

Eastern Oregon Livestock Show still on for now

A decision on whether to hold the event will be made in early May

By RONALD BOND
EO Media Group

UNION — Nothing has stopped the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show since its inception in 1908 — not World War I, World War II, not the Spanish flu and not even a fire — and it’s because of one fact.

“The show does not go on without volunteers,” EOLS President Dave Billings said. “That show can’t survive without volunteers. During those years when everyone else took off, this area had enough volunteers to make it happen. That’s why it stayed alive.”

Billings is hopeful those volunteers will be able to put on the show for the 113th year in a row this coming June. But what happens in the next month with the coronavirus will determine the fate of the oldest rodeo and livestock exhibition in the Northwest.

The EOLS kickoff dinner, which was to take place Saturday, was canceled, but that is the only scheduled event between now and



Springfield’s Jesse Tennent tries to outrun Leapfrog during the first freestyle bullfighting competition at the 2019 Eastern Oregon Livestock Show. The event is set to take place for the 113th straight year, though the decision to go forward comes in early May and depends on the fallout from COVID-19.

June 8, when the show is set to begin.

“We won’t have anything else until the first weekend in June, which is the weekend ahead of the rodeo,” Billings said, with the only major activity between now and then a cleanup day June 6, two days before the

beginning of the Livestock Show.

But like everyone else nationwide, Billings and the board members are watching the fallout of COVID-19. And with all the details that go into the event, Billings said if the coronavirus impacts the show, there

wouldn’t be an option to reschedule or postpone it, or have it in an abbreviated sense.

“We would have to just cancel for the year,” he said. “The schedule for rodeo and livestock, bulls — there’s just a lot of things that are hard to postpone. That stock

is tied up for the next week-end (at) other places. “Too many things that all have to line up to make it work.”

He noted, for example, the schedule for the horse racing, which takes place Friday through Sunday each year, has been set since January.

“The rest of the dates are taken,” he said.

Billings said the plan is for volunteers and board members to carry on as best as possible with smaller tasks at the EOLS ground in preparation for the show to go on as scheduled.

“We’ve got all kind of little maintenance projects,” he said.

Two alterations will have to be accounted for, however, that are tied into the already canceled kickoff dinner. Billings said the dinner is when the members of the queen’s court have their speech competition, and also marks the date the candidates can begin to sell tickets.

With social distancing and stay-at-home stipulations in place, Billings said, how to handle the ticket sales and the speech competition is still being considered.

“There’s a lot of unknowns right now. Everyone is sitting around

waiting,” he said.

As for animals raised by area youths that are sold during the week of the show, Billings said a contingency plan is being developed in case the coronavirus does lead to the show’s cancellation.

“If something happens and the show is canceled because of this, we would work with the kids to have sort of a sale that the animals are dispersed at,” he said. “They’re still working on what that could be.”

The board is eying the beginning of May for when it will make the call on whether to have the show.

“We’re all in hopes we’re going to have it,” Billings said. He noted that everybody is on board with the plan to move forward and that “none of us are running in the other direction,” of saying to cancel now.

“We’re going to go down to the last minute.”

Further, the hope is the 113th EOLS could be one that marks the region’s release from the quarantine lifestyle COVID-19 has put on the country.

“We have high hopes that we’re going to have a lot of enthusiasm for the show,” he said, “and a lot of it because people are tired of being cooped up.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY

Intervals of clouds and sunshine

SATURDAY

Cloudy

SUNDAY

Mostly cloudy with a shower

MONDAY

Times of clouds and sun

TUESDAY

Partly sunny

PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST									
52°	30°	55°	35°	56°	39°	55°	36°	62°	38°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST									
58°	28°	58°	37°	62°	42°	61°	37°	67°	37°

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 49° LOW 33°

Yesterday 49°

Normals 58° 38°

Records 84° (1944) 20° (1935)

PRECIPITATION 24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace

Month to date 0.02"

Normal month to date 0.09"

Year to date 4.97"

Last year to date 6.08"

Normal year to date 4.09"

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

TEMP. HIGH 54° LOW 22°

Yesterday 54°

Normals 62° 38°

Records 80° (1944) 18° (1935)

PRECIPITATION 24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"

Month to date Trace

Normal month to date 0.04"

Year to date 0.48"

Last year to date 3.59"

Normal year to date 3.18"

WINDS (in mph)

Today Sat.

Boardman WSW 10-20 NE 4-8

Pendleton W 8-16 NE 4-8

SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 6:31 a.m.

Sunset tonight 7:26 p.m.

Moonrise today 1:57 p.m.

Moonset today 4:29 a.m.

Full Last New First

Apr 7 Apr 14 Apr 22 Apr 30

Two new COVID-19 cases in Union County bring the total to three

By PHIL WRIGHT
EO Media Group

LA GRANDE — Union County has two new cases of the COVID-19 virus. One of them involves a Barreto Manufacturing crew member at the company’s Hot Lake plant.

The Center for Human Development Inc., which oversees public health in the county, reported late Wednesday afternoon that the new cases bring the county’s total to three. The center did not provide any information about who the victims are. Barreto Manufacturing owner Greg Barreto said the confirmation of his employee’s infection came Tuesday.

The employee came down with a fever on March 20, according to the notice the company sent Wednesday to employees. However, the employee’s last day at the job was March 19.

Barreto, who is in his sixth and final year as representative of Oregon House District 58, said he was in Salem when the employee called in sick with COVID-19 symptoms and promptly sought testing for the virus. But the wait time for the confirmation, Barreto said, is frustrating.

“That was nine days ago,” he said Wednesday afternoon.

Barreto said Thursday will mark 14 days since the employee was at work and no other employees have had symptoms. He also said the employee has been home and isolating, and has not needed to go to the hospital. But the business has stepped up its sanitization and social distancing efforts.

“You have to do all of these things and hope for the best,” he said.

Barreto Manufacturing has laid off 85 employees since mid-March due

to the economic downturn from the efforts to curtail the spread of the 2019 coronavirus. Barreto said the company is operating with a skeleton crew to finish out the remaining orders.

The Center for Human Development and the Oregon Health Authority is working to identify and isolate anyone who may have been in close contact with these individuals in the last 14 days, according to the news release from the center.

Union County Public Health Administrator Carrie Brogoitti said the number of cases in Oregon and nationwide continue to trend up.

“We are likely to see additional cases,” she said in the news release, “which is why we urge Union County residents to take the steps our federal and state government has outlined to reduce the spread and minimize the risk of becoming ill with the virus.”

NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 90° in Zapata, Texas Low -14° in Stanley, Idaho

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Full Last New First

Apr 7 Apr 14 Apr 22 Apr 30

Ranchers can apply for grazing allotments lost by Hammond Ranches

SALEM — Cattle producers can apply to compete for access to federal grazing allotments that Oregon’s Hammond Ranches lost in a court decision.

However, if Hammond Ranches decides to continue with an administrative challenge against the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, those applications will be put on hold, the *Capital Press* reported.

Ranchers have until April 14 to apply to graze livestock on the four allotments, which include about 41 square miles, while Hammond Ranches must decide by that

time whether to appeal or apply for a new grazing permit.

Steven Hammond, co-owner of the ranch in the high desert of Eastern Oregon, said he’s undecided about which procedural action to take and will consult with his lawyer to “try to understand how much more complicated this process is going to get.”

Hammond and his father, Dwight, are well-known in the ranching community for their legal battles with the federal government and environmental groups.

They were convicted of arson for setting fire to range land and sent to prison in 2012. The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 called for mandatory five-year sentences for the convictions.

— 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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211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211

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Regional Publisher and Revenue Director:

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Advertising Manager:

• Angela Treadwell

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Multimedia Consultants:

• Lora Jenkins

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Business Office Manager:

541-966-0824

COMMERCIAL PRINTING

Production Manager: Mike Jensen

541-215-0824 • mjensen@eastoregonian.com