

GO STEM Hub distributes learning kits for rural families

East Oregonian

LA GRANDE — Football players, food service workers and on-campus staff at Eastern Oregon University are doing what they can to bring STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education to youngsters in rural Oregon.

The Greater Oregon STEM Hub at EOU used grant funds from the Oregon Community Foundation to address student needs in regional counties hardest hit by COVID-19.

The Oregon Community Foundation awarded GO STEM \$19,950 to construct and distribute 2,000 at-home STEM kits.

GO STEM plans to deliver kits to every fourth-grade student in Umatilla and Morrow counties, as well as key districts and schools that remain virtual or have spikes in COVID cases. Fourth-graders were chosen because they are often the youngest students that experience a virtual learning environment.

“The objective of this project was to involve the fourth-grade students in hands-on STEM explorations that are self-directed and can be done with or without teacher guidance,” said GO STEM Executive Director David Melville.



Eastern Oregon University student-athletes volunteered on Oct. 31, 2020, to assemble 2,000 at-home learning kits as part of a grant-funded effort by the Greater Oregon STEM Hub to support fourth-graders in rural counties.

The kits focus on engineering design and construction with sail cars and parachutes, and geometry with straw structures. GO STEM worked with kit supplier Pitco Education to replace plastic straws with a paper version, and to include directions in both Spanish and English. The company has since applied these changes

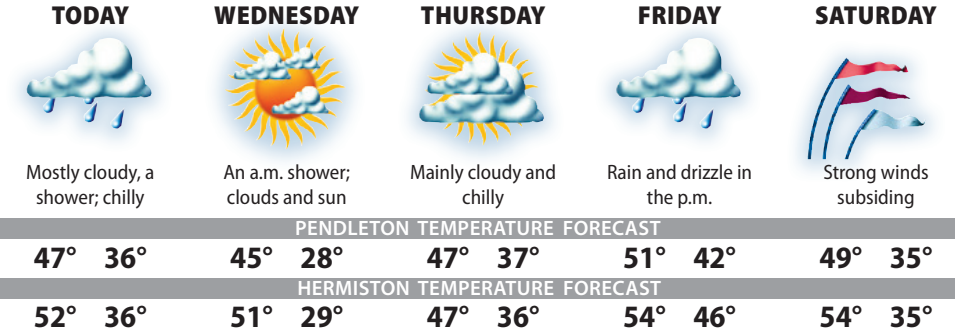
throughout its products. GO STEM worked with members of EOU’s football team to build the 2,000 STEM kits, while ensuring all involved observed the university’s COVID-19 safety protocols. Student-athletes built boxes, packaged project kits and other materials, and sealed the kits for distribution.

“Without the help of EOU football players and coaches, we would not be able to get these kits in the hands of the students,” Melville said. Another EOU partner, Sodexo, offered additional support. Sodexo provides food services at EOU and supplied Goldfish crackers and granola bars for each STEM kit.

“Not only are our students needing direct STEM education in their homes, but many of our most at-risk students are also food insecure,” said Program Director for GO STEM Donna Rainboth. “This partnership is win-win for our students.” Delivering the kits to families in rural counties required a collaboration out-

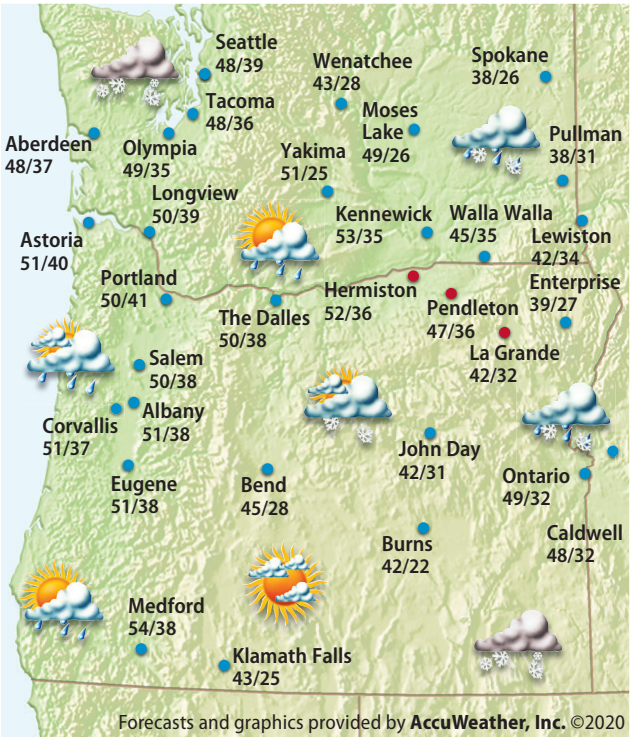
side of EOU. “As you can imagine, getting these kits in the hands of students across Eastern Oregon is a huge lift,” said Erin Lair, director of teaching and learning at Inter-Mountain Educational Service District (IMESD). “We are happy to provide our courier service to help distribute the kits. It is just what we do.” IMESD is working closely with EOU’s Shipping and Receiving Department in these efforts. “Shipping and Receiving has been amazing in helping us move these massive amounts of materials. Not only did they store and move the kit materials, they allowed us to stage and store the kits so they can be picked up by IMESD for delivery,” said Echo Knight, program assistant for GO STEM. By building relationships across university departments, GO STEM leveraged the strengths of students, staff and on-campus partners. “Eastern Oregon University and the Greater Oregon STEM Hub continue to build a strong relationship to benefit our region’s students — from preschool to college,” said Dean of the College of Education Matt Seimears. “Together, we can and do make a difference.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



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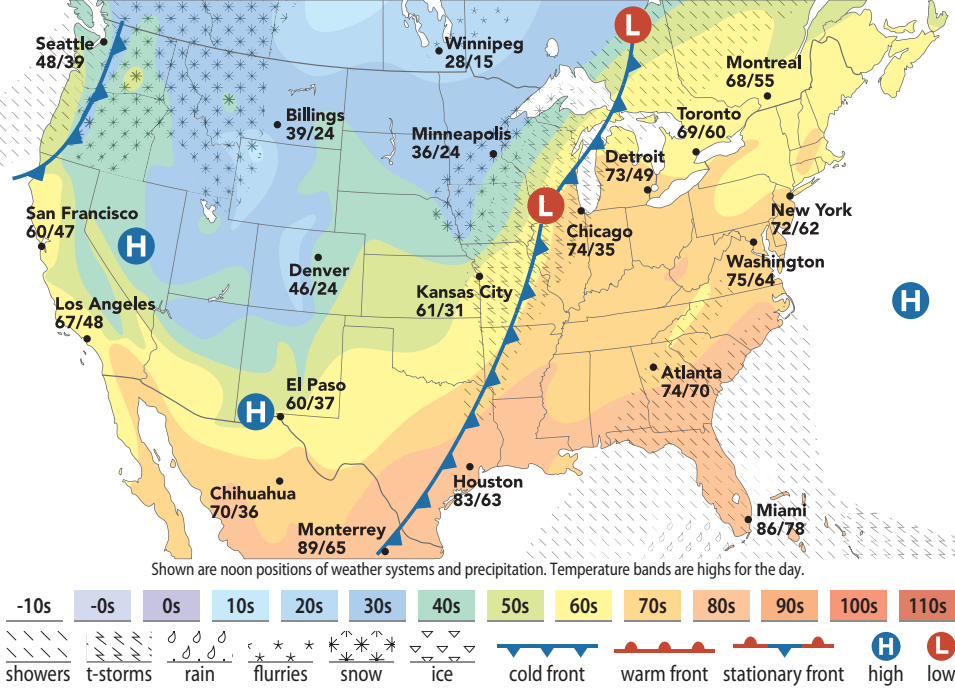
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NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 91° in Zapata, Texas Low -6° in Butte, Mont.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Police make arrest in Nov. 8 shooting

By SABRINA THOMPSON
The Observer

LA GRANDE — La Grande police arrested one man in connection to a shooting on Sunday, Nov. 8, that left another man injured.

Police Chief Gary Bell reported his department arrested Mung Trong Bui, 37, of La Grande, on suspicion of second-degree assault, unlawful use of a weapon and recklessly endangering another person. Second-degree assault is a Class B felony in Oregon. Conviction for the crime carries a mandatory minimum sentence of 70 months.

Bui is being held at the Union County Jail in La Grande.

La Grande police received a 911 call at 9:48 a.m. Nov. 8 about a disturbance between two men on Depot Street near Washington Avenue, according to police. The caller reported there had been one or more gunshots.

Members of La Grande



Sabrina Thompson/The Observer

The La Grande Police Department, Union County Sheriff's Office and Oregon State Police investigate a shooting on Sunday morning, Nov. 8, 2020, in La Grande on Depot Street near Washington Avenue. La Grande police reported arresting one man in connection to the shooting on the afternoon of Nov. 8.

police, Oregon State Police and the Union County Sheriff's Office responded. Bell reported the investigation determined Bui and Long Duc Truong, 40, of Portland, met on the morning of Nov. 8 in front of TT Nails, a salon at 108 Depot St. The two men know each other and “have a history of disagreement,” according to Bell, and during the meeting Bui fired a small caliber

handgun, striking Truong in the leg.

An ambulance took Truong to Grande Ronde Hospital, La Grande, which transferred him to an out-of-area hospital, Bell reported, but he did not have information about Truong's condition.

Police blocked off Depot Street near Washington Avenue for a number of hours during the investigation.

IN BRIEF

Walla Walla doctor has license suspended indefinitely

WALLA WALLA, Wash. — A Walla Walla physician has had his medical license indefinitely suspended.

Dr. Vrajesh K. Patel, initially licensed as an internal medicine practitioner by Washington in 2016, was charged with three counts of second-degree assault-domestic violence and two counts of domestic violence harassment for events in April, May and July of 2017.

In 2019, Patel was sentenced in Walla Walla County Superior Court to five years in prison. He is currently incarcerated at Airway Heights Corrections Center in Spokane.

On Thursday, Nov. 5, the Washington state Medical Commission said Patel can petition to have his license reinstated after he's released from prison and undergoes an evaluation.

Multiple medical authorities must find him able to practice with reasonable skill and safety and pass a clinical skills evaluation. Patel must meet with officials in person and complete an evaluation with the Washington Physicians Health Program. He must also obey all laws.

Additional monitoring could be required if Patel is able to resume a practice, and he will need to pay all associated costs, officials said.

— Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

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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