

# Union adds a chapter to a Flag Day tradition

By DICK MASON  
The Observer

UNION — The city of Union's name is linked to a 1863 Fourth of July celebration during the height of the Civil War, when a sea of homemade American flags were displayed in town.

Fast-forward 159 years to Tuesday, June 14, where about a dozen military veterans in Union also were embracing America's symbol of freedom.

The veterans were doing so in a more solemn fashion, retiring at least 100 aging American flags in a morning ceremony conducted by members of Veterans of Foreign Wars High Valley Post 4060 and American Legion Post 43. The retirement ceremony was one of many taking place throughout the United States on June 14 as part of an annual Flag Day tradition.

"We are paying respect for the American flag," Walter Richard, a member of VFW High Valley Post 4060, said.

All of the flags retired were burned at the conclusion of the retirement ceremony while adhering to the U.S. Flag Code.

The retired flags had flown many places, including cemeteries, post offices and the homes of veterans. A number also had served as casket flags



Mark Plank, left, and Dave Jensen, right, prepare to retire a flag on Tuesday, June 14, 2022, at a special ceremony at Union's VFW High Valley Post 4060.

at the funerals of veterans. The latter were particularly meaningful to the veterans present, including Mark Plank, a member of VFW High Valley Post 4060.

"We are honoring those who have fallen before us," Plank said.

Many of the flags retired had flown in the Grande Ronde Valley where strong winds cause them to wear out faster.

"The problem is that people leave them up during bad weather," Richard said.

Some of the aging flags

given to VFW High Valley Post 4060 and American Legion Post 43 were set aside to be passed on to a local funeral home that puts flags in with veterans who are cremated.

The annual retirement ceremony was once conducted on alternate years in La Grande at American Legion Post 43 and at High Valley VFW Post 4060 in Union. It is now always held in Union partly because the American Legion Post in La Grande is near railroad tracks and the noise made by passing trains

made it hard for people to hear, Richard said.

Veterans with VFW High Valley Post 4060 and American Legion Post 43 collect tattered, torn and soiled flags each year for the June 14 retirement ceremony.

Anyone with an American flag that needs to be retired is encouraged to give it to the veterans groups since this guarantees it will be treated with care as it is retired.

A drop box for flags will soon be put outside of the meeting hall of High Valley Post 4060, 518 N. Main St., Union.



Veterans prepare to fire blanks with rifles as part of a flag retirement ceremony on Tuesday, June 14, 2022, at the VFW High Valley Post 4060 in Union.



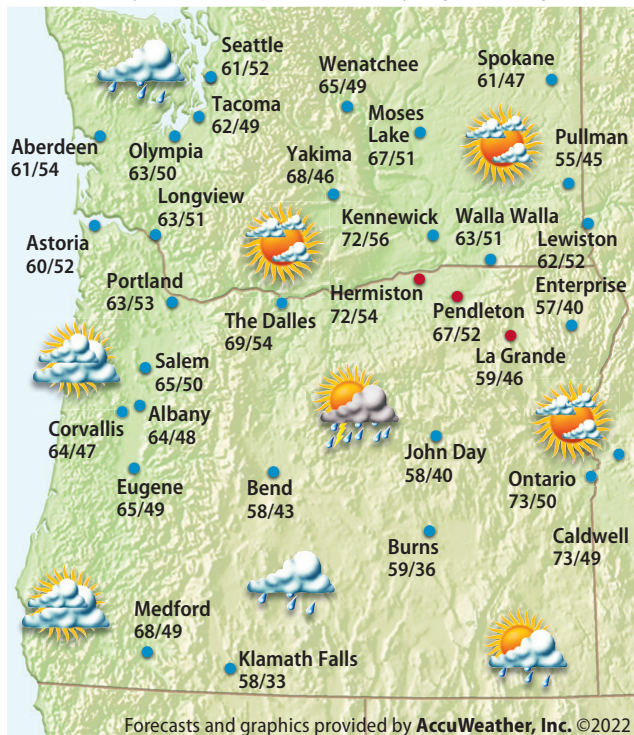
Dave Jensen adds a small flag to a fire during a retirement ceremony outside High Valley VFW Post 4060 on Tuesday, June 14, 2022, in Union. Jensen is a member of High Valley VFW Post 4060 and American Legion Post 43.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Breezy with sun and clouds	Cloudy with winds subsiding	Partly sunny and pleasant	Partly sunny and beautiful	Sunshine and pleasant
67° 52°	70° 53°	73° 54°	80° 59°	80° 55°
72° 54°	75° 56°	78° 54°	84° 62°	83° 60°

## OREGON FORECAST

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



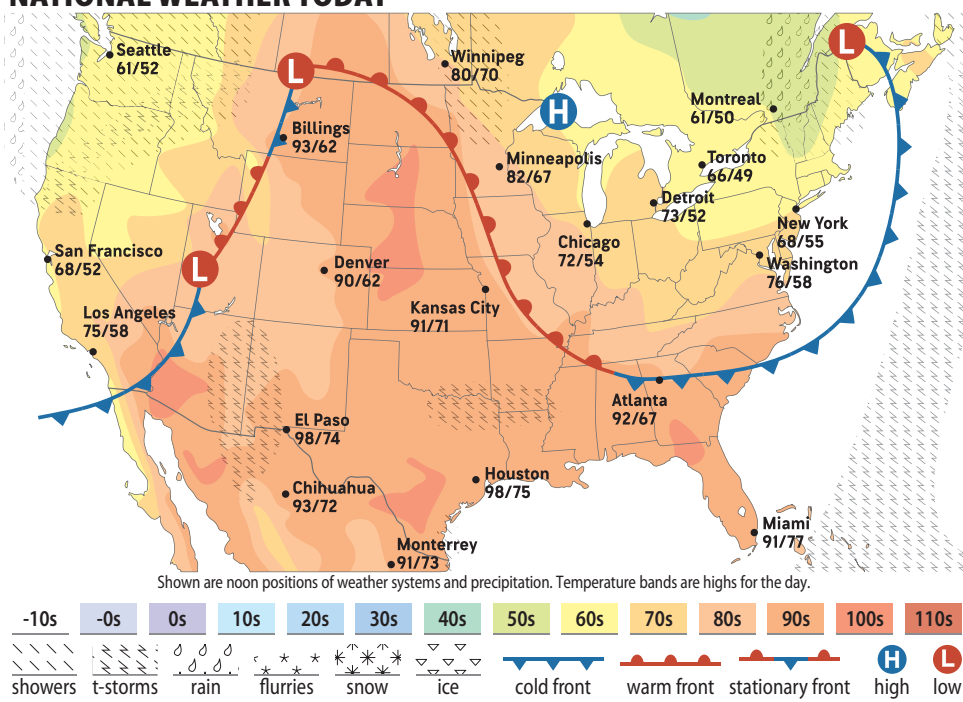
## ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. yest.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Yesterday	69°	53°	
Normals	79°	52°	
Records	108° (1961)	40° (1932)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.01"		
Month to date	2.16"		
Normal month to date	0.80"		
Year to date	10.82"		
Last year to date	4.29"		
Normal year to date	7.64"		
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. yest.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Yesterday	74°	54°	
Normals	82°	53°	
Records	106° (1961)	40° (1949)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	Trace		
Month to date	1.58"		
Normal month to date	0.46"		
Year to date	7.37"		
Last year to date	2.46"		
Normal year to date	4.84"		
WINDS (in mph)			
Today	Sun.		
Boardman WSW 10-20	WSW 8-16		
Pendleton WSW 10-20	WSW 10-20		
SUN AND MOON			
Sunrise today	5:05 a.m.		
Sunset tonight	8:47 p.m.		
Moonrise today	12:15 a.m.		
Moonset today	9:54 a.m.		
Last	New	First	Full
June 20	June 28	July 6	July 13

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 111° in Chandler, Ariz. Low 27° in Climax, Colo.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



# Baker City is no longer piping wastewater into Powder River

By SAMANTHA O'CONNOR  
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — For the first time in more than 50 years, Baker City no longer has to discharge its treated wastewater into the Powder River north of town.

The city had piped the wastewater into the river from its four treatment and storage lagoons, about a mile north of town, into the river since the early 1960s.

The destination for that water now is the new storage pond the city had built last year on a 51-acre parcel about 7 miles away, east of Interstate 84 and just south of Highway 203 at the eastern edge of Baker Valley.

"Not finished, but we're definitely at a major milestone here," said Michelle Owen, the city's public works director. "To me this is a huge milestone, the fact that we're no longer in the river and we're going into our new storage pond."

The old treatment lagoons — the largest is about 70 acres, and the three others are about 10 acres each — are connected by a pipeline to the new storage pond, which is much deeper — about 20 feet compared with 6 to 8 feet — and thus has a larger capacity.

The pipeline and new storage pond are the major parts of one of the city's largest and most expensive public works projects in the past couple decades, a \$5.7 million job the city undertook after the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality mandated the city eventually cease piping treated wastewater into the Powder River.

DEQ told city officials that treated wastewater could promote algae blooms and otherwise pollute the river.

In 2017, the city entered into a Mutual Agreement and Order with DEQ.

The city previously added chlorine to its wastewater to kill bacteria, then used sulfur dioxide to remove the chlorine



Baker City's new treated wastewater storage pond is beginning to fill. The pond is on the east side of Baker Valley, just south of Highway 203.

before the water was released into the river.

Owen said the city will continue to use the lagoons to temporarily store wastewater. Bacteria help break down pollutants in the wastewater, and solid material settles to the bottom. Typically wastewater is stored in the lagoons for about 30 days, although during the winter, when the lagoons are frozen, the city stores the water longer.

Because the treated water now will piped to the new pond, and used to irrigate non-food crops such as alfalfa rather than discharged into the river, the city no longer has to add sulfur dioxide to remove the chlorine, Owen said.

The chlorine will dissipate naturally before it's used for irrigation, she said.

"We're still treating wastewater at the (old) lagoon and it travels approximately seven miles out to our new storage pond," Owen said.

The city is pumping about three million gallons per day to the new lagoon, Owen said.

Of that volume, about 1.2 million is the water that flows each day from the city's homes and businesses.

The rest is water that already was stored in the lagoons.

Lowering the water levels in the lagoons enables another part of the multiyear project — removing the sludge that has accumulated during decades at the lagoons.

That sludge has reduced

the capacity of lagoons, Owen said.

The city also will replace valves in pipes that connect the treatment lagoons.

"Those need to be replaced as part of this project, so we need to bring the water level down so the contractor can actually work on the structures," Owen said.

Treated wastewater can flow from the lagoons to the new storage pond by gravity alone. However, Owen said there are pumps at both ends of the pipeline. The pump at the lagoons allows the city to move a higher volume of wastewater than by gravity alone. She said the city is using that pump now to accelerate the lowering of the lagoons.

Water from the new storage pond also will be used for irrigation, Owen said.

"We're trying to get enough water into the new pond so that we can fire up those pumps over there and make sure that everything's working and then we'll be able to go into land application for irrigation," she said.

Testing for that will likely occur within a week or two.

Owen estimated the city will have a permit from DEQ allowing irrigation by August and is waiting for the pump manufacturer to be available to set that up. Owen also estimated it will be around August before the city has the paperwork approved by DEQ to begin irrigation.

**EAST OREGONIAN**  
— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —  
211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211  
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211  
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed major holidays

**EastOregonian.com**

In the App Store:

East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801.  
Copyright © 2022, EO Media Group

**Circulation Dept.**  
For mail delivery, online access, vacation stops or delivery concerns call 800-781-3214

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

	Local home delivery	Savings (cover price)
EZPay	\$10.75/month	50 percent
52 weeks	\$135	42 percent
26 weeks	\$71	39 percent
13 weeks	\$37	36 percent

**Single copy price:**  
\$1.50 Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday

**ADVERTISING**

**Regional Sales Director (Eastside) EO Media Group:**  
• Karrine Brogotti  
541-963-3161 • kbrogotti@eomediagroup.com

**Multimedia Consultants:**  
• Angel Aguilar  
541-564-4531 • aaguilar@hermistonherald.com  
• Melissa Barnes  
541-966-0827 • mbarnes@eastoregonian.com  
• Audra Workman  
541-564-4538 • aworkman@eastoregonian.com

**Business Office**  
• Dayle Stinson  
541-966-0824 • dstinson@eastoregonian.com

**Classified & Legal Advertising**

Classified advertising: 541-564-4538  
Legal advertising: 541-966-0824  
classifieds@eastoregonian.com or legals@eastoregonian.com

**NEWS**

- To submit news tips and press releases: call 541-966-0818 or email news@eastoregonian.com
- To submit community events, calendar items, engagements, weddings and anniversaries: email community@eastoregonian.com, call 541-966-0818 or visit eastoregonian.com/community/announcements.
- To submit sports or outdoors information or tips, email sports@eastoregonian.com.

**COMMERCIAL PRINTING**

**Commercial Print Manager:** Holly Rouska  
541-617-7839 • hrouska@eomediagroup.com