

Oregon Trail interpretive site receives noteworthy additions

By DICK MASON The Observer

LA GRANDE — Four years ago, Dale Counsell and his son, Scott, found an unforgettable link, not to an internet website but to an era when digital technology still was the stuff of science fiction.

The Counsells were in Ladd Canyon on their family's ranching land when Scott Counsell spotted a metal chain link sticking up from the ground and told his father. Curious, the Counsells began digging. What they found was not precious metal but something else to treasure: a horse-drawn logging sled Dale Counsell said was used by a family who had owned the land as homesteaders in the late 1800s.

Nobody knows how long the sled had been buried, but it was obvious the time underground had taken its toll. "It was in terrible shape," Dale Counsell said.

A skilled craftsman who loves history, Dale Counsell then refurbished the sled by replacing its wood while retaining its metal elements. Today, the sled is on public display as one of the latest additions to an Oregon Trail interpretive site on Hot Lake



Ronnie Allen poses for a photo March 21, 2022, near a newly restored logging sled at an Oregon Trail site in Lower Ladd Canyon south of La Grande. Allen and Dale Counsell, both of La Grande, created the interpretive site five years ago and are continuing to add to it.

Alex Wittwer/EO Media Group

Lane, 2 miles west of the Lodge at Hot Lake Springs. The sled is loaded with logs from tree species common to Union County — white fir, lodgepole pine and tamarack, also known as western larch.

"The job Dale did restoring that sled is incredible," said Ronnie Allen, of La Grande, who with Dale Counsell created the Lower Ladd Canyon Oregon Trail

site five years ago.

The interpretive site is about a mile from the base of Lower Ladd Canyon Hill. Allen said Oregon Trail pioneers came off the hill directly to where the interpretive site is located.

In the mid-1800s, Oregon Trail pioneers made overnight stops at the location, he said. Allen estimates that from 1843 through the

early 1860s, between one and five wagons were at the site continuously during the summer months.

The sled now at the site likely was used not only to transport trees but also hay, supplies and people, Counsell said.

The logging sled is one of several significant additions made to the Oregon Trail site during the past month.

Other additions include an ox yoke, donated by Craig's Antiques, of La Grande, that was used by oxen to pull a wagon across the Oregon Trail, Allen said.

"It shows heavy wear consistent with pulling covered wagons over the Oregon Trail," he said.

Yokes, like the one displayed, were wooden beams normally used between a pair of oxen to enable them to pull together on a load when working in pairs.

Oxen are regarded as the unheralded heroes of the Oregon Trail, Allen said. He noted that the vast majority of the pioneers coming West on the Oregon Trail used oxen instead of horses. Pioneers preferred them because they are calmer and easier to work with than horses.

"They are not as temperamental as horses," Allen said.

Pioneers took excellent care of their oxen, Allen said, because they knew that without the animals, they would be in dire circumstances.

Oxen sometimes drank water from wooden buckets on the Oregon Trail when they could not be taken to streams or springs. The buckets pioneers used to bring water to their oxen were

virtually identical to a bucket that was also recently added to the Oregon Trail interpretive site, Allen said.

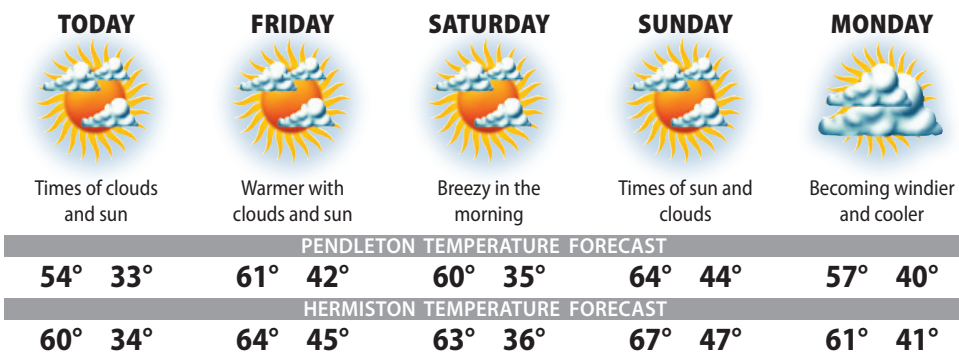
It is easy for visitors to the site to get a feel for the type of wagon oxen pulled across the West for it has two replicas of them. Both are farm wagons more than 100 years old that are like those used on the Oregon Trail. Allen said farm wagons started being used on the Oregon Trail due to a shortage of the more popular Conestoga wagons.

No actual wagons in which pioneers traveled across the Oregon Trail still exist, Allen said. He explained by the time pioneers made it to Oregon, most wagons were in terrible condition. Those that were functional were used for farm work until they worn out. And after about five years of farm work, he said, "they were useless."

Allen, who received a Distinguished Service Award in 2019 from the Northwest chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association for his work in helping create the Oregon Trail interpretive site in Lower Ladd Canyon, said there will be more additions to the center in the future.

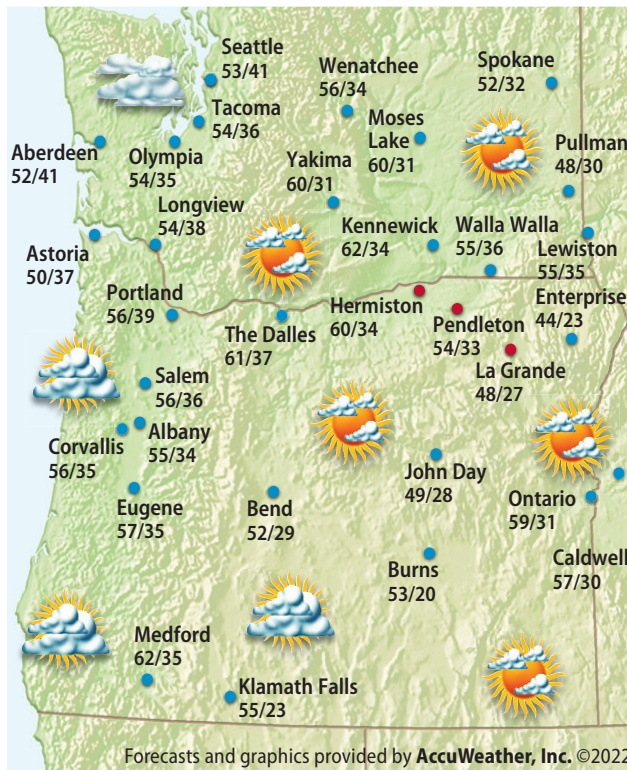
"It is an ongoing project," he said. "There really will be no end to it."

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.

Table with columns for Temp, High, Low, Normals, and Records for Pendleton.

PRECIPITATION

Table with columns for 24 hours ending 3 p.m., Month to date, Normal month to date, Year to date, Last year to date, and Normal year to date for Pendleton.

HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.

Table with columns for Temp, High, Low, Normals, and Records for Hermiston.

PRECIPITATION

Table with columns for 24 hours ending 3 p.m., Month to date, Normal month to date, Year to date, Last year to date, and Normal year to date for Hermiston.

WINDS (in mph)

Table with columns for Boardman and Pendleton, and rows for Today and Fri.

SUN AND MOON

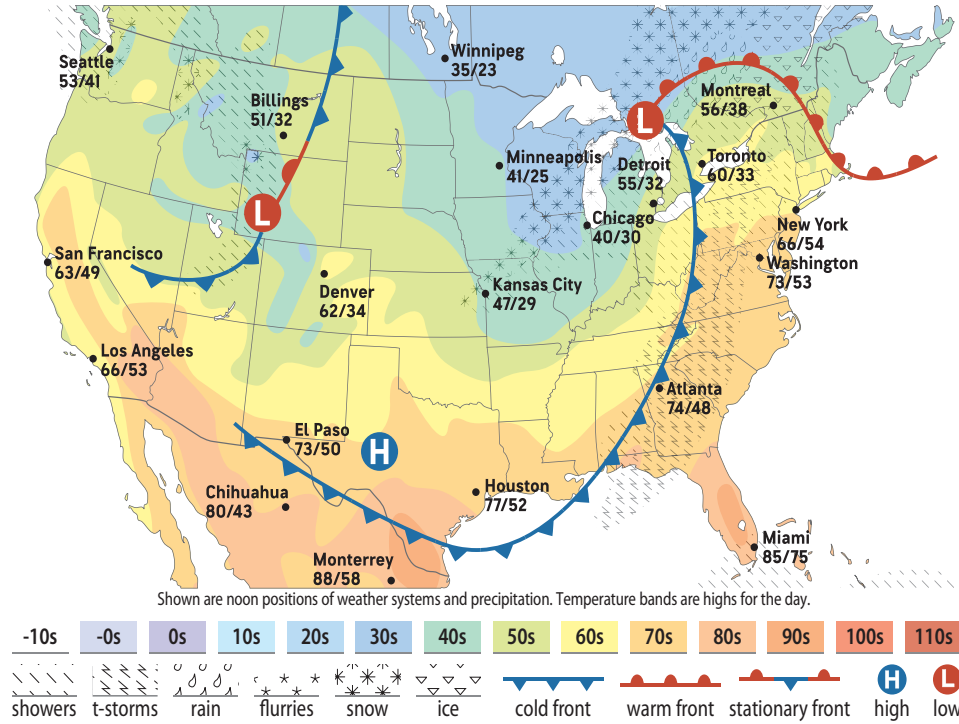
Table with columns for Sunrise today, Sunset tonight, Moonrise today, and Moonset today.

NATIONAL EXTREMES

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

High 98° in McAllen, Texas Low 0° in Saranac Lake, N.Y.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Rescuer, family fret over missing dog

By BILL BRADSHAW Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — Have you seen an errant, dark-brown and white bull terrier running loose in the Wallowa area? That could be Petey, who has been missing from his foster family since March 22.

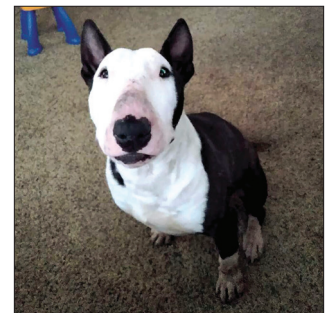
Tracy Boose, services manager for Bull Terrier Rescue Inc. PNW, said the foster family was out shed hunting in Wallowa with Petey, and the dog escaped to chase some deer.

"I think they were not paying close enough attention and he had a leash on that was too loose and he was able to get out of it and took after the deer," Boose said.

Based in Puyallup, Washington, she said her organization fosters out dogs all over Oregon, Western Idaho, Washington and part of British Columbia, Canada.

"He came from an area in Oregon where he was living on a ranch and had done really well there," Boose said.

She learned Mia Kennon of Wallowa was looking to foster a bull terrier and Petey had been with the Kennon family for a month and a half.



Tracy Boose/Contributed Photo Petey, a 5-6-year-old bull terrier, went missing from his foster family in the Wallowa area March 22, 2022.

After a placement, she keeps in touch with the family to make sure everything works out.

"I want to make sure the dog's going to be happy there and they're going to be happy with the dog," she said.

Boose said Petey is believed to be 5-6 years old.

"Petey is friendly, neutered and current on vaccinations," she said. "He likes most other dogs and livestock. He will chase a cat for the chase, but has never hurt one."

She said she's been in contact with local authorities, including the Wallowa County Humane Society, the Wallowa County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Department of Transportation "and anybody we can think of."

Boose said she's losing sleep over his being missing.

"I've never lost a dog in 30 years," she said. "The longest I've ever had a dog lost is 90 minutes. He's eight hours away and in the wilderness. ... I am beyond frantic."

Anyone with information on Petey should contact Boose at 253-341-6632 or by email at rcrtracyb@gmail.com.

IN BRIEF

Walla Walla firefighter charged with child sex crimes

WALLA WALLA — Anthony Spada, 46, a Walla Walla firefighter and paramedic accused of child molestation, has been formally charged by County Prosecutor James Nagle's office, court documents show.

The formal charges — first-degree child molestation, second-degree child molestation and communication with a minor for immoral purposes — match the booking charges for Spada's arrest on March 23 by the Walla Walla County Sheriff's Office.

First-degree child molestation is a Class A felony in Washington with a maximum sentence of life in prison. Second-degree child molestation is a Class B felony with a maxi-

mum sentence of 10 years in prison.

Communication with a minor for immoral purposes is a misdemeanor.

Spada is due back in court Monday, April 4, for arraignment.

The probable cause affidavit shows Spada is accused of inappropriately touching a minor whom he knows, as well as showing the minor pornographic content.

Spada was released on his own recognizance March 24. He has been ordered not to have any unsupervised contact with minors.

Spada, who has worked for Walla Walla since 2003, has been placed on administrative leave, instructed to stay out of city offices and to not contact city employees, pending the Sheriff's investigation and guidance from legal counsel.

— Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

CORRECTIONS: The article "Cold night in the canyon" in the Tuesday, March 29, edition of the East Oregonian misstated the date of the helicopter rescue of two men from a deep canyon. The correct date was July 2, 2021.

The Tuesday, March 28, article "Pendleton World War II guardhouses under threat" misstated when the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport Commission meets. The commission's next meeting is on April 20.

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