

A young cowpoke watches the start of the Western Select Ranch Horses Preview in the Round-Up Pavilion on Saturday, May 1, 2021. Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

WEEKEND EDITION

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Republican feud surfaces with new bill

Introduced legislation targets colleagues' roles in state GOP

By **BRYCE DOLE, JAYSON JACOBY and GARY WARNER**
EO Media Group

SALEM — A long-simmering feud among Oregon Senate Republicans surfaced on Wednesday, May 5, with the introduction of a bill pitting the main factions of the 11-person caucus against each other.

Senate Bill 865, co-sponsored by Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, and Sen. Lynn Findley, R-Vale, would make it a fineable offense to serve simultaneously as a state office-



Hansell



Heard



Findley



Linthicum

holder and an officer of a state central committee of a political party. Violators would be fined \$250 per day. The bill has a clause that would make it law as soon as it was signed by the governor.

While generic in its official language, the bill's most immediate effect is to challenge Sen. Dallas Heard, R-Roseburg, who earlier this year was elected chair of the Oregon Republican Party. It would

also take aim at Sen. Dennis Linthicum, R-Klamath Falls, a Heard ally who was elected the state GOP party treasurer.

The bill says it was introduced "at the request of Malheur, Baker and Morrow Counties Republican Executive Committees."

Hansell said he was recently contacted by a group of mostly Republicans regarding Heard and Linthicum. The group voiced

concerns about whether the state's strict ethics and campaign laws permit their election, telling Hansell that "you're walking a fine line when you wear two hats," he said.

Hansell said that he and his colleagues sought advice from co-legislative counsel who said there was potential for ethics violations for the senators elected to the committee. He added that the bill would mirror laws in other states.

'You make a choice'

The move for the bill, Hansell said, became especially motivated when Heard voted "no" in protest of all the bills in the committee, which include bills to fight child pornography and sex trafficking that have received widespread

Republican support.

"When you're representing the ORP, are you just representing Douglas County? Are you representing the state?" Hansell said. "Enough people said, 'He doesn't represent me and he's making these statements and making these votes, and we need to have some separation.' It reached the point where we had Republican folks supporting a bill like this, and because of the priority deadline Sen. Findley used a priority bill to move it."

Hansell said the response from Republicans so far has been mostly positive, but the move has nonetheless upset some officers from the ORP.

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Hermiston police officer undergoes surgery for brain tumors

By **BRYCE DOLE**
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — A lieutenant with the Hermiston Police Department underwent a procedure this week to remove two brain tumors identified by medical professionals just days before, according to Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston.



Studebaker

Randy Studebaker, the department's sole lieutenant, informed Edmiston about a week ago that he was beginning to have vision problems. Studebaker first went to an eye doctor before going to the emergency room on April 29. The following day, he went to a neurologist who discovered that Studebaker had developed two brain tumors that would need an immediate procedure, Edmiston said.

"I know that every person in this department's concerned about his short-term health and long-term health as well," Edmiston said.

Between 60 to 80 friends and family gathered in a prayer circle at the Hermiston Police Department on Tuesday, May 4, before Studebaker was transported to a clinic in the Tri-Cities for his procedure,

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EO SPOTLIGHT



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Firefighters use a hose and hand tools to try to douse a hotspot while mopping up a brush fire near Southeast Nye Avenue in Pendleton on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

Conditions raise fire concerns

Much of Eastern Oregon has formally declared a drought disaster

By **BRYCE DOLE**
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The fire started when a wire detached from a power pole, igniting the grass near Perkins Avenue and 17th Place in Pendleton on Wednesday, May 5. Then, the snapped wire's electrical current met the ground behind the Red Lion Hotel, starting a second fire.

Firefighters eventually contained the blaze, but Pendleton Fire Chief Jim Critchley said if conditions were even slightly drier, it may have been a different story.

"We're lucky today because we still have some green in our

grasses," he said. "But if this were to happen later on in the season, that would have caused a bigger problem."

Some Eastern Oregon fire chiefs are concerned that the county's already dry conditions could lead to an increased risk of vegetation fires heading into a summer where drought is consuming much of Oregon.

"We've been worried about this for a while," Critchley said. "We've got flash fuels. So they're going to move fast, especially right now when everything's (growing) or is just starting to dry out."

Boardman Fire Chief Mike Hughes said his team is currently responding to roughly four vegetation fires each week in the Boardman and Irrigon areas. Critchley said Pendleton firefighters are responding to "one or two a week."

"We've been running to vegetation fires every day," Hughes

said. "Every single day we're on controlled burns that have gotten out of control because the winds came up."

Critchley and Hughes each said fires are occurring earlier this season than normal, attributing it to this year's lack of moisture.

"This is early in the season, so we're a little bit concerned that, already, we're catching these little grass fires so early," Hughes said. "Because you remember what happened last year in Oregon. The whole other part of the state tried to burn down."

Umatilla County Fire District Chief Scott Stanton said he has yet to notice an uptick in vegetation fires in his district, which covers areas around Hermiston and Stanfield, but added he had not taken a look at the recent data. He added with the predictions showing a drier, warmer summer,

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Cooking show highlights tribal traditions

'Top Chef' gets a taste of the CTUIR's First Foods

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

CASCADE LOCKS — For its 18th season, "Top Chef" tried to make the most of its Oregon location.

Throughout the reality cooking show competition, chefs from around the country were asked to cook with craft beer from Portland, fruit from Hood River and wine from the Willamette Valley.

But for the season's sixth episode, which premiered on Thursday, May 6, the production ventured from Portland to Cascade Locks, where contestants were challenged to work with ingredients that predate Oregon's status as an American territory, much less a state — the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's First Foods.

The First Foods — water, fish, wild game, roots and berries — are not only cuisine, but a fundamental aspect of life for the Umatilla, Walla Walla and Cayuse peoples since "time immemorial," a collection of foods that inform the Tribes' yearly activities and rituals and a motivating factor in the CTUIR's environmental protection efforts.

Behind the scenes with the CTUIR

During the first half of the episode, the chefs blindly selected a knife labeled with a fish or meat, and then were ordered to pair with another contestant to make a surf and turf dish revolving around the theme of First Foods.

Several chefs remarked about the pressure they felt, not only

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