist died in a collision with a semi on the Highway 395 overpass above I-84 on Tuesday afternoon. Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan

Motorcyclist killed in semi crash

East Oregonian

STANFIELD — A Stanfield man died Tuesday afternoon after being struck by a semi on the Interstate 84 overpass that connects Stanfield and Echo.

Sgt. Seth Cooney of the Oregon State Police reported Jason Blankenship, 40, of Stanfield was driving his motorcycle when he was struck by the semi.

The semi truck driver is Roberto Rodriguez Diaz, 41, of Hermiston. He was uninjured in the crash. Cooney

said the cause of the crash was still under investigation, and that law enforcement was still on scene as of press time. The overpass was closed while police investigate the wreck.

Cooney said he did not yet know whether charges would be filed against Rodriguez.

Historical society strikes 'Umatilla Gold'

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Mineral mining was more prevalent elsewhere in the American West, but a Umatilla County Historical Society exhibit will make the case that the county is bountiful with a gold all its own.

The historical society has been working on "Umatilla Gold: The History of Wheat in Umatilla County" for years, but a recent large grant from a private foundation meant the nonprofit could finally publicize the project.

With the help of Formations Inc., the Portland consultant that constructed the SAGE Center's exhibits, the historical society plans to give locals and visitors an interactive tour through the history of a crop that's nearly synonymous with Umatilla County.

The exhibit

While the majority of the exhibit deals with the past two centuries, it also covers millions of years of the region's history.

After an introduction, visitors will learn the geological history of Eastern Oregon, from the sediment that was deposited during and after the ice age to the volcanic effect that created the "bones of the region," according to a 2017 outline of the exhibit.

The museum will also include a section on the indigenous people of the Columbia Basin, including the tribes that would come to form the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

From there, the exhibit will skip ahead to 1862, a big year for Umatilla County's agriculture sector.

At the national level, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act, which entitled men older than 21 to any unclaimed 160-acre parcel of land. Domestic migrants from the Oregon Trail and the Willamette Valley poured into Eastern Oregon, as did European immigrants from abroad.

More locally, Umatilla County was created just as a Baker County gold rush created demand for wheat.

While early settlers used wheat for subsistence farming, the grain industry started to flourish in the late 19th and early 20th century in places like Pendleton, Adams, Athena, Weston,



Conceptual art contributed by Umatilla County Historical Society. The "Umatilla Gold: History of Wheat in Umatilla County" has received a \$121,780 grant and will open in 2019 at the Heritage Station Museum in Pendleton.

Pilot Rock, Echo, Buttercreek and the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

Those years saw farmers embrace mechanical reapers, tractors and vehicles while they grew and harvested the wheat before shipping it off on rail or boat to other markets. During the Great Depression, farmers formed the Pendleton Grain Growers co-op to help keep farms from closing.

The exhibit eventually transitions to modern wheat farming and its latest trends like no-till farming and auto-steering tractors that use GPS for more precise rows during plowing, seeding, fertilizing and harvesting.

Like the SAGE Center in Boardman, "Umatilla Gold" will have interactive elements to the exhibit.

Molding gold

While the Umatilla County Historical Society has featured many different exhibits at the Heritage Station Museum in Pendleton over the years, executive director Barbara Lund-Jones said they've never had an exhibit that focuses exclusively on wheat.

Board president Tom Winn, a retired wheat farmer, said modern changes in the industry means that it's time to preserve history. Although agriculture is still an economic driver in the region, farm consolidation and the advent of new agricultural technology means fewer people are farming than they used to.

The historical society sketched out its first exhibit outline in 2015, but the nonprofit refrained from going public until recently. It had been steadily raising money from organizations like Umatilla County Economic Development, the Oregon Heritage Foundation and the Pacific Power Foundation when it got big news from the MJ Murdock Charitable Trust. — the charity was granting the historical society \$121,780 toward fabricating and installing the exhibit.

"Umatilla Gold" has an estimated cost of \$354,873, and the historical society has already raised money needed for planning and programming, as well as the concept design. The nonprofit is continuing to raise money for the final design while the Murdock trust dollars will go toward the final construction phase, which has a total cost of \$287,113.

When the exhibit opens in 2019, Lund-Jones said it will fit into Pendleton's growing tourism industry and downtown area.

"Umatilla Gold" is expected to be a steady feature of the Heritage Station for years to come. As one of the conditions of the Murdock grant, the exhibit will have to stay open for at least 10 years.

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



Photo contributed by Colleen Blackwood

Tina Witherell, committee chairperson for the Krazy Horse Quilters raffle quilt, and Darrin Umbarger, Clearview Disability Resource Center, show off the 2018 raffle quilt. The drawing will be held during the May 5-6 Pendleton Quilt Show, with proceeds from raffle ticket sales going to Clearview.

Clearview to sew up donation from quilt show

East Oregonian

Stitching together a team effort, the Krazy Horse Quilters created a special raffle quilt that will benefit Clearview Disability Resource Center.

A nonprofit organization in Pendleton, Clearview is dedicated to helping seniors and people with disabilities. It offers resources to individuals and their families regarding disabilities as well as being an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) resource center for people who have concerns in regard to employment, housing and other areas where independence is a priority.

Executive director Darrin Umbarger is the driving force behind Clearview, said Colleen Blackwood of the quilt group, and is responsible for expanding the reach of the organization. Their goal is to help those with a disability live a more complete and successful life.

This year's raffle committee was chaired by Tina Witherell of Pendleton, Blackwood said. Each member of the Krazy Horse group selected scrap fabrics and made sections that were sewn into the blocks of the quilt, which measures 88 inches by 105 inches. The pattern, created by Karen Griska, is called Hexagons and Witherell designed it as the "Honeycomb Quilt." Wendy Rohde of Pendleton did the quilting stitches for the group.

Tickets are currently available at Thimbles Fabric-N-More, 1849 Westgate Place, Pendleton. They cost \$1 each or six for \$5. Also, they will be sold at the Pendleton Quilt Show, which is Saturday, May 5 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, May 6 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate.

Admission is \$5, which is good for both days.

The featured quilter is Janine Burke of Designs by JB in Reardan, Washington. Burke has been a vendor at the show for several years. She will teach a class on her pattern "Neutral Thinking" Friday, May 4. Also, she will share her best tips and tricks. The registration fee is \$40.

In its 17th year, the Pendleton Quilt Show will include a number of regional quilt supply vendors offering their wares to those in attendance. Blackwood said people should enjoy viewing the Krazy Horse Challenge with a theme of "Hexagons gone Wild." And, as always, people throughout the region are invited to register their quilts to display in the non-juried show. For questions about entering a quilt, contact Marilyn at lom1127@q.com

Additional details about the show are available at www.krazyhorsequilters.org or www.facebook.com/krazyhorsequilters. For questions, contact Blackwood at bwood@wtechlink.us or 541-276-4240.

WILDHORSE RESORT & CASINO

3/21

Cineplex Show Times

\$5 Classic Movie • 12:00 PM
Lenny (R)

Tomb Raider (PG13)
6:50 • 9:10 4:10 9:30

A Wrinkle in Time (PG)
4:40 7:10 • 9:40

The Hurricane Heist (PG13)
5:00 7:30 10:10

Death Wish (R)
4:50 7:20 9:50

Black Panther (PG13)
4:00 7:00 10:00

* Matinee Pricing
wildhorsesort.com • 541-966-1850
Pendleton, OR I-84 - Exit 216

HERMISTON

Aspen Springs summer opening possible

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

Lifeways hopes to open the doors to its new psychiatric facility in Hermiston this summer.

The Oregon Health Authority issued a statement last week that the facility had received approval, pending final review. Now, Lifeways must complete the

certification and licensing processes.

Tim Hoekstra, CEO of Lifeways, said the facility is almost complete, but is still in the final stages of construction.

"It's going to be state-of-the-art," he said.

Hoekstra said the timing of the next few steps of the project are up to the state.

"The certificate of need final order is the driver in

terms of the timeline for when we can open up," Hoekstra said.

Hoekstra said they also have to complete the hiring process for the facility. Some employees have already been hired to staff the round-the-clock operation and are working for Lifeways in an outpatient capacity. He said when the facility opens it will employ between 42 and 50 people.

Wyden to hold town halls in Umatilla, Boardman

East Oregonian

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden will make a six-county tour of Eastern Oregon in April, including town halls in Umatilla and Boardman.

According to a press release, Wyden will be at Umatilla High School at 9:30 a.m. on April 3. The

following day, Wyden will visit Riverside Senior/Junior High School in Boardman at 9:15 a.m.

Since he was elected senator in 1996, Wyden has held town halls in all 36 Oregon counties every year. When he finishes this tour, he will have appeared at 887 town halls.

"Throwing open the doors of government for town halls where anybody can come to ask any question is a huge part of what I call the 'Oregon Way,'" he said in a statement. "Participatory democracy is alive and well in our state, and I look forward very much to hearing from Eastern Oregon at these town halls."

White Bluffs Quilt Museum
invites you to view

A Century of Quilts

MAR 23-24 SEE A SAMPLING
at the Tri City Quilter's Guild Quilt Show - Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick, WA

THROUGH APRIL 28 SEE THE FULL EXHIBIT
at White Bluffs Museum: 294 Torbett St., Richland, WA

CONCEALED CARRY PERMIT CLASSES

MARCH 23 • 1:00 OR 6:00 PM

Best Western
2255 S Hwy 395, Hermiston

\$80 multi-State, Oregon included no-fee. \$45 Oregon-only

Required class to get an Oregon or multi-State permit. Class includes:

- Fingerprinting & photo
- Oregon gun laws
- Washington gun laws
- Interstate travel laws
- Interaction with law enforcement
- Use of deadly force
- Firearm / ammunition / holster selection

360.921.2071
FirearmTrainingNW.com : FirearmTrainingNW@gmail.com