

Baker City native studying plant-based treatment for Parkinson's

Tanya Denne analyzing healing properties of the plant *Mucuna*

By LISA BRITTON
For the Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Tanya Denne, a Baker City native who has been studying a plant that could help combat Parkinson's disease, will graduate in 2021 from Bastyr University with a degree in naturopathic medicine.

While working on her doctorate, she's continued to analyze the use of *Mucuna pruriens* and its potential in treating Parkinson's disease, a disorder of the central nervous system that affects movement.

According to Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), for unknown reasons Parkinson's causes brain cells that make a chemical called dopamine to die. This leaves the brain without enough dopamine — a "neurotransmitter," or chemical messenger — to signal nerves to trigger movement.

Parkinson's worsens over time. There is no cure.

Drug treatments of levodopa/cabidopa focus on the dopamine system in the brain. According to Denne,



Contributed Photo

Tanya Denne graduated from the University of Portland and will graduate this year from Bastyr University in Seattle with a degree in naturopathic medicine.

research has determined *Mucuna* seeds contain 3% to 7% levodopa.

Denne's interest in *Mucuna* stems from a personal story — her grandmother died of Alzheimer's disease, and that inspired her to study neuroscience.

After graduating from the University of Portland, she volunteered at OHSU in Portland to study *Mucuna*

and Parkinson's.

In early 2016, she traveled to India for three months to study *Mucuna* in its native environment, and to collect seeds to study.

That same year she started attending Bastyr University in Kenmore, Washington, to pursue a doctorate in naturopathic medicine.

Now, near the end of her

academic journey, Denne credits fundraising events in Baker City for supporting her project.

"It's taken a whole community and over a decade, and a huge majority of the original funding and support started in Baker City," she said.

Mucuna progress

During her studies at

Bastyr, Denne has worked on the *Mucuna* project by finding a farmer in Hawaii who could grow the seeds she brought from India. She's also experimented with seed extracts and worked with colleagues from Bastyr and OHSU who have used the extracts in animal model studies.

"It's this really cool, multi-faceted project,"

Denne said.

She said results from the mice model showed increased tyrosine hydroxylase (TH), which suggests a neurorestorative property of the *Mucuna* extract.

Further studies are planned, with a larger sample size.

And their research is fueling other projects.

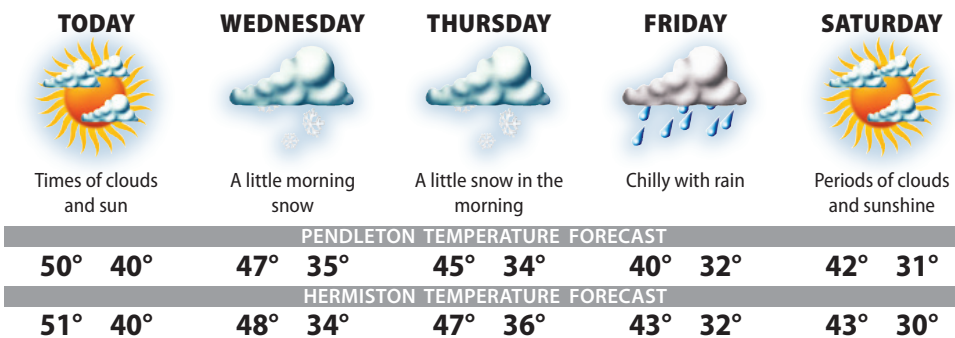
"Our research team is now collaborating with a field research project in Africa, where it is estimated that only 9% of the population has access to conventional Parkinson's medication," she said. "We're working with The Parkinson's Institute in Italy, drafting and implementing sites to grow *Mucuna* as a source of levodopa for Parkinson's treatment as a public health effort."

After graduating with her doctorate this year, Denne plans to complete a residency and wants to specialize in neuro-focused care, such as Parkinson's disease.

She'd like to eventually return to practice in Baker City.

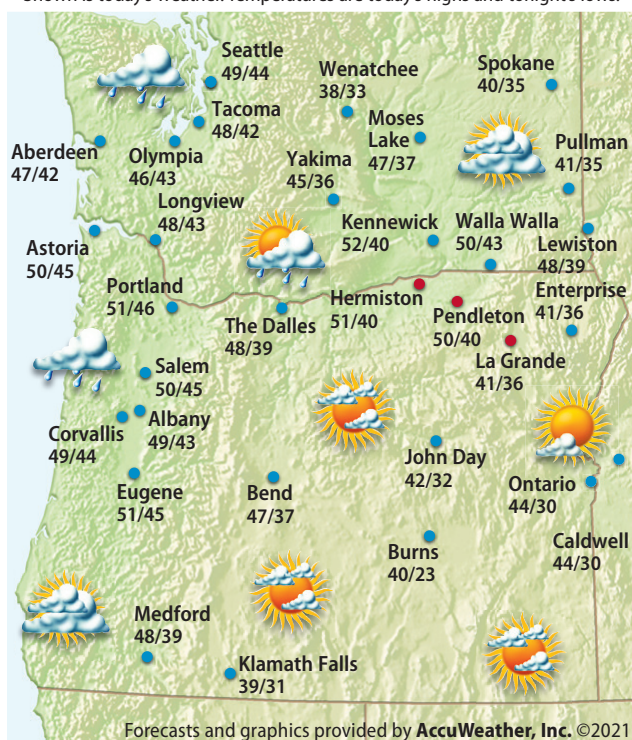
"It really does take a village, and I am grateful to be from one that embodies core values of generosity, positive change, and compassion," she said.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



ALMANAC

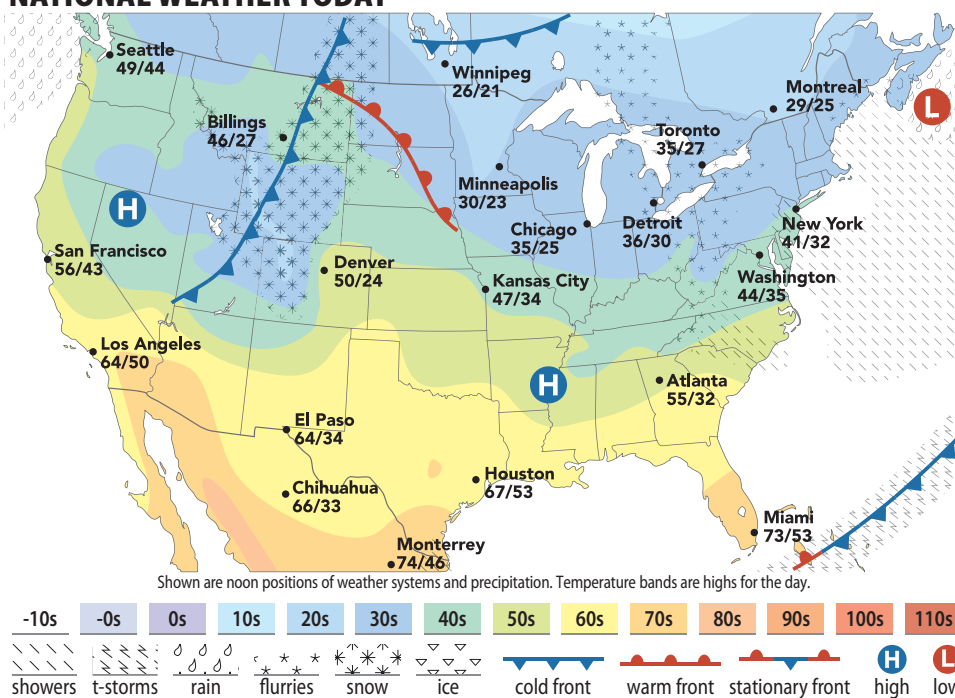
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.	
TEMP.	PRECIPITATION
Yesterday 53°	24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.10"
Normals 40°	Month to date 0.15"
Records 69° (2012) -9° (2004)	Normal month to date 0.24"
	Year to date 0.15"
	Last year to date 0.12"
	Normal year to date 0.24"
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.	
TEMP.	PRECIPITATION
Yesterday 57°	24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.09"
Normals 40°	Month to date 0.11"
Records 64° (1989) -4° (1942)	Normal month to date 0.16"
	Year to date 0.11"
	Last year to date Trace
	Normal year to date 0.16"
WINDS (in mph)	
Today SSE 4-8	Wed. SSW 4-8
Pendleton SSE 6-12	Pendleton SSE 7-14
SUN AND MOON	
Sunrise today 7:36 a.m.	Sunset tonight 4:26 p.m.
Moonrise today none	Moonset today 11:35 a.m.
MOON PHASES	
Last New Jan 6	First Full Jan 28
New Jan 12	Full Jan 20

NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 85° in Zapata, Texas Low -9° in Angel Fire, N.M.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Man suspected in string of thefts arrested

Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

WALLA WALLA, Wash. — Washington police arrested a Walla Walla man just on Saturday, Jan. 2, who is suspected of stealing from at least 10 victims in the area, police reported on Sunday, Jan. 3.

Antonio Ramon Lomeli, 22, of Walla Walla, is being held in the Walla Walla County Jail on \$2,900 bail under investigation for second-degree burglary, first-degree theft, first-degree stolen property possession, five counts of second-degree stolen property

possession, unlawful possession of another's ID card, trafficking in stolen property, violation of controlled substance laws for methamphetamine and fentanyl, possession of drug paraphernalia and third-degree driving with a suspended license.

A Walla Walla officer saw Ramon Lomeli at the Isaacs Street Chevron at about 12:20 a.m. on Jan. 2, and knew the man had warrants for his arrest, according to police.

When officers stopped Ramon Lomeli to arrest him for the warrants, they noticed tools in his vehicle that matched those from thefts reported on Friday, Jan. 1. He was also fingered as a suspect from surveillance footage of a recent burglary.

Officers secured a search warrant for the vehicle and on Jan. 3 reportedly discovered inside the stolen property from at least 10 local victims of vehicle prowls or burglaries.

Detectives from the street crimes unit have reached eight victims as of midday Jan. 3 and were still trying to contact others to get property returned, according to the release.

IN BRIEF

Union County mountain rescue ends well

UNION COUNTY — Search and rescue teams from Baker and Union counties on Sunday, Dec. 27, reunited a pair of cougar hunters with their family.

The Baker County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Team reported it received a request in the early hours of Dec. 27 to assist with the search for overdue hunters in Union County in the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest.

Friends of the hunters had been searching throughout the night and located their snowmobile on the 860 Road just north of the 77 Road. The Baker County SAR Team responded to the Taylor Green area off the Forest Service 77 Road, and Union County Search and Rescue established an emergency operations center.

Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash and Lt. Ryan Downing set off in a tracked all-terrain vehicle to find the missing hunters, but neither that machine nor the snowmobile could go further due to the terrain and dense trees. The sheriff and lieutenant then continued on foot, following the missing pair's tracks in the deep snow.

Union County launched another team, and friends of the family joined the effort using snowmobiles.

Ash located the pair a little after 9 a.m. on Dec. 27 in a deep canyon. They were cold and tired but uninjured, according to reports from the sheriff's offices. The emergency operations center crew used mapping technology to help the Union County team maneuver to the group. The tracked ATV transported Ash,

Downing and the hunters to the staging area, where they were reunited with relieved family members.

Oregon health care worker hospitalized after allergic reaction to COVID-19 vaccine

ENTERPRISE — A health care worker in Oregon was hospitalized after having a severe allergic reaction to the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, according to the Oregon Health Authority.

The worker, an employee at Wallowa Memorial Hospital, experienced anaphylaxis after receiving a first dose of the vaccine last week, officials said.

The health authority said vaccines for COVID-19 can cause mild to moderate side effects in some people. This can include pain and swelling on the arm and sometimes fever, chills, tiredness and headache.

"The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that in rare cases, some people have experienced severe allergic reactions after getting a COVID-19 vaccine," health officials said in a press release. "An allergic reaction is considered severe when a person needs to be treated with epinephrine or EpiPen, or if they must go to the hospital."

Health officials will continue to track adverse reactions to the COVID-19 vaccines. So far, 38,698 doses of the COVID-19 vaccines — 26,639 of Pfizer-BioNTech and 12,054 of Moderna — have been administered in Oregon since the week of Dec. 13, officials said.

— EO Media Group

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.

EAST OREGONIAN
— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —
211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays

EastOregonian.com
In the App Store:

East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801.
Copyright © 2021, EO Media Group

Circulation Dept.
For mail delivery, online access, vacation stops or delivery concerns call 800-781-3214

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

	Local home delivery	Savings (cover price)
EZPay	\$9.75/month	50 percent
52 weeks	\$135	42 percent
26 weeks	\$71	39 percent
13 weeks	\$37	36 percent

*EZ Pay = one-year rate with a monthly credit or debit card/check charge

Single copy price:
\$1.50 Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

ADVERTISING
Regional Sales Director (Eastside) EO Media Group:
• Karrine Brogotti
541-963-3161 • kbrogotti@eomediagroup.com

Advertising Manager:
• Angela Treadwell
541-966-0827 • atreadwell@eastoregonian.com

Multimedia Consultants:
• Kelly Schwirer
541-564-4531 • kschwirer@eastoregonian.com
• Audra Workman
541-564-4538 • aworkman@eastoregonian.com

Business Office
• Dayle Stinson
541-966-0824 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

Classified & Legal Advertising
1-800-962-2819 or 541-278-2678
classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legals@eastoregonian.com

NEWS
• To submit news tips and press releases: call 541-966-0818 or email news@eastoregonian.com
• To submit community events, calendar items and Your EO News: email community@eastoregonian.com or call Renee Struthers at 541-966-0818.
• To submit engagements, weddings and anniversaries: email rstruthers@eastoregonian.com or visit eastoregonian.com/community/announcements
• To submit sports or outdoors information or tips: 541-966-0838 • sports@eastoregonian.com

COMMERCIAL PRINTING
Commercial Print Manager: Holly Rouska
541-617-7839 • hrouska@eomediagroup.com