

# Nimiipuu Experience visits Baker City

By IAN CRAWFORD  
Baker City Herald

BAKER CITY — Performers of the Nimiipuu Experience, colloquially Nez Perce, arrived in ornate, historic dressage on July 21 for traditional performance and oral history of the indigenous nation before a small crowd of Baker City residents.

“I love when they bring little ones here, they will soon become great allies,” said Stacia Morfin, the founder and lead performer of the program. Several children attended the event at the Crossroads Carnegie Art Center, Baker City, and even joined the dance circle.

The term Nez Perce was French for “nose pierced,” at the time applied to a wide region of Native territories. The Nimiipuu did not historically practice nose piercing, however the misnomer stuck in parlance long enough to become adopted in culture.

All of Baker County once was in the Nimiipuu territory, stretching to now Canada and south to Nevada, from the Columbia Basin to the ranges of Wyoming.

Together with Maurice “Pistol Pete” Wilson, the performers led a battle song in timed harmony before a staff of eagle feathers, something Wilson said is as entwined in their culture as the flag and the national anthem. The stars and stripes themselves are stitched into his attire, colors he earned by rite of his service in the Navy.



Maurice “Pistol Pete” Wilson and Stacia Morfin host the Nimiipuu Experience on July 21, 2022, at the Crossroads Carnegie Art Center, Baker City.

“You’ll see that I have a very beautiful dress on,” Morfin said, “and actually this dress is about 220 years old, and it’s made out of bighorn sheep.” Stacia was adorned in extensive beadwork, material that likely took weeks and months to produce by hand, no less with Venetian beads, delivered through

world-spanning trade routes in the 1800s.

Anthropology marks the presence of humanity in Northeastern Oregon for nearly eons. Their earliest indicators dated to nearly 16,000 years ago, according to carbon dating. The tribal stories as well reached far, far back.

“It was about 8,000 years ago when Mount Mazama blew,” Morfin said. “And our oral history tells us that when the sky our brother, he became black, and you could not see anything for approximately 30 days.”

“We go back to time immemorial,” Wilson said, “what I want to

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about experiencing the Nimiipuu culture, you can go to [www.nezpercetourism.com](http://www.nezpercetourism.com) or call 208-790-8873.

see is not just one or two generations, I want to see six or seven generations down the road that we’re still here and still strong.”

Following the route and eventual surrender of Chief Joseph, the tribe were forbidden from speaking their native language, or expressing their culture, which Morfin and Wilson wanted to emphasize. Loss of language also was a deep cultural wound, as the tribe was subjected to conform with the nation that now enveloped it.

“That’s why, today, I try to express to the kids about how important it is,” Wilson said, reflecting on getting his great grandchildren involved in powwow. “I told them, ‘you guys want to go to the powwow floor? I’ll make you guys outfits.’”

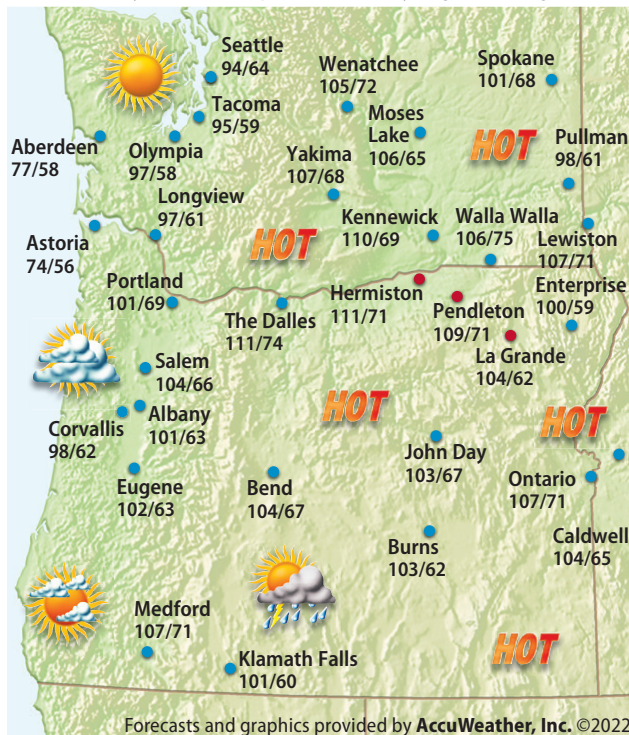
At the close, Pete supplied rhythm to his hide drum as Stacia lead the audience in a simple, traditional group dance. The small, strafing steps added together to turn the whole group into a churning wheel on the dance floor. They stuck on for photos and questions after the group, and encouraged others to visit the Lewiston, Idaho area.

## Forecast for Pendleton Area

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<b>HOT</b>	<b>HOT</b>			
Sunny; record-breaking temperatures	Record-breaking temperatures	Becoming windier and cooler	Mostly sunny, breezy and nice	An afternoon thunderstorm
<b>109° 71°</b>	<b>110° 76°</b>	<b>96° 66°</b>	<b>89° 59°</b>	<b>88° 58°</b>
PENDLETON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
<b>111° 71°</b>	<b>112° 76°</b>	<b>98° 68°</b>	<b>90° 61°</b>	<b>91° 60°</b>
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				

## OREGON FORECAST

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



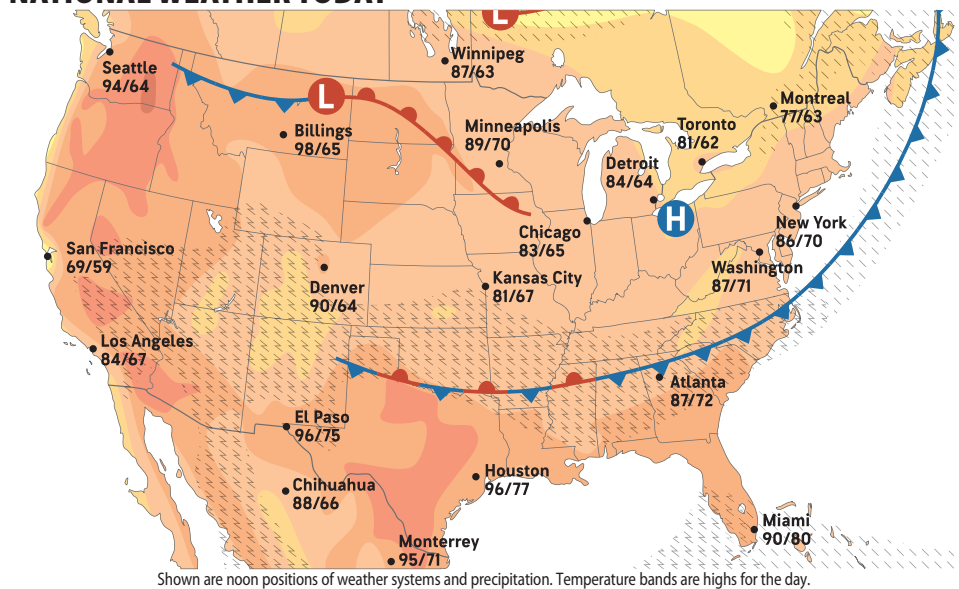
## ALMANAC

PENDLETON through 3 p.m. Fri.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Friday	108°	71°	
Normals	92°	60°	
Records	108° (2022)	38° (1917)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"		
Month to date	0.31"		
Normal month to date	0.34"		
Year to date	11.13"		
Last year to date	4.34"		
Normal year to date	8.29"		
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. Fri.			
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW	
Friday	109°	67°	
Normals	95°	60°	
Records	109° (2022)	42° (1959)	
PRECIPITATION			
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"		
Month to date	0.03"		
Normal month to date	0.11"		
Year to date	7.48"		
Last year to date	2.46"		
Normal year to date	5.13"		
WINDS (in mph)			
Today	Sun.		
Boardman	WSW 4-8	WSW 4-8	
Pendleton	WNW 6-12	NW 6-12	
SUN AND MOON			
Sunrise today	5:36 a.m.		
Sunset tonight	8:26 p.m.		
Moonrise today	7:19 a.m.		
Moonset today	9:55 p.m.		
First	Full	Last	New
Aug 5	Aug 11	Aug 18	Aug 27

## NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)  
High 110° in Pasco, Wash. Low 39° in West Yellowstone, Mont.

## NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



-10s	-0s	0s	10s	20s	30s	40s	50s	60s	70s	80s	90s	100s	110s
showers	t-storms	rain	flurries	snow	ice	cold front	warm front	stationary front	high	low			

## Pendleton suspects in 2021 Walla Walla group attack still await trial

By JEREMY BURNHAM  
Walla Walla Union-Bulletin

WALLA WALLA — It’s been a year since police investigated an alleged group attack involving Pendleton residents in Walla Walla that Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Jennine Christensen compared to an “old western.”

Five adult suspects still await trial in Walla Walla County Superior Court. Two minors also have been charged, and a sixth adult had his charges dismissed.

According to court documents, on July 5, 2021, Charles Thompkins Jr., 63, and a group of people, including his sons, drove from Pendleton to the 100 block of Prospect Avenue and confronted a man he claims stole a vehicle from him.

The group then allegedly beat the man and two other men after intimidating them with loaded guns, according to the documents.

One of the alleged victims had to have surgery for multiple breaks and fractures on his face and skull, documents noted.

Charles Thompkins, his son Habukkuk Thompkins, 21, Ira O. Toledo, 21, Santi-

ago R. Lara, 21, and Carlos R. Johnson, 22, all face charges of first-degree robbery, three counts of first-degree assault with a deadly weapon, first-degree burglary with a deadly weapon and criminal mischief with a deadly weapon.

All those charges are Class A felonies — with a maximum penalty of life in prison — except the criminal mischief charge, which is a Class C felony with a maximum penalty of five years in prison.

In addition, Charles Thompkins, who police said was the leader of the group, faces a charge of harassment, which is a gross misdemeanor. Meanwhile, charges against Jeremiah A. Thompkins, 19, have been dismissed.

A trial date of Oct. 18 has been set for Charles Thompkins, who is representing himself, and Toledo, who is represented by Jason R. Wargin of Wenatchee.

This does not mean the two trials will happen at once though. Walla Walla County Superior Court is scheduling multiple trials for the same day in case one or more of the cases gets postponed or settled.

The trial for Johnson, who is represented by Julie E. Karl of Waitsburg, is set for Nov. 29.

Lara was the last of the adults arrested in connection with the case. While he had charges filed against him in August 2021, he was just arrested this month and had his first appearance in court on July 18. No trial date has been set yet.

He’s also the only defendant still in jail, as the others have all posted bail. Lara’s bail is set at \$150,000, with no reduced cash equivalent. Normandy Park attorney Christopher Swaby has been assigned to represent him.

Habukkuk Thompkins, who is represented by Walla Walla attorney William D. McCool, was in court Monday, July 27, to modify his electronic home-monitoring order.

While he asked Judge Brandon L. Johnson to not impose an ankle monitor because he needed the ability to get a job and prepare for his wife to give birth to their child, Johnson ordered that the monitor be used.

He did, however, say the order could be adjusted to allow him to do what he needs to do, saying that it’s not so much about limiting where he goes, but instead knowing where he goes.

## IN BRIEF

### Baker City City Council approves psilocybin ballot title

BAKER CITY — Baker City Council approved giving City Recorder Dallas Brockett permission to pursue the psilocybin ballot title for the Nov. 8 statewide election.

Councilors unanimously approved the first full reading of the local law and the second reading by title only at their regular meeting Tuesday, July 26.

Councilors decided at their July 12 meeting to instruct staff to prepare the ballot title.

The ordinance bans psilocybin, or psychedelic mushrooms, manufacturing

and service centers.

While Oregon’s 2020 Ballot Measure 109 to legalize the psychoactive mushrooms passed statewide, Eastern Oregon overall voted it down. The law allows cities and counties to vote anew to ban psilocybin manufacturing and services in their jurisdictions.

Umatilla County Board of Commissioners and the Pendleton City Council also referred bans to voters in November.

Hermiston City Council at its meeting July 25 voted to ban psilocybin service centers. The council also referred the matter to voters to repeal the ordinance or let it stand.

—EO Media Group

**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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