

Warnock out as manager of Dean Oregon Ranches

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — A new ranch manager for the Bob Dean Oregon Ranches in the Upper Imnaha area has arrived in the county, as the outgoing manager B.J. Warnock has submitted his resignation notice, according to Sheriff Joel Fish and Warnock.

Fish said in an email Friday, Jan. 14, that his department's criminal investigation into possible animal neglect is continuing.

"I am interviewing all those involved and/or collecting statements," Fish said. "This will take time as I have many other duties and am short staffed."

Warnock said in an email earlier this month that "When we began gathering (cattle) in September, there were 1,613 mother cows on summer range."

He acknowledged bovine casualties during the recovery efforts, even though he and his crew were assisted by neighboring ranchers.

"Despite the efforts of our crew and the community, 10 cows have been found unrecoverable," he said, adding that "1,548 Dean Oregon Ranches mother cows were successfully gathered by Dean

Oregon Ranches crew before the snow. After the snow, 34 mother cows have been gathered through the joint efforts of our crew and the community. Of those, 26 were Dean Oregon Ranches cattle; the others were owned by neighboring ranches."

Fish said Jan. 14 he still doesn't know the number of rescued or lost cattle involved in the situation. He said the new manager is Katie Romero, but he hadn't yet met her nor did he know anything about her.

In a statement received by email Jan. 17, Warnock said, "We put in our two-week notice on Jan. 12. The gathering crew will be done the end of the month, as well. We wish the Deans and any future employees the best of luck going forward."

He said he would have no further statements on the issue.

Fish said in his investigation he has spoken with Karen Dean, wife of Bob Dean, who is ailing.

"The cattle are still under Dean Oregon Ranches," Fish said.

Dean attorney Christopher Gramiccioni, of South Carolina, said Joseph Law Firm in La Grande is representing Dean locally. There was no response to email and telephone requests for comment from the firm.

North Powder schools move to distance learning

By **DICK MASON**
The Observer

NORTH POWDER — An outbreak of COVID-19 in the North Powder School District has forced the school district to shut down in-person instruction and provide only online instruction.

The changes are for Wednesday, Jan. 19, and Thursday, Jan. 20. The North Powder School District has four-day school weeks.

"This is what is best for the health and safety of everyone," said North Powder School District Superintendent Lance Dixon.

The move to online instruction, formally known as Comprehensive Distance Learning, was made after 11 students tested positive for COVID-19 during the past week. The number of students who were exposed via close contact now is being determined, but Dixon said the number was large. He said that doing contract tracing was getting to be extremely difficult because there have been so many close contacts.

"It was becoming an organizational nightmare," he said.

School districts have the option of operating a test-to-stay program, where students who are exposed to someone COVID-19 positive can stay



The Observer, File

An outbreak of COVID-19 in the North Powder School District has forced the school district to shut down in-person instruction and provide only online instruction for Wednesday, Jan. 19, and Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022.

in school if they test negative and have no symptoms of the disease and then test negative again five to seven days later.

Dixon said the test-to-stay program was not an option for the North Powder School District because it does not have enough COVID-19 test kits.

The good news for the school district is that plans are in place for students to be back on campus Jan. 24. Dixon said by that time North Powder students will have been away from each

other in school for 10 days, more than the state's required quarantine time after a close contact or a positive test. The span was lengthened by the fact there was no school Jan. 17 due to the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

"Thank God (Jan. 17) was a holiday," he said.

No online instruction was given Jan. 18 to give teachers a day to prepare to provide online instruction.

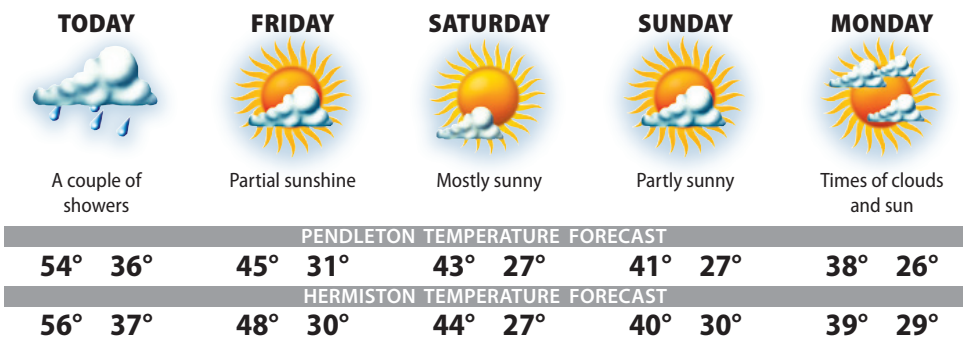
Dixon said teachers are ready to provide distance learning after giving it for a

portion of the 2020-21 school year and remaining ready to make a quick transition to it.

The superintendent said he believes shutting down in-person instruction this week will pay dividends over the long term because it will allow the school district to be in a better position to control the COVID-19 outbreak when in-person instruction begins again on Jan. 24.

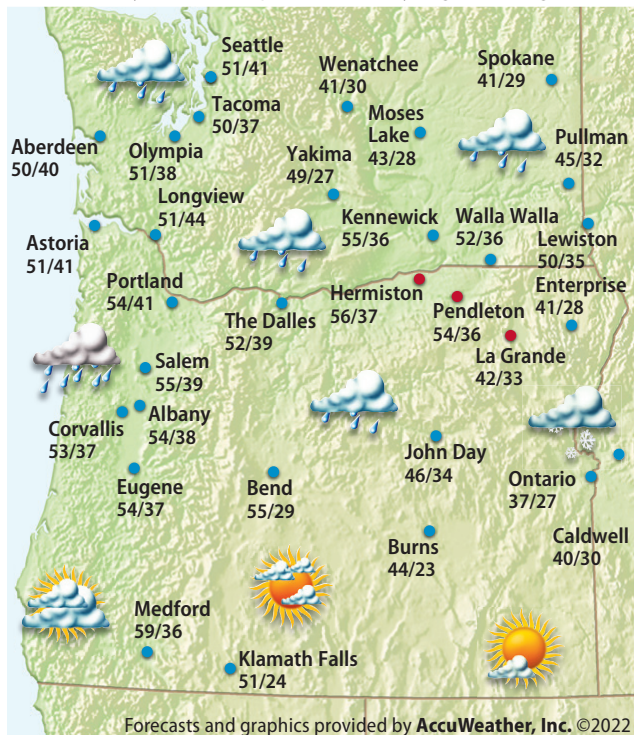
"It is the best solution," Dixon said, "and will keep students out of school for the shortest time possible."

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

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



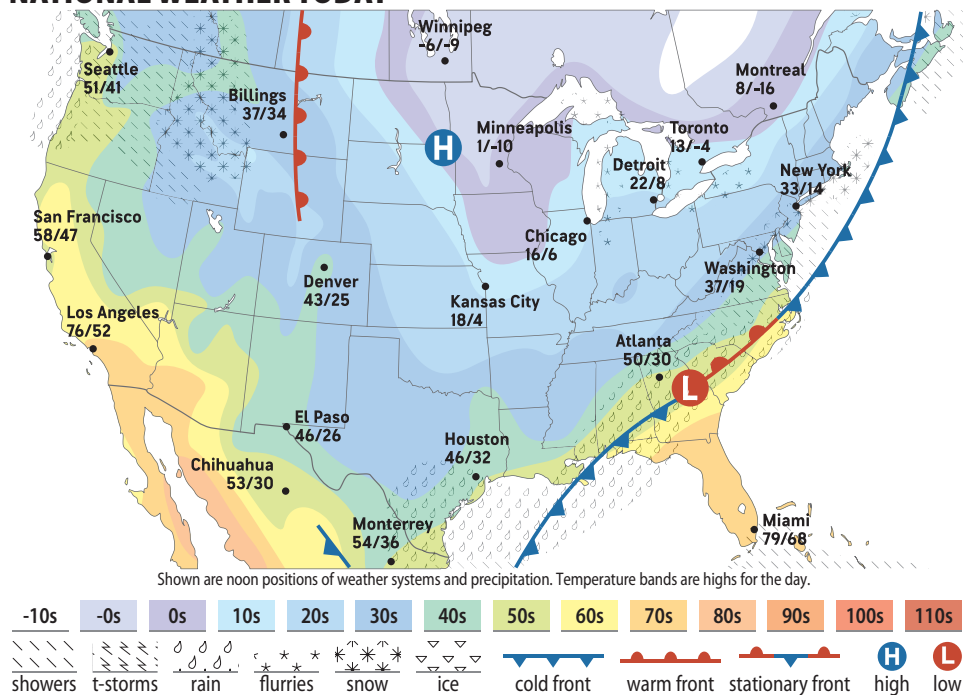
ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Yesterday	42°	32°	
Normals	42°	28°	
Records	67° (1968)	-13° (1922)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace		
Month to date	1.36"		
Normal month to date	0.96"		
Year to date	1.36"		
Last year to date	0.44"		
Normal year to date	0.96"		
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Yesterday	39°	33°	
Normals	44°	29°	
Records	61° (1977)	-6° (1957)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"		
Month to date	0.81"		
Normal month to date	0.72"		
Year to date	0.81"		
Last year to date	0.34"		
Normal year to date	0.72"		
WINDS (in mph)			
Today	Fri.		
Boardman	WSW 8-16	WSW 4-8	
Pendleton	WSW 8-16	W 4-8	
SUN AND MOON			
Sunrise today	7:29 a.m.		
Sunset tonight	4:44 p.m.		
Moonrise today	7:40 p.m.		
Moonset today	9:23 a.m.		
Last	New	First	Full
Jan 25	Jan 31	Feb 8	Feb 16

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 89° in Zapata, Texas Low -22° in Willow City, N.D.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Search and rescue locates two teens stuck en route to Magone Lake

By **STEVEN MITCHELL**
Blue Mountain Eagle

PRAIRIE CITY — The Grant County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Team located two teenage boys from Mt. Vernon whose lifted pickup got stuck in the snow near Magone Lake and returned them safely to their families.

The teens, ages 16 and 17, decided to take a spur-of-the-moment drive to Magone Lake in the mountains north of Prairie City on the evening of Sunday, Jan. 16, via the less-traveled Beech Creek Road route and got stuck in deep snow, according to information from the sheriff's office.

Family members

attempted to reach the teens but turned back to avoid getting stuck themselves and called the Grant County Emergency Communications Center at around 2:30 a.m. on Jan. 17.

The search team used cell phone pings to find the general area of the teenagers' last known location.

Using a Sno-Cat recently acquired by the sheriff's office, Sgt. Dan Komning and deputy Savannah Wyllie reached the missing youth shortly before 6 a.m. Jan. 17.

The teenagers were OK when the search team reached them, but their pickup had become stuck and mechanically disabled.

"Neither youth was prepared to spend a night

out in the cold," the sheriff's office said in a press release.

The agency reminded the traveling and adventuring public that preparation is key to survival in the beautiful vastness of Grant County.

"We hope you explore safely and responsibly," the press release said, noting that short-notice, spur-of-the-moment trips usually cause the most problems.

"Always let someone know where you are going, and don't deviate from that plan," Sheriff Todd McKinley said in the press release. "Should you become stuck or stranded, please contact the sheriff's office at 541-575-1131 or call 911, and we will assist in getting you help."

IN BRIEF

EOFF offers short film encore screenings, begins planning for fall event

LA GRANDE — The Eastern Oregon Film Festival announced the 2022 event will take place over the weekend of Oct. 20-22.

The annual festival, held in La Grande, is working toward holding screenings in the Liberty Theatre, which is under renovation, according to a press release. The Filmmakers Residency Program has been postponed to 2023 while the organization focuses on operations at the theater.

The organization also is advancing its virtual catalog offerings. In 2022, EOFF will be posting encore screenings of the 2021 festival's short film selections. These monthly screenings will be held in person but may also be viewed online. January's encore presentations have begun. For access and full details, go to www.eofilmfest.com.

Call for entries for the 2022 Eastern Oregon Film Festival begins Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Films may be submitted at www.filmfreeway.com/eofilmfest.

Washington man hit, killed on I-84

BAKER CITY — A Washington man was hit and killed on Interstate 84 near Baker City early Sunday, Jan. 16.

Oregon State Police troopers responded about 12:12 a.m. to the scene near the Baker Valley Rest Area, at milepost 295.

Their preliminary investigation found that a westbound Volkswagen Passat, driven by Karli McKim, 21, of La Grande, struck Luis Manuel Torres Rivera, 44, of Lynnwood, Washington, who was standing in the freeway. Rivera died at the scene.

According to OSP, it's not clear why Rivera was on the freeway.

The Baker County Sheriff's Office, Baker City Fire Department and Oregon Department of Transportation assisted state police at the scene.

—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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