

After the Blitz, RAF vet lands in Wallowa County

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
EO Media Group

JOSEPH — How does a young English girl who served in the Royal Air Force end up in Joseph, Oregon? To tell the full story would take a long time to tell — just about 100 years. That's because Gladys Huffman will turn 100 in January.

But for this Veterans Day, she's one of the few World War II veterans left in Wallowa County — and the only one still living at the Alpine House in Joseph.

Born in January 1920 in Birkenhead, England, Huffman was just 19 when Great Britain declared war on Nazi Germany after Hitler's Sept. 1, 1939, invasion of Poland.

Like many of her countrymen — and women — she wanted to join the war effort. At first, she volunteered as an air raid warden and spotter in her hometown. Both Birkenhead and Liverpool were prominent shipbuilding centers, and thus targets of the Luftwaffe — the German air force.

"We had an anti-aircraft gun parked right outside our house," she recalls, saying she was based near her home.

She even remembers after one Luftwaffe raid, the



Gladys Huffman, a World War II veteran of Britain's Royal Air Force, sits covered in a quilt presented to her by the American Legion, of which she is a member in her own right. She was a war bride to a pilot in the U.S. Army Air Forces and has been a citizen since 1945. She now lives at the Alpine House at Joseph.

EO Media Group Photo/Bill Bradshaw

building in which she was taking shelter was hit and heavily damaged, but she and others survived in the basement.

"We didn't know how we were going to get out until a pickaxe came through the wall and somebody asked if we were OK," she says.

As an air raid warden,

she helped enforce blackouts during the Blitz — Germany's early, unsuccessful effort to bomb Britain into submission that culminated in British victory in the Battle of Britain — and after a bombing by the Luftwaffe she would call in where emergency services were needed. She says that on one

occasion, her family spent 10 days in an air raid shelter.

She says the bombings during the Blitz and the blackouts were the worst parts of the war she experienced personally.

"You couldn't see anything (at night)," she says. "You couldn't even see the street signs to know where

you were. That was the hardest to take."

Of course, the worst experience for her and her family was what happened to two of her brothers, Reginald and Victor Favager, who also were in the RAF.

Huffman said that one night, during the same raid over occupied Europe, both the Lancaster bombers her brothers were aboard were shot down. Victor, who had lied about his age and enlisted at 17, was killed and Reginald, 19 at the time, was taken prisoner. Reginald was captured near the site where the Germans were doing rocket tests and he was accused of being a spy.

"He was treated very badly by the Nazis," she says, adding that he did survive the war.

As a plane spotter, she would identify whether flights of planes were friend or foe and count the numbers of enemy planes. Later, she became one of the early volunteers in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force.

"At first, the RAF didn't want women," she says. "You had to be able to do a man's (desk) job to release him to go to the front."

Later on, she says, as Britain got more desperate for manpower, women were

conscripted, something American women haven't experienced.

Huffman was given a job as an accountant handling the finances of British and foreign pilots. That's how she met her first husband, Willard W. Davis.

An American, Davis went to Canada to try to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

"He wanted to go in right now" to be a fighter pilot, Huffman said.

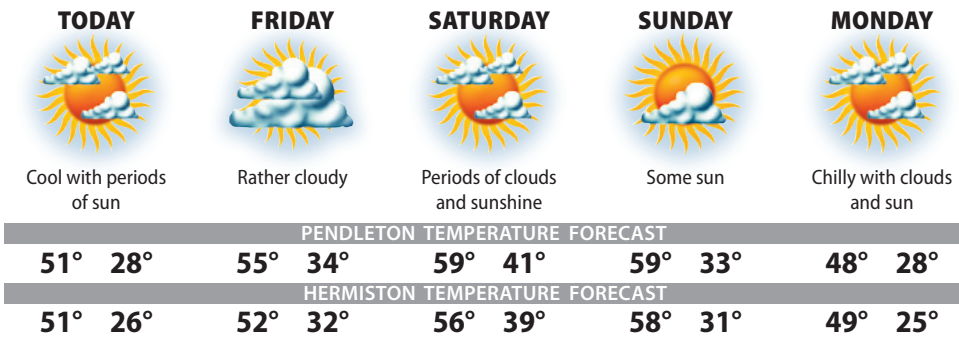
But since the process of becoming a pilot with the RCAF was going to take too long, he instead got his wings with the air force of the Polish government in exile. He got his training and wings from the RAF, wore an RAF uniform, but flew in a squadron with Poles and other non-Brits.

Davis flew for the Poles and the RAF until America came into the war in December 1941.

"He wanted to fly under his own colors" and transferred to the U.S. Army Air Forces, Huffman said.

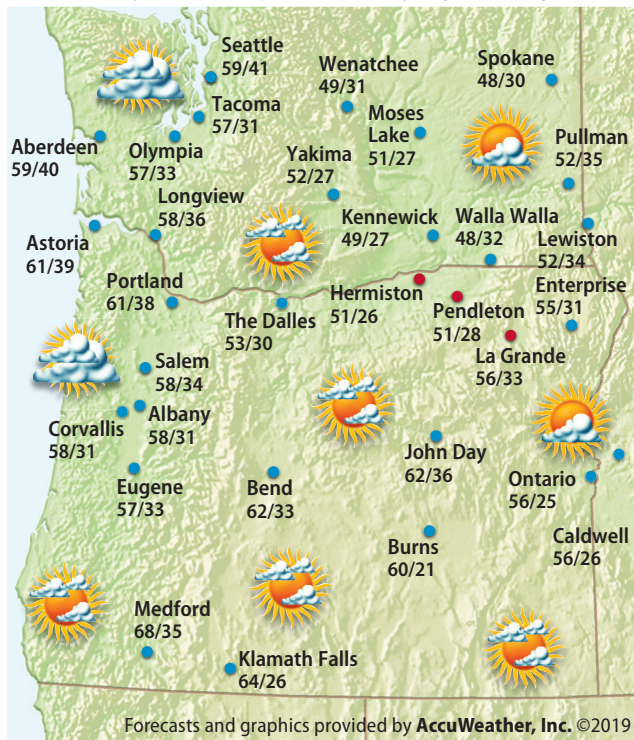
The couple married in June of 1943 and her RAF service ended. By then, the Allies were pushing back on nearly all fronts, but Davis didn't want his bride in harm's way and sent her to America.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



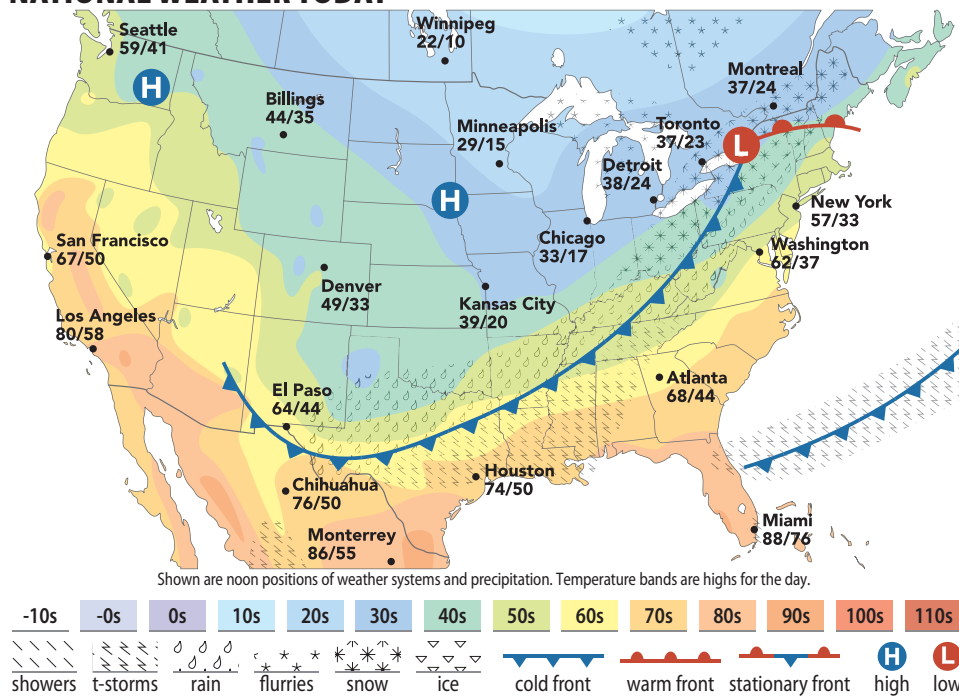
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	55°	28°
Normals	54°	35°
Records	74° (2006)	15° (2003)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.00"	
Normal month to date	0.24"	
Year to date	11.31"	
Last year to date	8.25"	
Normal year to date	10.23"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	56°	24°
Normals	55°	35°
Records	68° (1934)	10° (2003)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.00"	
Normal month to date	0.22"	
Year to date	4.94"	
Last year to date	6.46"	
Normal year to date	7.50"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	ENE 3-6	
Fri.	ENE 3-6	
Pendleton	NNW 4-8	
Fri.	NNW 4-8	
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	6:43 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	4:34 p.m.	
Moonrise today	3:01 p.m.	
Moonset today	1:29 a.m.	
Full	Last	New
Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26
		Dec 3

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 94° in Palm Springs, Calif. Low -4° in Dunkirk, Mont.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Hearings set for Sumpter city workers

Three employees have been on paid leave since spring

By **JAYSON JACOBY**
EO Media Group

SUMPTER — Three Sumpter city employees who have been on paid administrative leave since this spring will have a chance to defend their performance to the city council on Thursday afternoon.

LeAnne Woolf, bookkeeper and assistant city recorder for the city, which has a population of about 210 and is about 28 miles

west of Baker City, was put on leave May 14.

Two of Sumpter's three other city employees — City Recorder Julie McKinney and Public Works Director Jeff McKinney, who is her husband — have been on leave since June 14.

Each of the three employees has asked that the hearing take place during a meeting open to the public, rather than during an executive session from which the public can be excluded, Sumpter Mayor Greg Lucas said.

The three employees will have separate hearings of up to 30 minutes, without the

two others present, Lucas said.

Woolf's hearing will start at 2 p.m. at Sumpter City Hall, 240 Mill St., followed by separate hearings for the McKinneys. Lucas said he didn't know which McKinney would have the first hearing.

The city council will not take public comments during the hearings, Lucas said.

Whether the council will decide on any action regarding the employees' status during Thursday's meeting depends on what happens during the hearings, Lucas said.

BRIEFLY

Police: Semi driver kidnapped, assaulted woman at Costco

HILLSBORO — A truck driver was arrested after police say he kidnapped a woman in Tacoma, Washington, drove her to Hillsboro and assaulted her on the loading dock of a Costco store when she tried to escape.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reported Alfonso Summers was driving his tractor-trailer in Tacoma when a woman he didn't know asked for a ride, according to Hillsboro police.

Sgt. Eric Bunday says the woman asked Summers to take her to another part of Tacoma but that Summers refused to let her out and drove to Hillsboro.

On Monday, someone called police to report seeing a man assault a woman outside Costco. The man, who police later identified as Summers, then drove away.

Soon after, a caller to 911 reported the truck was stuck on railroad tracks. Summers ran, but police officers arrested him.

He faces charges including kidnapping and strangulation.

3,000 gallons of sewage spills into Willamette River

PORTLAND — A pipe carrying raw sewage spilled an estimated 3,000 gallons into the Willamette River in downtown Portland.

The Oregonian/OregonLive reported the city's Bureau of Environmental Services said crews discovered the spill around 10:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Sewage flowed into the river at the Eastside Esplanade north of the Morrison Bridge. Crews stopped the spill by 2:30 p.m. by making a temporary repair on one of the city's sewer lines.

To put 3,000 gallons in context: The city's treatment plant takes in 70 million gallons of sewage a day.

Drug charge dropped against former tribal police officer

YAKIMA, Wash. — A federal drug charge against a former Yakama Nation police officer has been dismissed, while his sentencing for a child pornography conviction has been rescheduled.

The Yakima Herald reported 39-year-old Lorenzo Elias Mendez was charged with one count of possessing more than 1.76 ounces of methamphetamine with intent to distribute.

A U.S. district judge has issued an order granting a motion by federal prosecutors to dismiss the charge without prejudice. The charge cannot be filed again.

Mendez had pleaded not guilty. Mendez was convicted in August of one count of attempted production of child pornography.

— Associated Press

CORRECTIONS: The East Oregonian works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

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