

Kah-Nee-Ta Resort closes on Warm Springs Reservation

By EMILY CURETON
Oregon Public Broadcasting

Kah-Nee-Ta's closing weekend was brimming with guests — and memories.

Jerry and Brian Gorman thought about how their granddaughter took her first steps here. Erik Firkus remembered himself at 8, "running around, being free." He was with his 7-year-old son this weekend. They were among thousands who came to say goodbye to the spring-fed swimming pool, the campground, the teepees, the horses, the hotel surrounded by high desert trails. And ...

"The People. The People of the Tribe are always such generous people," Jerry Gorman said.

One well-known ambassador for the people at Kah-Nee-Ta is Delson Suppah Sr. He's an elder in the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and, until this week, he spent most Saturday nights telling legends to tourists. By day, he often sat in the shade of a juniper tree by the swimming pool, just chatting with guests.

Suppah remembered getting his first job at the resort at 17, back when that meant wearing moccasins and ribbon shirts to work.

"We need to get back there because that's what the tourists want," he said. "They want to see Indians and they want to learn about Indians."

Suppah said tribal leadership failed to preserve that original identity, or act on a variety of plans to keep the resort open through outside investment.

"They can call it blame. I don't call it blame, it's fact," he said.

Tribal and hotel officials declined interview requests. In a press release last week, Tribal Councilor Carina Miller said it would be irresponsible to pour more money into a venture that hasn't been profitable for years. The decision to close the resort was contentious and came after a slew of proposals stalled.

The closing weekend culminated in time-honored traditions, such as a horse parade with riders in beaded regalia, dancing and a salmon dinner. Roma David ran the show.

"I'm just going to put on a parade and just [have a] bitter farewell," she said.

Bitter, she said, because so much has changed for the worse at Kah-Nee-Ta. She thinks the hotel rates got too expensive. A golf course



It was a somber goodbye to Kah-Nee-Ta for many. A young woman in traditional regalia marched on horseback to the final Saturday salmon bake with traditional dancing.

was built in the 1980s. More recently, a casino came and went. Now, that's on the main highway through the reservation, a few miles away from the remotely situated resort.

Roma gave a quick recounting over the decades, skimming over the roughest parts — the fires, the scandals and the floods — while washing salmon flesh off a piping hot wooden stick. It was used to roast the fish over an open flame. Her

mother, her grandmother and her aunt also cooked salmon dinners at the resort. For this final meal, her son tended the fire, while nieces, nephews and grandkids helped.

"I'm just praying that things will turn around and people will start thinking after they see this," she said. "Because it's our people who are suffering by losing this place."

Job losses hit the reservation recently when a lumber mill closed. The resort brings

another wave of lost jobs.

Of 146 people laid off from the resort, many are tribal members. More than 100 people who live in staff apartments on the property were given until January to move out.

For the staff, the closing weekend was non-stop slammed. Plenty of employees moved on after they were given notice of the closure two months ago, so those who stayed until the end didn't have much time

for nostalgia. Ellise David thought the reality of it all still hadn't hit her.

"For me it's the people here, not the actual place," said the 18-year-old, who worked at Kah-Nee-Ta's front desk. She got a job there at 14, the legal working age on the reservation.

Roma David is her grandmother. But Ellise isn't really interested in cooking salmon or performing dances.

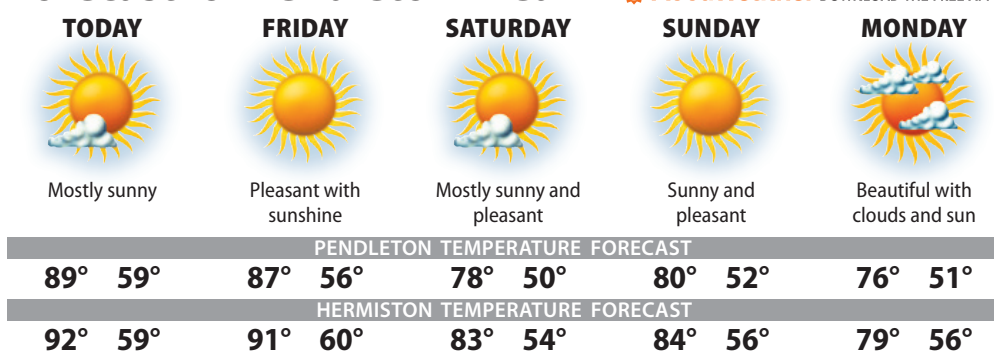
"I'm into agriculture. So I like cows, plows and sows a lot," she said with a laugh.

She was quick to smile despite the somber mood. She wore a bright red T-shirt that read, "I stand with Standing Rock," and she compared the resort's struggles with identity to her own.

"I'm half-white and half-Native-American. So for me growing up, I had a really hard time," she said. "Because I always felt like I wasn't Indian enough for my grandparents ... And not white enough for a lot of people."

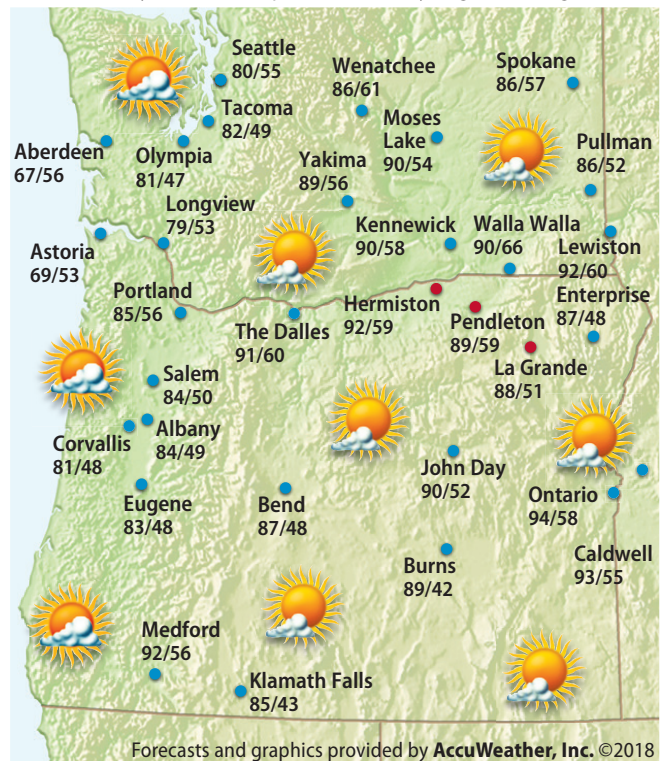
Ellise said she believes closing the resort opened a rift along generational lines, between older tribal members who don't want the place to change and younger people like her, who think it has to, even if that means closing for now.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.

| TEMP. | HIGH | LOW |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| Yesterday | 84° | 48° |
| Normals | 82° | 53° |
| Records | 99° (1932) | 36° (1892) |

PRECIPITATION

| 24 hours ending 3 p.m. | 0.00" |
|------------------------|--------|
| Month to date | 0.00" |
| Normal month to date | 0.07" |
| Year to date | 6.52" |
| Last year to date | 11.37" |
| Normal year to date | 8.45" |

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

| TEMP. | HIGH | LOW |
|-----------|------------|------------|
| Yesterday | 85° | 45° |
| Normals | 83° | 52° |
| Records | 97° (2003) | 37° (1956) |

PRECIPITATION

| 24 hours ending 3 p.m. | 0.00" |
|------------------------|-------|
| Month to date | 0.00" |
| Normal month to date | 0.05" |
| Year to date | 5.15" |
| Last year to date | 6.65" |
| Normal year to date | 6.17" |

WINDS (in mph)

| | Today | Fri. |
|-----------|--------|----------|
| Boardman | SW 3-6 | SW 6-12 |
| Pendleton | NW 4-8 | WSW 6-12 |

SUN AND MOON

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Sunrise today | 6:22 a.m. |
| Sunset tonight | 7:24 p.m. |
| Moonrise today | 2:22 a.m. |
| Moonset today | 5:46 p.m. |

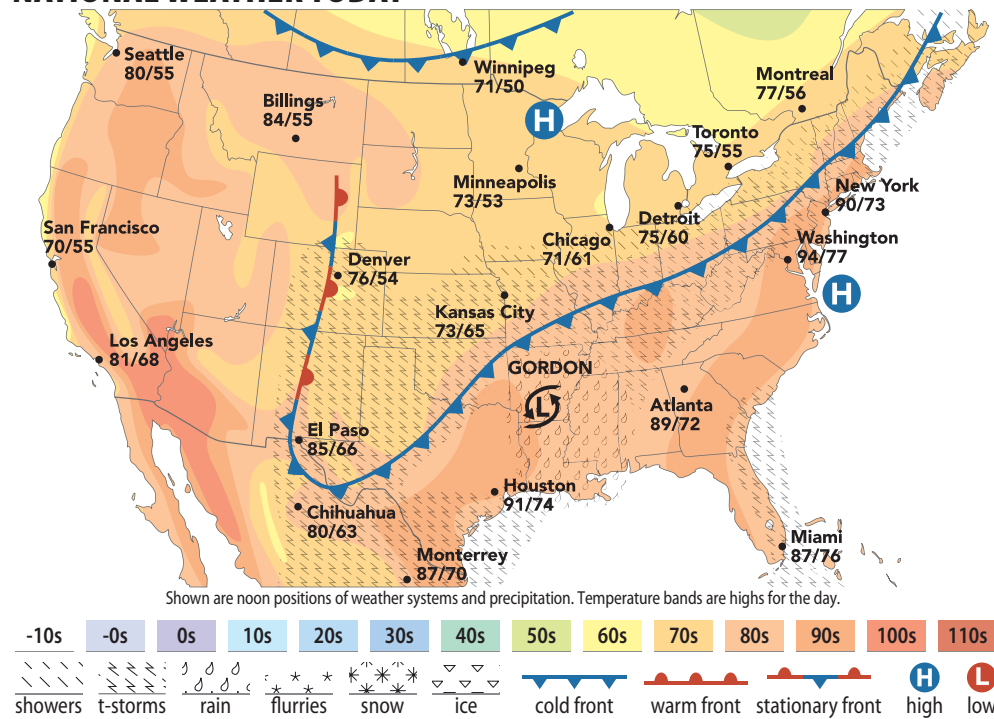
New First Full Last
Sep 9 Sep 16 Sep 24 Oct 2

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 105° in Thermal, Calif. Low 25° in Yellowstone Nat'l Park, Wyo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



BRIEFLY

OSU scientists examine Mount St. Helens formation

PORTLAND (AP) — OSU scientists may have the answer to why Mount St. Helens is out of line with other major volcanoes on the Cascade Range.

University geophysicist Adam Schultz and his team think a giant subsurface rock formation diverted magma, causing Mount St. Helens to form west of the Cascadia Arc, Oregon Public Broadcasting reported Monday.

"It seems like what we call the Spirit Lake batholith is probably the reason why Mount St. Helens actually pops up far to the west of where you would anticipate it to be," Schultz said.

The team of researchers layered together different imaging studies to gain better insight into what's below the volcano's surface. They paired older studies — showing the structure, density and temperature — with newer ones that used magnetotelluric measurements, which show subsurface electrical conductivity.

"Either method by itself can lead to a level of uncertainty, but when you layer them together as we have done in this project you get a much clearer picture of what lies below," Schultz said.

Mount St. Helens formed because the Juan de Fuca plate off the coast of Washington and Oregon slipped under the North America plate. The plate went past crustal blocks with marine sediments that slammed into the continent, Schultz said.

"This material is more permeable than surrounding rock and allows the magma to move through it," Schultz said. "The big batholith acts kind of like a plug in the crust and diverted magma that normally would have erupted in

line with the other major Cascade volcanoes, resulting in St. Helens forming to the west of the Cascadia Arc, and Mount Adams slightly to the east."

Family says young firefighter died of pneumonia

SCAPPOOSE (AP) — The family of a 20-year-old Scappoose man who died after returning from a summer fighting wildfires in Oregon and Washington says he died of complications from pneumonia.

Local TV stations report that Eric Aarseth returned from the fire lines last week and was sick but didn't seek medical attention.

His family says friends found him unconscious on their couch on Aug. 28.

He was taken by ambulance to the hospital, where doctors diagnosed sepsis.

Aarseth never regained consciousness and doctors took him off life support on Monday.

Jackson County officials seek arsonist in grass fires

SHADY COVE, Ore. (AP) — Authorities in Jackson County are looking for a suspect who set a string of grass fires last week in Shady Cove.

The Jackson County Sheriff's Department says witnesses reported seeing a light-colored Pontiac Sunfire sedan leaving the scene near Highway 62 around the time the fires were reported late on Aug. 30 and early on Aug. 31.

One fire was reported at 9:10 p.m. and two more were reported just after 1 a.m.

All three were quickly extinguished.

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