

EAST OREGONIAN SPORTS

SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2022

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B1

Dancer returns to The Sooner State

Oklahoma City University has one of the top 10 dance schools in the country

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Susan Stephens has been coaching dance for more than 15 years. The Hermiston coach has seen a lot of talent come through her program over the past four years, but none have compared to T'Lee Burk.

"It's kind of unheard of to see her kind of talent here," Stephens said. "She is an amazing dancer, but better than that, she is an amazing person. You could not ask for a better teammate. She is that once-in-a-lifetime kind of kid.



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

T'Lee Burk performs with members of the Hermiston High School Stardust Dance Team in the high school hip-hop division Feb. 26, 2022, during Hearts in Motion at Pendleton High School. Burk recently received a scholarship to attend the Ann Lacy School of American Dance and Entertainment at Oklahoma City University.

We've had a lot of talented kids come through, but not many who want to continue to dance in college."

Oklahoma City University feels the same as Stephens. It recently offered the Hermiston senior a scholarship to attend the Ann Lacy School of American Dance and Entertainment.

"I found them," Burk said. "Dance is a little different than any other sport. We don't have recruiters. I applied to Oklahoma City University. After you are academically admitted to the school, you have to audition for the dance program."

Burk had to send in five audition videos in different styles of dance — ballet, tap, jazz, jazz combo and a solo dance of her own choosing. Everyone applying had to perform the same routine, except for the solo.

"Once you send it in, then you have to wait," Burk said.

"It was about two weeks. It was exciting, but it was a stressful audition time. It was super exciting to hear back. It was a crazy experience."

The dance faculty at OCU reviews the videos sent in, looking for technique and those who are properly trained. In addition to the dance videos, the applicants also submit a small introduction about themselves.

"We look for good character and those who will work hard, as well as proficient technicians," said Hannah Malinowski, administrative assistant to dance chair Jo Rowan. "The faculty has a grading rubric and that helps decide who and how many they will accept."

The program does not put a cap on the number of dancers it will accept each year. The 2021-22 freshman class has 44 dancers. There have

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Keeping the lights on

\$20,000 grant helps Pendleton Little League upgrade lighting

By ANNIE FOWLER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Pendleton Little League is on track to open its season April 2, and players will see things in a whole new light.

The four ballparks are getting new and improved lighting thanks to a \$20,000 grant from the Wildhorse Foundation.

"This was a much-needed godsend," Pendleton Little League President Monty Ludington said. "In October, we were doing field work and there were so many lights out. In the condition they were in, we didn't know if we would be able to hold practices or games at night."

Pendleton Little League applied for a Wildhorse Foundation grant in December and received news in February the foundation had awarded the grant. Gordon's Electric in Pendleton was contracted to do the work.

"They are in the process of getting installed," Ludington said. "Some have been put up already, but the weather is stalling things a bit."

Ludington said the light poles will remain in place, but the housing units for the light bulbs and the bulbs are being replaced.

"We are moving from the halogen lights, which are probably 20-some years old, to LED," Ludington said. "They will be brighter,



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

New LED lighting sits atop utility poles Thursday, March 10, 2022, at the Pendleton Little League fields. A \$20,000 grant from Wildhorse Foundation made getting the new lights possible.

take less energy and will be cheaper. We would have liked to have replaced the poles too, but this was the best option available to us at the moment."

According to a report by Sport Lights Supply, using LED lights is 10 times cheaper than using halogen lights.

Ludington said the money saved on the electric bill will be put back into the program.

Pendleton Little League has seen a renewed interest this spring after suffering through two seasons of the pandemic and all the precautions that came with it.

"Our numbers are hovering above pre-COVID numbers," Ludington said. "We had just over 400 kids in 2018. In 2019, it was 300-plus, and in 2020, it was about 290. Last year, we had 190 kids."

Pendleton Little League has about 375 youths signed up this year for baseball and softball. The organization has teams for majors, minors and rookie ball. There are

150 signed up for rookie ball, which is a co-ed program for kids ages 6-8 and is coach pitch.

"People just want to get back to the way things were," Ludington said. "This is about building a community, having fun, making friends and establishing relationships. It's about the experience."

The organization also will have a Little League parade down Main Street, something that was not possible the past two years. The city already has given its OK for the event. The final details are being worked out, but the parade is set for 9 a.m. on April 2.

"We want to have opening day festivities like we used to," Ludington said. "The kids will parade down Main Street in their uniforms, and we will have opening day ceremonies on the field afterward."

Ludington also said the snack shack will be open, and crews are working to get the restrooms back in shape.

Simmons, Young earn 3A honors

East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Hermiston freshman Izzy Simmons and senior Bailey Young were named to the 3A state basketball all-tournament team for their performances March 3-5 in Tacoma, Washington.

The Bulldogs, making their first appearance at the Hardwood Classic, won three loser-out games to



Simmons

Young

Simmons finished with 29 points, 13 rebounds and six assists. She was named to the second team.

Young, who battled inside, had six points and 14 rebounds, and was selected to the honorable mention team.

Garfield's Malia Samuels was named tournament MVP on the girls side after leading the Bulldogs to a 3A state title.

reach the state quarterfinals. Hermiston finished 0-2 with losses to Lake Washington and Stanwood.

Over two games,

SEEKING QUALIFIED PROVIDERS

CAPECO is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for qualified contractor(s) to provide Nutrition Program services, including Home Delivered Meal and Congregate Meal services within Morrow and Umatilla Counties.

Home delivered meals are critical to maintaining independence and provide socialization to people who may feel isolated or lonely at home.

Congregate meals are an opportunity to socialize and gain support through community while CAPECO provides nutrition education.

This service is more than just a meal; its purpose is to nourish the whole person.

Request a copy of the RFP packet by contacting Jody Warnock, CAPECO Program Director, jwarnock@capeco-works.org 541-278-5668

PROPOSALS DUE MARCH 31, 2022



**COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM
of EAST CENTRAL OREGON**

UMATILLA * MORROW * GILLIAM * WHEELER * SHERMAN * WASCO * HOOD RIVER COUNTIES

ON THE SLATE

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

Boys soccer
Hermiston at Walla Walla, 12:30 p.m.

College women's wrestling
Eastern Oregon at NAIA National Invite, Jamestown, North Dakota, TBA

College softball
British Columbia at Eastern Oregon (2), 11 a.m.

College baseball
Eastern Oregon at Corban (2), 11 a.m.
Grays Harbor at Blue Mountain (2), 11 a.m.

College women's lacrosse
Eastern Oregon at Boise State Tournament, TBA

SUNDAY, MARCH 13

College baseball
Grays Harbor at Blue Mountain (2), 11 a.m.

MONDAY, MARCH 14

Prep baseball
La Grande JV at Heppner, 2 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15

Prep baseball
Pendleton at Walla Walla (2), 2 p.m.
La Grande at McLoughlin, 2 p.m.
Umatilla at Pilot Rock, 4 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at Irrigon, 4 p.m.
Stanfield/Echo at Riverside, 4 p.m.

Prep softball
Eisenhower at Hermiston, 4 p.m.
Walla Walla at Pendleton, 4 p.m.
Irrigon at Weston-McEwen, 4 p.m.
Echo/Stamfield at Riverside, 4 p.m.
Umatilla at Pilot Rock, 4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

Boys soccer
Hermiston at Hanford, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

Prep softball
La Grande at Hermiston, 4 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

Prep baseball
Baker at Heppner (2), noon
La Grande at Hermiston (2), 4 p.m.

Prep softball
Baker at Heppner/lone (2), noon

Track and field
McLoughlin, Riverside, Stanfield/

Echo, Weston-McEwen at Ontario Ice Breaker, 3:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

Prep baseball
Columbia-Burbank (WA) at Riverside (2), 2 p.m.
Pendleton at Hanford, 4 p.m.
Weston-McEwen at McLoughlin, 4 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Irrigon, 4 p.m.

Prep softball
Echo/Stamfield at Umatilla, 1 p.m.
Columbia-Burbank (WA) at Riverside (2), 2 p.m.
Enterprise at Weston-McEwen (2), 2 p.m.
Pilot Rock at Irrigon, 4 p.m.

Boys soccer
Hermiston at Kennewick, 7 p.m.

Track and Field
Ione, Umatilla at Mullen Leavitt Invite, The Dalles, 2 p.m.

College baseball
Clackamas at Blue Mountain (2), noon

College softball
Spokane at Blue Mountain (2), 2 p.m.