

Cracking through the heat

Lightning cracks Wednesday, June 30, 2021, over the fields north of Pendleton as a summer storm rolls through the region on the heels of a record-breaking heat wave.

Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

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Caution remains a must for many

Umatilla County to keep contact tracing center open for two more years

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

UMATILLA COUNTY —The impacts of COVID-19 in Umatilla County will last much longer than the laws set up to contain it.

On Thursday, July 1, the state lifted the lion's share of its COVID-19 restrictions, meaning social distancing and mask requirements were lifted in almost all settings.

The following day, Umatilla County Board of Commissioners Chair George Murdock said he learned the county's contact tracing center will need to stay open for another two years. As the state leaves behind the remnants of the COVID-19 lockdown, Umatilla County will have to figure out how to protect a population that's overexposed and undervaccinated.

Alisha Lundgren, Umatilla County deputy health director,

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Lundgren



Murdock



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Tour guide Becky Ramirez explains the history of the Shamrock Card Room Thursday, July 1, 2021, during a tour of the Pendleton Underground. With the June 30 end of COVID-19 restrictions, Pendleton Underground Tours lifted its mask requirements.

Mask on, mask off

Downtown Pendleton businesses vary in COVID-19 guidelines as state mandates end

By BRYCE DOLE
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — When Brooke Armstrong heard about Oregon lifting its pandemic restrictions on Wednesday, June 30, she said she felt little relief. Over time, she's grown numb to the constant changes, dreading what might come next.

"I would say I was super, super excited," said Armstrong, the executive director of Pendleton Underground Tours. "But I don't really have much reaction anymore."

Pendleton Underground, one of the

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Charlie Herrington, right, plays a small guitar Thursday, July 1, 2021, during a demonstration for Sandee Haskett at Pendleton Music Co. in downtown Pendleton. The business has chosen to continue to require customers and staff to wear masks following the end of the statewide mask mandate on June 30.

Man dies from heat stroke in Hermiston trailer park

By BRYCE DOLE
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — The first person in Umatilla County to reportedly die from a heat-related illness amid the record-breaking heat wave was a man who suffered from heat stroke in his trailer in Hermiston on June 24, according to Umatilla County Medical Examiner Aimee Rogers.

James Anfeldt, 47, of Spokane, was found by his 6-year-old son

who was living with him in a trailer at Panelview RV Park, according to Rogers. The boy thought his father was sleeping all day before he requested help from a neighbor, she said.

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office responded to the report of a little boy requesting medical assistance that day, according to sheriff's Lt. Sterrin Ward. The boy, soaked in sweat, flagged down the deputies at around 6:30 p.m., officials said.

Deputies found Anfeldt dead on the floor of the trailer, Rogers said. By that time, Anfeldt's trailer had reached about 130 degrees.

Rogers said he likely died the night before.

Anfeldt had been working as a construction worker in Pendleton and had hypertension, Rogers said. She said she suspects he suffered external hyperthermia due to working long hours in the heat that exacerbated an electrolyte imbalance and contributed

to his death.

Temperatures in Hermiston and Pendleton on June 24 were in the 90s, according to the National Weather Service in Pendleton.

Anfeldt was one of 95 heat-related deaths the Oregon State Medical Examiner reported during the heatwave that has scorched the Pacific Northwest the past week. According to the Oregonian/OregonLive, he is the first identified victim of the heatwave in Oregon.



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