

Search and rescue teams finish training

East Oregonian

ENTERPRISE — Search and Rescue team members from Wallowa, Union, Baker and Umatilla counties honed their skills in the Salt Creek Summit area of Wallowa County.

About 60 SAR volunteers and instructors from the four counties participated June 24-27 in the multi-day training, which was hosted by Wallowa County Search and Rescue volunteers.

“Our numbers were down a little from what we expected, but it’s a little late in the season,” Paige Sully, the event coordinator for Wallowa County SAR, said. “But all in all I think it was great.”

Training included swiftwater rescue, tactical fast tracking, advanced incident command, hasty-team and K-9 land searches, rescuing injured hikers from remote locations and coordination with Civil Air Patrol aircraft.

“It was a very good training,” said Jim Akenson, who serves as a WCSAR incident commander and participated in the incident command training. “It was fundamental and advanced all rolled into one. As an incident commander, it’s good to see more and more people coming on who can take leadership roles. Everybody I observed did really well.”

June 26 was devoted to classes, most with hands-on field experience.

Tactical tracking, taught by Clifford Pease and Leon Kershaw,



Ellen Morris Bishop/Contributed Photo

Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office tracker Leon Kershaw, center, shows search and rescue volunteers Miles McFall, left, and Heather Howard how to interpret a “flag” or track Saturday, June 26, 2021, in the Salt Creek Summit area of Wallowa County.

proved one of the more popular classes. Both men track suspects and escaped prisoners for the Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office and other law enforcement agencies. Their “fast tracking” tech-

niques have allowed them to follow and apprehend escaped convicts more than 40 miles in three days.

“It’s important to pay attention to the small things that people leave along their path, including

actual tracks as well as bent twigs, scuffs and other (sign),” Pease said. “It’s often possible to determining a general path and send a team ahead along that line to pick up (tracks) farther ahead and close the

time-distance gap. You can find the lost person quicker that way.”

The trackers also worked with Wallowa County’s two tracking K-9 teams — Heather Howard and her dog Gracie, and Edward “Vern” Vernarsky and his dog Trooper.

“I really thought the tracking class was great,” said Holly Akenson, Wallowa County Search and Rescue K-9 team leader. “There were a lot of really good on-the-ground things.”

Swiftwater rescue training, led by a team of instructors from Wallowa County, took place in the pond near Salt Creek Summit. Volunteers fine-tuned skills that included accurately throwing rescue ropes.

Search and rescue hasty, medical and K-9 teams coordinated by incident command and SAR members from multiple counties spread out in a mock search and rescue exercise June 27 in the Salt Creek Summit area. Civil Air Patrol brought in two aircraft — one from Boise and another from Redmond — to aid in searching for several “lost hikers,” some of whom were “injured.” The search and rescue efforts all were successful within the three hours allotted for the exercise.

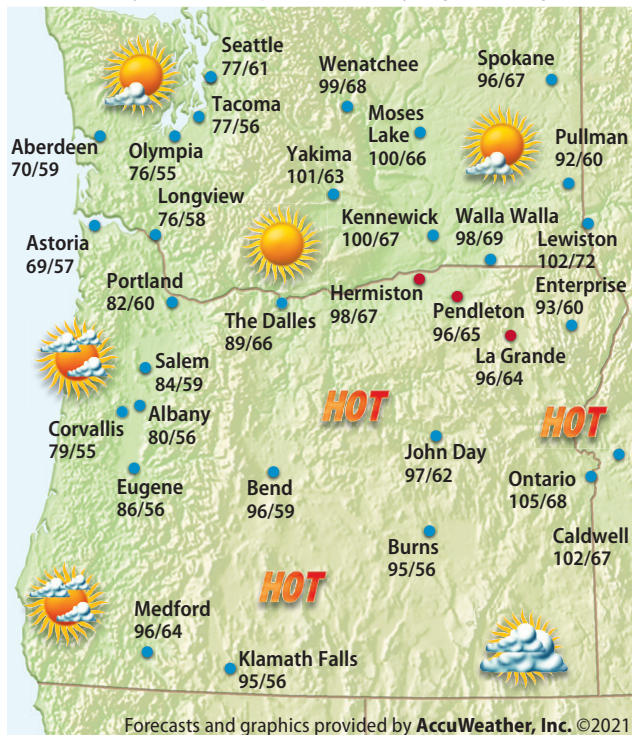
“Learning to work with and practicing with our neighboring counties for mutual aid just makes us more ready when we have a big search and we all need to work together,” Akenson said. “This way we all know each other, we’ve worked together, and I think that’s really beneficial.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
HOT	HOT	HOT		HOT
Mostly sunny and very hot	Sunshine and very hot	Blazing sunshine and very hot	Very warm with blazing sunshine	Very hot; breezy in the p.m.
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
96° 65°	98° 65°	101° 69°	97° 69°	96° 64°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
98° 67°	100° 67°	103° 71°	101° 72°	99° 64°

OREGON FORECAST

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



ALMANAC

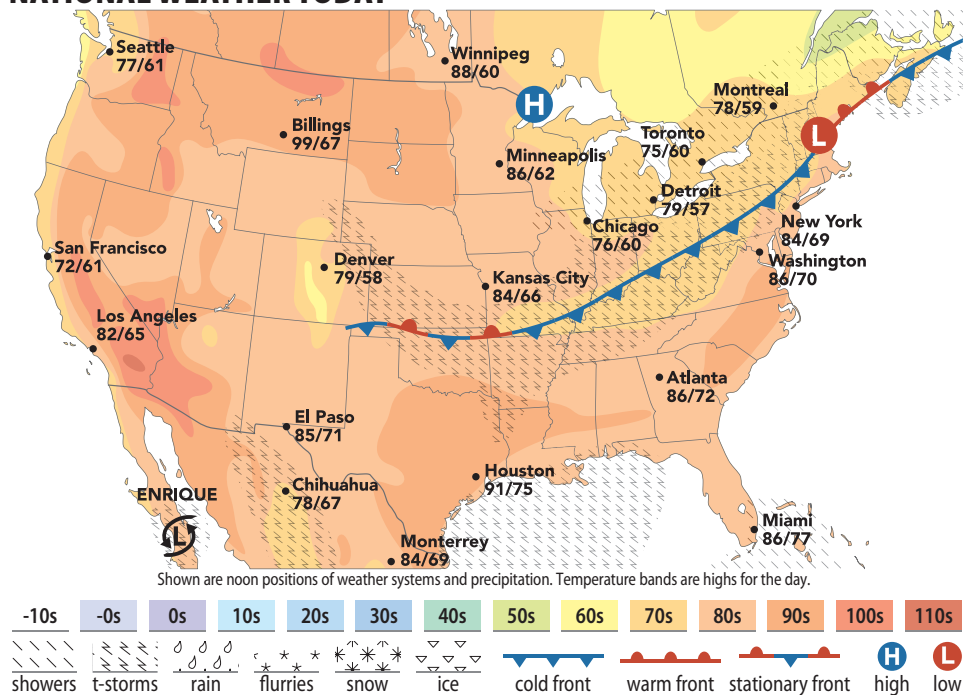
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	103°	75°
Normals	84°	55°
Records	108° (1924)	36° (1898)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.28"	
Normal month to date	1.06"	
Year to date	4.31"	
Last year to date	8.57"	
Normal year to date	7.57"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	107°	82°
Normals	84°	56°
Records	107° (2021)	38° (1949)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.23"	
Normal month to date	0.59"	
Year to date	1.93"	
Last year to date	1.65"	
Normal year to date	5.70"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Fri.	
Boardman	SW 10-20	SW 7-14
Pendleton	W 7-14	WNW 6-12
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	5:10 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	8:48 p.m.	
Moonrise today	12:50 a.m.	
Moonset today	12:55 p.m.	

NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 113° in Lewiston, Idaho Low 34° in Dillon, Colo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



A ‘major step in the right direction’

Higher ed leaders see funding, new bills as positives for institutions

By MEERAH POWELL
Oregon Public Broadcasting

SALEM — Oregon’s public universities and community colleges will receive the full amounts of funding they requested from the state.

The passage of a higher education budget bill as the Oregon Legislature wrapped up its work over the weekend gives the public universities \$900 million and the community colleges about \$703 million for the upcoming two-year budget period. Those funds will be distributed to the individual institutions by the state’s Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

“As Oregon moves forward out of the pandemic, wildfire devastation and impact on the economy, our 17 community colleges stand ready to support students

as they upskill, reskill and achieve their academic goals in pursuit of a rewarding career,” Cam Preus, executive director of the Oregon Community College Association, said in a statement.

Last December, Gov. Kate Brown recommended public universities receive about \$836 million, while community colleges were slated to get \$641 million — about \$60 million less for both sets of institutions than the now-legislatively approved budget.

Along with meeting the institutions’ full budget requests, Oregon higher education also saw some other advancements this legislative session — including bills focused on the success of underrepresented students.

“The 2021 session was a much needed bright spot for Oregon’s public university students,” said Tom Insko, president of Eastern Oregon University and chair of the

Oregon Council of Presidents.

Insko said in a statement that the Legislature not only made investments into

university operations and financial aid programs, but also pushed forward policies including “basic needs navigators, streamlined transfer of credits and a task force to look at how best to serve underrepresented students.”

HECC Executive Director Ben Cannon said in a statement that the Legislature also funded projects to update and renovate campus buildings around the state, expanded college access programs and supported the modernization of the technology the state uses to administer financial aid to students.

“We have a long way to go to create a truly equitable and accessible system of education and training after high school, but this session represented a major step in the right direction,” Cannon said.



Insko



Preus

IN BRIEF

Baker City mayor running for governor

BAKER CITY — Baker City Mayor Kerry McQuisten is aiming for a much higher political office — Oregon governor.

McQuisten, 49, who is a Republican, has announced a gubernatorial campaign for 2022.

Oregon’s governor, Democrat Kate Brown, can’t run in 2022 due to term limits.

On her campaign website — kerrymcquisten.com — McQuisten writes: “Campaigns always claim that change is needed. This time, it couldn’t be more true!”



McQuisten

Oregonians need a leader who will get our children back in school, fight for medical freedoms, protect our individual constitutional rights, prevent criminals from burning and destroying our once-flourishing cities, remind Oregonians of their inherent pioneer spirit, and prevent the kind of rule we’ve seen from ever happening again.”

McQuisten was elected to the Baker City Council in November 2020.

Her fellow councilors elected her as mayor in January 2021 (in Baker City’s form of government, elected councilors, not voters, choose the mayor).

—EO Media Group

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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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