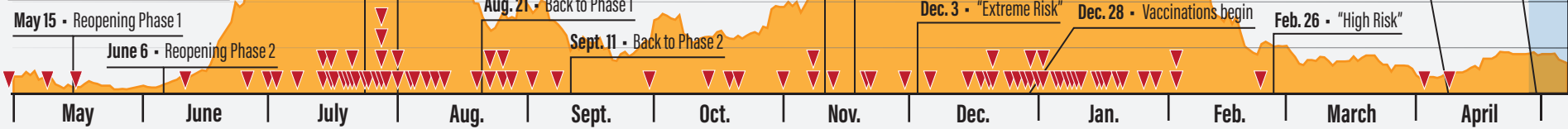


UMATILLA COUNTY COVID-19 TREND - AS OF MAY 7

Umatilla County cases: **8,130** (51 new cases this week)
 Umatilla County deaths: **84** (0 new deaths reported this week)
 Oregon cases: **189,986** (5,174 new cases this week)
 Oregon deaths: **2,522** (27 new deaths reported this week)

Umatilla County vaccinations: **3,101** in progress, **16,803** complete (as of 12:01 a.m. 05/07/2021)

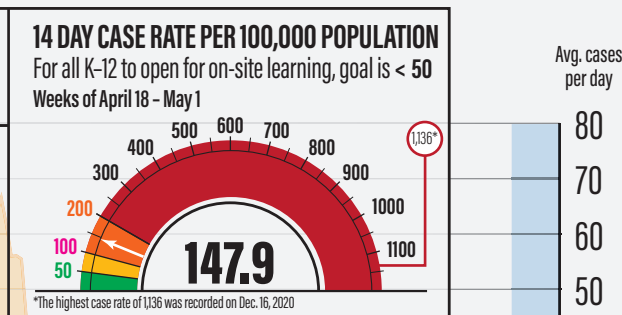
LEGEND
 7 DAY AVERAGE DEATHS LAST 10 DAYS*
*Cases in this time period may not yet be reported
 SOURCES: OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY, UMATILLA COUNTY HEALTH



East Oregonian graphic by Andy Nicolais

TEST POSITIVITY RATE		
For all K-12 to open for on-site learning, goal is < 5% (Number of positive tests divided by number of people tested)		
Time Period	Umatilla County	Oregon
April 18 - May 1	5.0%	6.4%
April 11 - 24	5.1%	5.7%
April 4 - 17	4.7%	5.1%

Source: Oregon Health Authority. Percentages may change week to week as data is updated.



Authorities to hold search for missing Idaho woman

The Observer

MEACHAM — Umatilla County Search and Rescue and Oregon State Police are coordinating a two-day multiagency search set to begin on Saturday, May 8, near Meacham for Deborah Hendrichs, the 56-year-old woman from Star, Idaho, who went missing in the area on Jan. 11.

The search will concentrate on areas surrounding the eastbound side of Interstate 84 near milepost 238, where her abandoned vehi-

cle was found after she was reported missing, according to a press release from the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office. Search areas include portions along I-84, Hancock Road, the railroad and bridge and area creeks, bodies of water and wooded land.

The objective of the search is to locate any remains of Hendrichs or any items she may have had with her at the time of her disappearance.

"This will be a robust search response with multiple agencies involved," the release said. "Approximately

90 personnel have committed to assist in the search, including possibly 10 K-9 teams, four drones and about 35 ground searchers. The actual number will not be known until participants check in on (May 8)."

The sheriff's office also is asking the general public to remain out of the area unless they are residents and requesting that hunters with spring turkey or bear tags be aware there are searchers in the area and to

choose an alternate hunt location during those days. And locals living in the area, especially near Meacham Lake, should be aware the search will use four drones.

"The drones will not be concentrating on occupied areas or invading privacy of homes or curtilage," according to the press release. "They will be concentrating on areas away from occupied buildings and bodies of water. Searchers on the ground will also be

staying away from occupied homes and curtilage, however if a home appears to have been vacant throughout the winter or looks broken into, they will notify the land owner in an attempt to eliminate any possibility that she entered an unoccupied residence or structure seeking assistance."

Personnel with the Oregon Department of Transportation and Union Pacific Railroad have provided a liaison to ensure safety of the search personnel because the area includes the interstate and railroad lines. ODOT also

provided the location for an incident command post.

Union Pacific Railroad, Cunningham Sheep Company and Hancock Timber Resource Group have been contacted and are cooperating with searchers because these businesses own a large portion of the search area.

Sheriff's Lt. Sterrin Ward said the project includes the development of a website on this mission at sterrinward.wixsite.com/website. The website also is where the mission will provide updates.



Hendrichs

City council to consider grant program

By JADE MCDOWELL
 East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The Hermiston City Council will hear a proposal during its Monday, May 10, meeting to help get local restaurants back on their feet.

Instead of a straightforward grant, the program would use gift certificates paid for by the city. The idea is to not only provide cash directly from the city, but also to provide people incentive to return to eating at restaurants, likely bringing more paying customers with them when they do.

According to the proposal by Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan, the city already did something similar with Hermiston Cinemas and Desert Lanes Family Fun Center last year. The city had partnered with Umatilla County to offer cash grants to small businesses affected by the pandemic, and when fewer than expected applied, they used some of the extra money to purchase large quantities of gift certificates from the movie theater and bowling alley.

The result was upfront cash for those businesses when they needed it to stay afloat during closures, Morgan said, but also boosted sales later as, for example, a child took their parents with them, or someone who had a gift certificate for a movie ticket purchased concessions while there.

"Those gift certificates have been getting pushed



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File

Rasna Som, 10, bowls at Desert Lanes Family Fun Center in Hermiston on Monday, June 8, 2020. The city purchased gift certificates to support the business during the summer of 2020, and could apply the same strategy to restaurants.

IF YOU GO

The city council meeting will be at 7 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395. The meeting will also be livestreamed on the city of Hermiston YouTube page. The full agenda packet for the meeting can be found at hermiston.or.us/meetings.

out to the community through the Parks & Rec and Library programs, and the overall arrangement has been well received by the participating businesses," he wrote in a memo to the city council.

He is proposing the city do something similar through restaurants, although in this case the city would pay the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce a 10% administrative fee to

administer the program on the city's behalf. Morgan is proposing the city pay for \$50,000 worth of \$10 gift certificates, which could be handed out through the parks department, library, chamber and to utility customers.

The council will also consider a supplemental budget, which is used near the end of the fiscal year to add in large, unexpected expenses that weren't origi-

nally included in the budget at the beginning of the year.

It will also consider a proposal to lease some of the city's currently unused water allocations from the Regional Water System to agricultural users, on a year-by-year basis.

The agenda also includes an intergovernmental agreement between Hermiston, Umatilla, Stanfield, Echo and Umatilla County to more closely work together on projects that benefit the whole of western Umatilla County. The main provision of the agreement is for all parties to split the cost of the contract that Hermiston currently has with Pac/West, which provides lobbying, public relations and other services for the city.

Arrest made after brief chase, fight

By BRYCE DOLE
 East Oregonian

PENDLETON — A man was arrested on charges of burglary, theft, criminal mischief, escape and resisting arrest on Sunday, May 2, after a brief chase resulted in a fight with police officers that left both the man and an officer with minor injuries, according to a press release from Pendleton Police Chief Charles Byram.

Police on April 26 began investigating a reported burglary that occurred at Highly Active, a tobacco shop in downtown Pendleton on 318 South Main St. Three longboards, each priced at \$160, were stolen from the business and a window was smashed, with damages estimated at approximately \$1,500, the press release said. Later, in the early hours of May 2, a police officer recognized a man he knew to be Colten Kee Nez, 31, carrying a longboard in the parking area of The Marigold Hotel on 105 Southeast Court Avenue in Pendleton. Nez fled on foot and left the longboard behind. Police lost Nez, but the longboard was confirmed as one of the three stolen from Highly Active, the press release said.

That same day, Pendleton police located Nez at the Marigold and attempted to arrest him, but Nez resisted arrest and fled, the press release said.

Three officers, two from Pendleton and one from Umatilla Tribal Police, chased Nez to the laundry room of the apartments above Virgil's at Cimmiyotti's at 137 South Main St. Nez, who Byram said is a large man trained in mixed martial arts, fought back as police tried to hold him down and make the arrest.

While Nez struggled, a knife fell from his waistband and injured an officer, but medical attention was not needed, the press release said. "This could have ended badly for everyone involved," Byram said.

Nez received medical attention and was admitted to St. Anthony Hospital due to concerns over his use of a controlled substance and complaints of pains to his side after the fight, according to Byram, who added that police hadn't learned of any injuries to Nez.

Nez was later released from the hospital and was arrested on charges of second-degree burglary, first-degree criminal mischief, second-degree theft, two counts of second-degree escape and two counts of resisting arrest, the press release said. He was booked in the Umatilla County Jail with bail set at \$55,000, according to the jail's website.

The case will now be turned over to the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office, the press release said.

LOCAL BRIEFING

Woodlands association offers spring field day

PENDLETON — The Umatilla/Morrow Chapter of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association is inviting forest landowners to its Spring 2021 Field Day on Saturday, May 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 55381 Albee Road near Ukiah.

The main highlight will be a fuels reduction thinning work demonstration on-site with several contractors showing various pieces of equipment to assist in reducing wildfire risks on private forest lands.

There will also be an update from both the Oregon Department of Forestry and the Natural Resources Conservation Service on future funding sources to accomplish fuels reduction thinning, an update on the timber and log prices in the area, and the benefits of becoming a member of the Oregon Small Woodland Owners Association.

Lunch will be provided, and a number of items will be raffled off during the event. Participants are requested to dress accordingly for walking on forest roads and in the forest.

For more information, call Hans Rudolf at 541-276-3491.

CTUIR will allow people who test positive for marijuana to obtain tribal housing

MISSION — The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have removed a barrier to obtaining tribal housing.

In a Tuesday, May 4, press release, the Tribes announced they had amended their housing department's drug elimination policy to allow tribal members to test positive for marijuana during the application process.

The press release noted that cannabis was still illegal on the reservation, but changing the policy was an acknowledgment that marijuana was legal to consume in Oregon and Washington and THC, one of the active ingredients in cannabis, can stay in a person's system for weeks or longer.

The rule is narrow in application: The CTUIR will screen for drugs during the application process, and drugs that are illegal under federal or tribal law still can't be possessed or consumed while living in tribal housing.

— EO Media Group