

# Eastern Oregon Film Festival prepares for 12th rendition

By DAVIS CARBAUGH  
The Observer

LA GRANDE — As fall approaches, so too does one of La Grande's growing arts traditions.

The 12th presentation of the Eastern Oregon Film Festival is slated for a hybrid presentation this year, with in-person and virtual events for Oct. 21-23. Prior to festival passes going on sale, a virtual sneak peek fundraiser is on Wednesday, Sept. 15.

"We're going to pull back a bit and be safe about things," Eastern Oregon Film Festival Director Chris Jennings said.

A big alteration to this year's film festival will be the limited availability of in-person passes for only official EOFF members and visiting artists. This decision comes in the wake of the surge in COVID-19 cases and uncertainty of venue availability.

"For us to be able to manage the festival this year, we have to limit that all-access festival pass to just our members," Jennings said. "Because we've had such a large response in artists who are coming, we need to make sure we can serve up the festival in-person to visiting artists and major members as well as having everything else available online virtually."



Jesse Cimon, left, Ryan Edvalson, center, and Chris Jennings pause for a portrait April 23, 2021, at the performing arts venue HQ in La Grande. The Eastern Oregon Film Festival organizers are prepared to manage the 2021 festival in the safest way possible.

Festival passes for in-person access now are available on the festival's website, while virtual passes will be available to purchase online starting Sept. 17. The sneak peek fundraiser event marks the deadline for festival sponsorship opportunities. Further details on streaming the event will be available at [www.eofilmfest.com](http://www.eofilmfest.com).

Despite the hurdles COVID-19 presents, Jennings is happy with how the festival has grown in popularity. The festival is

showing more films than ever this year and received its largest number of submissions. Visiting filmmakers contributed 40 short films and 13 feature films to this year's exhibition. Jennings already is expecting at least 30 visiting filmmakers to present their works in person in La Grande.

"We have a lot of interest on the filmmaking side, so hopefully we can make a nice networking party for the visitors and engage them with our members while still

distributing a program that works virtually," he said.

Like many events and organizations in the area, EOFF is rolling with the punches when it comes to COVID-19. After having hosted the festival virtually last year, Jennings is confident in the festival's technical setup and infrastructure available to present a quality product this time around. In addition to the pandemic, venue accessibility is playing a role this year.

With construction

Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group, File

continuing at the Liberty Theatre, Jennings is crossing his fingers the space will be ready to host viewings in just over a month. He expects the festival will use a pop-up screen and may have to acquire a special occupancy permit to hold showings at the venue. The film festival also will utilize the McKenzie Theatre and Schwarz Theatre at Eastern Oregon University, as well as the Lodge at Hot Lake Springs and HQ on Depot Street in downtown La Grande. The venues

have varying capacity limits ranging from 60 at Hot Lake to more than 400 at Eastern Oregon, which is causing headaches in planning.

"That's why we wanted to limit it to members and that way we can plan ahead for the capacity at all our venues," Jennings said. "Then, if it's safe and things are good and we can do it, we'll open a day-of box office for the films and things going down."

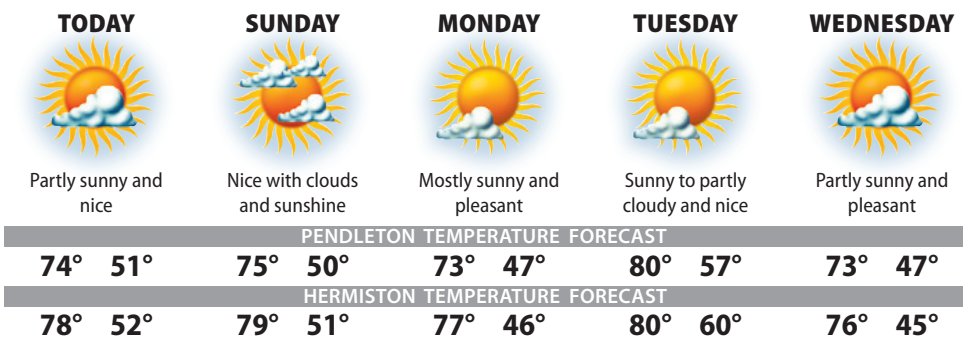
Jennings said the festival will take it one step at a time and determine in-person availability in October. Once the total number of member passes and visiting filmmakers can be determined, in-person tickets for nonmembers may come available.

"We will have an in-person festival," Jennings said. "It will be an artists' festival and a members' festival, but there will be public opportunities depending on capacities."

Even with certain limitations in place due to COVID-19 and venue accessibility, Jennings is hoping to continue the film festival's growth and foster La Grande as a cultural destination.

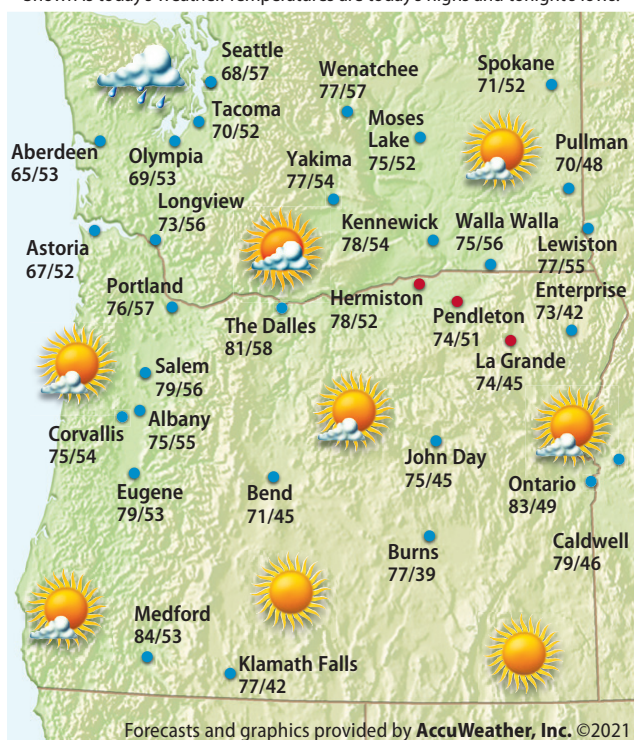
"We're definitely going to put it out there in the safest way we can and manage it in the best way we can," Jennings said.

## 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.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	71°	63°
Normals	82°	52°
Records	96° (1990)	30° (1895)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.04"	
Month to date	0.04"	
Normal month to date	0.16"	
Year to date	4.41"	
Last year to date	8.68"	
Normal year to date	8.81"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	75°	65°
Normals	84°	50°
Records	98° (1944)	35° (1932)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.02"	
Month to date	0.02"	
Normal month to date	0.10"	
Year to date	1.95"	
Last year to date	1.66"	
Normal year to date	5.41"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Boardman	WSW 6-12	WSW 6-12
Pendleton	W 6-12	W 7-14

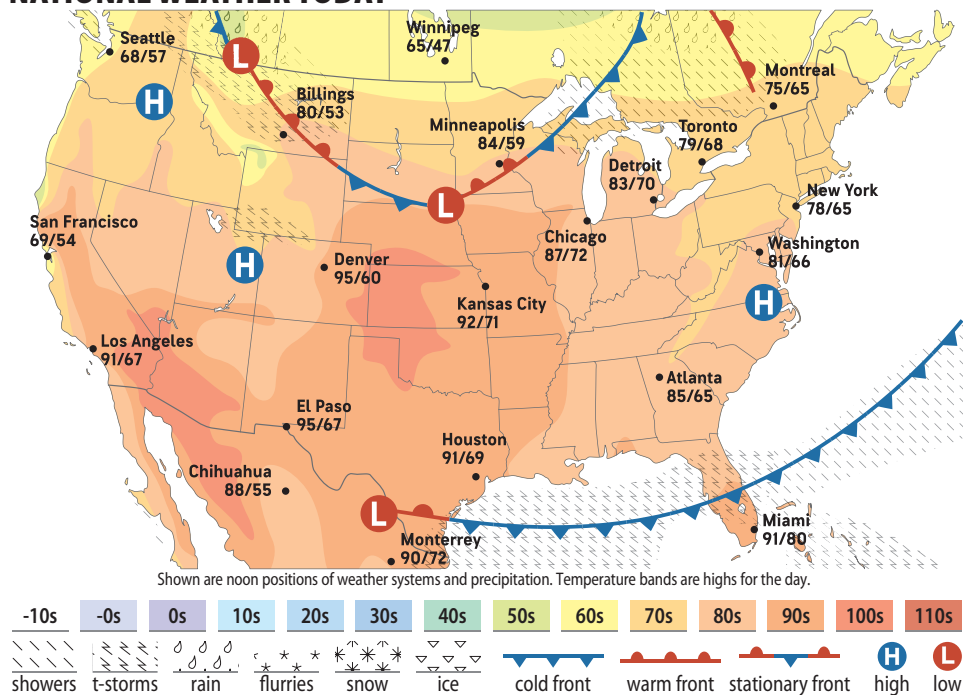
## SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today	6:29 a.m.
Sunset tonight	7:14 p.m.
Moonrise today	12:05 p.m.
Moonset today	9:48 p.m.

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 110° in El Centro, Calif. Low 29° in Wolcott, Colo.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



# City manager consults with attorneys on possible lawsuit

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR  
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Baker City City Manager Jon Cannon has been busy during the past week carrying out the city council's order to look into a possible lawsuit challenging Oregon Gov. Kate Brown's mandate that health care workers be vaccinated against COVID-19.

workers, and to the requirement that students wear face masks while indoors at school.

Councilors discussed options, including filing a lawsuit or joining another city's or county's lawsuit.

Cannon on Tuesday, Sept. 7, said he has been speaking with attorneys.

"I have a couple potentials for them to think about, but I haven't gotten anything that the council has wanted to call a meeting for and talk about," Cannon said.

He said he is gathering information to present to councilors at a future meeting. The council's next regular meeting is Tuesday, Sept. 14.

Cannon said he also received many phone calls

from city, county and school district officials from across the state who are interested in possible legal avenues to challenge the governor's executive orders.

"From east to west, north to south, from a lot of different entities," Cannon said.

Before and during the council's Aug. 24 meeting, a group of residents gathered outside city hall to protest the vaccine and mask mandates.

Baker City Mayor Kerry McQuisten said the vaccine requirement, which applies to the city's firefighter/paramedics, could result in employees resigning, leaving the fire department without critical staff.

Affected employees must either be fully vaccinated by Oct. 18, or receive an exception on either medical or religious grounds.



Cannon

## IN BRIEF

### Spa owner in hot water again after women allege abuse

SISTERS — A spa owner in Sisters faces fresh allegations of sexual abuse after the Deschutes County District Attorney declined to charge him in July due to insufficient evidence.

Now Michael Boyle, 60, owner of Hop in the Spa in Sisters, finds himself back in hot water after 10 more women came forward alleging abuse and a grand jury indicted him on multiple charges.

The grand jury on Tuesday, Sept. 7, handed down an indictment against Boyle for the following, according to a press release from the district attorney's office: 13 counts of practicing massage without a license; two counts of first-degree sexual abuse; third-degree sexual abuse; and one count of fourth-degree assault.

The first court appearance for Boyle, 60, is scheduled for Sept. 23. A judge at that time will inform him of the charges against him. Deschutes County District Attorney John Hummel said the abuse relates to touching "sexually intimate parts of the body" while giving massages.

The first case was dismissed because Hummel said an investigation determined Boyle had "skirted the line" but not committed a crime. Hummel said it's not uncommon for multiple women to come forward after one person alleges abuse.

"People think that something that happened to them was inappropriate," Hummel said, "but they think it just happened to them and they don't want to be the sole person to come forward because then all the focus is on them and they are rightfully reluctant to take on that all alone."

—EO Media Group

## CORRECTION

The Page A1 story "Boardman Coal Plant decommissioning moves along," published Thursday, Sept. 2, misstated the dates of demolition of the plant. Original plans stretched potentially into December 2023 but have since moved to the end of 2022.

**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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