

State Parks Day celebrated with free camping, parking

East Oregonian

State Parks Day is Saturday and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is inviting Oregonians outdoors for a day of free camping, free parking and special events at Oregon's state parks.

Several state parks are holding free events that day, and camping is free at all tent, RV and individual horse campsites. Day-use parking will be free June 1 and 2 at the 25 parks that charge a day-use fee.

"State Parks Day is our way each year of thanking Oregonians for their commitment to our state parks," said Lisa Sumption, OPRD director. "We invite people to discover a new park or revisit an old favorite."

State Parks Day is organized by OPRD and has been held annually since 1997.

Oregon Lottery returns as an event sponsor this year and they're providing support for events at six state parks: Champoeg State Heritage Area, Fort Stevens State Park, Tumalo State Park, The Cove Palisades State Park, Wallowa Lake State Park and Silver Falls State Park.

Oregon Lottery is also sponsoring a new addition to State Parks Day: commemorative State Parks Day pins. The limited-edition pins will be available for free at more than two dozen state parks on June 1 (see the full list of parks distributing the pins at the end of this story). Note: parks have a limited supply of pins and they will be given away first come, first served.

In total, 11 state parks will host free events June 1:

- Willamette Valley**
 - Champoeg State Heritage Area
 - Fort Yamhill State Heritage Area
 - Silver Falls State Park
- Coast**
 - Fort Stevens State Park
 - Cape Meares State Scenic Viewpoint
- Cascade Range and Central Oregon**

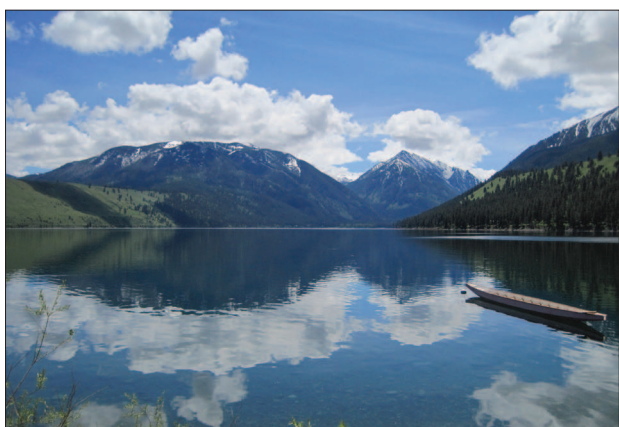


Photo by Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Several Oregon state parks, including Wallowa Lake State Park (pictured), are holding free events on Saturday, June 1, during State Parks Day.

- The Cove Palisades State Park
 - Prineville Reservoir State Park
 - Tumalo State Park
- Portland Metro Area**
- Tryon Creek State Natural Area
- Southern and Eastern Oregon**
- Collier Memorial State Park
 - Wallowa Lake State Park

Events include disc golf, living history, outdoor concerts, ranger-led programs and more. Full details about events at each park are on the official State Parks Day webpage.

To guarantee a campsite for State Parks Day, reserve online at oregonstateparks.org or call 800-452-5687 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. While campsite rental is free, an \$8 non-refundable transaction fee is required at the time of the reservation. Reservations must be made at least 24 hours in advance of your stay. Approximately half of state park campgrounds accept reservations.

List of state parks giving away State Parks Day pins on June 1:

- Coast**
 - Bullards Beach State Park
 - Cape Arago State Park
 - Cape Lookout State Park
 - Cape Meares State Scenic Viewpoint
 - Crissey Field State Recreation Site
 - Fort Stevens State Park

- Humbug Mountain State Park
 - Shore Acres State Park
 - Sunset Bay State Park
 - William M. Tugman State Park
- Columbia River Gorge**
- Ainsworth State Park
 - Guy W. Talbot State Park
- Willamette Valley**
- Champoeg State Heritage Area
 - Dexter State Recreation Area
 - Elijah Bristow State Park
 - Fort Yamhill State Heritage Area
 - Silver Falls State Park
 - Thompson's Mills State Heritage Area

- Cascade Range and Central Oregon**
 - LaPine State Park
 - Prineville Reservoir State Park
 - The Cove Palisades State Park
 - Tumalo State Park

- Southern and Eastern Oregon**
 - Clyde Holliday State Park
 - Cottonwood Canyon State Park
 - Emigrant Springs State Heritage Area
 - Farewell Bend State Recreation Area
 - Hat Rock State Park
 - Lake Owyhee State Park
 - Minam State Recreation Area
 - Sumpter Valley Dredge State Heritage Site
 - Wallowa Lake State Park

EASY RIDERS

A trio of cyclists rides up Old Emigrant Highway near Pendleton during Saturday's mini Century Ride of the Centuries. The longtime series of rides, which traditionally features century farms on the routes, downsized this year to a single day.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney



LOCAL BRIEFING

Umatilla County board to hear charter proposals

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners hears first-hand Wednesday for the first time from the committee making recommendations to change county government.

The county board more than a year ago formed the Charter Review Committee to analyze and suggest changes to the charter, the founding document for the structure and function of Umatilla County's government. The nine-member group decided at the end of April to recommend major reforms, starting with an overhaul of the board of commissioners.

Rather than three full-time positions, the committee decided a board of five part-timers would work better. That five-person board would hire the county counsel and a county manager, another significant change.

The county's growth demands a professional administrator, according to the committee, which also would improve the consistency of overseeing county operations compared to the different styles of the three commissioners.

The board of commissioners moved its meeting to Wednesday to 5:30 p.m. to hold a workshop with the charter committee and hear all the recommendations. The

meeting is open to the public in room 114 at the county courthouse, Pendleton.

its on-campus next fall will spend about \$120 more on tuition and fees.

EOU board approves tuition increase

LA GRANDE — After months of planning and discussions with students and stakeholders, the Eastern Oregon University Board of Trustees recently approved a 4.9% increase across all tuition categories for next year.

Though trustees expressed reluctance for the increase citing student access and affordability, EOU remains the most cost-effective public university in the state, and only two institutions held tuition at a lower percent increase.

"We are truly concerned about cost of attendance at EOU," said Vice President of Finance and Administration Lara Moore. "In a challenging state funding environment, and given that 52 percent of our incoming class last fall was low income, we have been committed to staying below a 5 percent increase to ensure student access."

The 4.9% change will be applied to on-campus resident and non-resident tuition, as well as online rates. Moderate student fee increases, along with the tuition change, means that an Oregon resident taking 15 cred-

Law enforcement search turns up stolen vehicles, trailers

PENDLETON — Umatilla County law enforcement Friday recovered stole vehicles and trailers.

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office reported deputies and personnel from Umatilla County Community Corrections conducted a legal search at a residence on the 45000 block of Adams Road near Pendleton.

There, deputies recovered the following:

- 1995 Peterbilt semi from the Spokane County, Washington;
- John Deere Gator 4x4 all-terrain vehicle from the Wildhorse Resort & Casino Golf Course, Pendleton;
- two, enclosed U-Haul trailers, which the sheriff's office returned to a Pendleton area U-Haul rental business;
- one large black dump trailer from Richland, Washington.

The sheriff's office also reported it returned the vehicles to their legal owners or soon will.

The suspect in the case, however, was not on the premises, so the investigation continues.

Power Pro to close up shop

Hermiston-based business opened doors in 2001

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

It's a good time to be an electrician in Hermiston, but not a good time to need one.

As Amazon continues adding data centers to the area, the tech company worth more than \$1 trillion is poaching employees from local electrical shops faster than they can hire them. It's gotten so bad that Jon Patterson of Power Pro — one of Hermiston's three major electrical contractors — is closing his business.

"You can't hire an electrician," he said. "Everyone is losing three to four people a month to those guys."

Patterson started Power Pro in 2001 out of his shop, and built his building on Campbell Drive in 2006. Over the past 18 years he has employed 99 different people as full-time employees, he said, and many more for part-time work.

He said he has enjoyed his time building a business in Hermiston and had "a lot of fun" doing it. The community has been supportive, and employees have formed close-knit friendships.

"It's really been a pleasure working here," he said.

The past year has been much less enjoyable, however, as employees have walked off partially completed jobs, lured away by high pay and large signing bonuses for Amazon.

"I don't mind if they're

ready to leave the nest, but everyone at once killed me," he said.

Hermiston projects, both municipal and commercial, have announced delays in recent years due to a struggle finding electrical contractors. Patterson said his two biggest competitors actually asked him to reconsider his decision to retire.

"That says something," he said.

He predicted local electrical contractors will have to raise wages — and prices — significantly to keep employees from heading to Amazon.

"What's going to happen here is if you want something done to your house you're going to be paying \$200 an hour," he said.

That will be a problem for someone besides Patterson to figure out. He said he's taking about a year off to go build a cabin on some property he owns, and then he will start thinking about what will come next.

He is auctioning off Power Pro's equipment, trucks and other supplies through Mike's Auction LLC on May 31, which could provide an opportunity for someone else in the area looking to start or expand their business.

Power Pro has performed a wide range of commercial and municipal jobs in the Pacific Northwest over the years, from schools to stores. Patterson said one of his favorite jobs was doing lightning protection on Forest Service lookout towers in remote locations all over the Pacific Northwest. As the Forest

Service's "go-to" person for lightning protection, they used everything from mules to ATVs to pack in supplies and equipment.

"We had a lot of fun on the towers," he said. "It was just like camping."

Patterson said despite closing the business he plans to remain chair of Blue Mountain Community College's electrical apprenticeship advisory committee. He said if the state wanted to help ease Eastern Oregon's electrician shortage it would revise its particularly restrictive rules for licensing and allow electricians to take on more than one apprenticeship at a time.

He also encouraged teachers to stop telling students that the only way to make money was with a college education.

WILDHORSE RESORT & CASINO
5/28
Cineplex Show Times

\$5 Classic Movie
Showing Wednesday at 12PM
THE JERK

Aladdin (PG)
3:50p* 6:40p
9:30p

John Wick: Chapter 3 Parabellum (R)
4:10p 7:00p 9:50p

Avengers: Endgame (PG13)
3:40p* 7:20p 9:10p

A Dog's Journey (PG)
4:30p 6:50p 9:40p

Pokemon Detective Pikachu (PG)
4:40p 7:10p

Godzilla: King of the Monsters (PG13)
Thursday, May 30th • 7:00p, 10:00p

Rocketman (R)
Thursday, May 30th • 7:00p, 9:40p

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

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