

Furry friend greets Pendleton pilots

By CHARLY HOTCHKISS
East Oregonian



Yasser Marte/East Oregonian

The airport cat hangs out Monday, Oct. 10, 2022, with Marilyn Barrett, Boutique Air customer service agent, at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport in Pendleton.

PENDLETON — The night was dark and quiet at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport in Pendleton. In the distance a light descended from the clouds and the familiar roar of an incoming plane filled the air. Seconds later the squeak of the rubber tires touching down on the runway announced the plane had made contact with the ground.

Not two seconds after that, a faint cry came from the shadows — an insistent “meow” that repeated and grew louder as the creature moved closer.

Behind the fence that separates the tarmac from the outside of the airport, near the portable buildings housing temporary bathrooms and offices while renovation is underway, a cat trotted out of the darkness — a friendly tortoiseshell tabby female with a clipped left ear, letting people know she has been spayed, most likely through a local trap, neuter, return program.

The Boutique Air Pilatus PC-12 plane taxied along the tarmac toward the terminal, where eight passengers exited. The cat meowed excitedly, running and seeking attention.

Passengers milled past on the other side of the fence into the portable building housing Boutique’s offices. The cat meowed at them. People smiled and waved at the cat as they passed by their new four-legged friend.

Pilot Omar Reynoso, of Morgan Hill, California, has been working with Boutique Air for one year doing this route to and from Portland International Airport. Reynoso confirmed he and the airport cat are good friends.

“When I started they told me to feed the cat,” Reynoso said with a laugh. “Like it was one of my tasks.”

Reynoso explained he thinks the cat hears the plane coming as it approaches and comes running to wait for the

crew near the exit of the tarmac, as the cat is there waiting for them every evening after they land.

“It knows we are going to feed it,” Reynoso snickered.

The pilots wrap up their nightly duties and head over to their crew house to rest, and the little airport cat is right at their heels. The pilots feed her on the porch of the crew house. Reynoso said after awhile she got so comfy with him she started wandering inside, though really she is supposed to stay outside because some Boutique employees are allergic to cats.

“If we go out to town she waits for us to come back in the parking lot,” Reynoso said.

The cat throughout the day usually hangs out around the crew house, directly across the parking lot from the runway, according to airport staff.

Marilyn Barrett, customer service agent with Boutique Air, said the first time she actually met the cat she was doing laundry at the crew house in the middle of the day when the cat wandered into the laundry room to greet her.

“I had heard the meows and looked but never saw the cat,” Barret explained. “Then she came and found me.”

The tabby has no name, and why she chose to live at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport is unknown.

Powerline opponents plan appeal

By DICK MASON
The Observer



East Oregonian, File

The setting sun silhouettes transmission lines in Boardman Feb. 3, 2022, near the possible future starting point for the proposed 290-mile Boardman to Hemingway transmission line.

LA GRANDE — The Stop B2H Coalition is taking its case against the proposed Boardman to Hemingway transmission line to the Oregon Supreme Court.

The coalition intends to appeal a decision last month by Oregon’s Energy Facility Siting Council to approve a site certificate for the project. The permit authorizes construction of the 290-mile, 500-kilovolt line across five Eastern Oregon counties, including Union County. Federal agencies have already granted permission for the line to cross land they manage.

“We have not given up,” said Jim Kreider, co-chair of the Stop B2H Coalition, along with Irene Gilbert.

Sven Berg, a communications specialist with Idaho Power, a major supporter of the B2H project, said he feels good about Idaho Power’s position with regard to the appeal.

“That is their right under Oregon law but we are confident in the case we have built and laid out before the Energy Facility Siting Council,” he said. “We look forward to the resolution of this issue and beginning the con-

struction of this project.”

Berg said Idaho Power has started design work, geo technical and survey work and has been working with property owners to get easements for land it needs along the project route. He said Idaho Power hopes to start construction of the B2H transmission line in the second half of 2023.

Kreider said the Stop B2H Coalition will file its appeal in early December. Its deadline for filing the appeal is Sunday, Dec. 4.

Grounds upon which Stop B2H may file appeals include the decibel level of the noise created by the towers’ transmission lines. Kreider said the noise

level of B2H’s power line would exceed state noise standards.

An appeal may also be filed regarding the scenic values B2H power lines would impact at the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, 5 miles east of Baker City and Morgan Lake, Kreider said.

Stop B2H members have been meeting with their coalition’s attorneys to determine which issues it will base its appeal on. Recommendations will be presented by Stop B2H members for legal analysis.

“They will do a deep legal dive into the issues,” Kreider said.

He said members of Stop B2H are feeling more optimis-

tic because of the success they are having raising the money needed to bring their case to the Supreme Court. The largest donation has been a \$40,000 grant from the Oregon Historic Trails Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation “to educate and mobilize communities in five rural eastern Oregon counties to promote, advocate, and litigate for the protection and preservation of the Oregon Trail,” according to the grant application Stop B2H submitted to the Oregon Community Foundation.

Lois Barry, a member of the Stop B2H Coalition, said in a press release about the grant the B2H transmission line as planned, would cross remnants of the Oregon Trail in Eastern Oregon 17 times and “severely impact the experience of walking the pristine parts of the trail near the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center near Baker City.”

Towers along the B2H line would be as high as 180 feet. In comparison, standard towers are 75-90 feet tall. Plans call for the towers near the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, Kreider said, to be 130 feet tall.

Flour mill demolition prep begins

By DAKOTA
CASTETS-DIDIER
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The burnt portions of the Pendleton flour mill are set to be demolished, and a team from Northstar Demolition and Remediation Inc. was at the mill Thursday, Oct. 20, assessing the site and planning the demolition.

Matt Chambers, vice president of operations for Northstar Demolition and Remediation Inc. was overseeing the inspection and explained that they’re still in the preparatory phase of the demolition process.

“We’re doing surveys and the engineering,” Chambers said, “The structure is compro-

mised, so determining where the vulnerable points are and how to mitigate hazards associated with it, that’s what we’re in the process of doing right now.”

Chambers, who flew out from Denver to oversee the operations, was on site with a Northstar Demolition and Remediation Inc. team from Portland which will be carrying out the demolition.

“We have heavy involvement from engineering partners looking at structure, looking at the damage and examining old drawings to try and determine what’s the best scenario, how can we approach things, what’s being supported by what, those types of things,” Chambers said.

“Anytime you enter a demoli-

tion like this it’s different every time, so there’s no set box that you can pull out and say, ‘this is what we’re going to do.’ Right now we’re getting the engineers involved and figuring out what to do.”

The Pendleton Fire Department was also at the mill during the inspection, continuing their work of dousing hotspots throughout the burnt mill as they have since the fire.

“They requested we come down, they’re getting ready, so we’re trying to make sure to keep these hotspots down,” Lieutenant-Paramedic Craig Murstig, of the Pendleton Fire Department explained. “We may have to come back as they start working, for now we’re

putting water on it and knocking it down as best we can. The problem is there’s so much rubble material in there, you can’t get to all the fire. You get it doused down, after a few days it dries out and starts smoking again.”

While the demolition is still in its preparatory phase, the whole demolition process could be complete in just a few months, Chambers explained.

“Once we get through the engineering, hopefully we get everything down to a safer elevation within a month,” Chambers said. “Then probably another month and a half to two months to get everything cleaned up, gone, and get the site restored back to something usable.”

KUBOTA HARVEST RETURNS AVAILABLE FOR SALE!

M7-172D

- 168 Engine HP,† 4-Cylinder Turbocharged Kubota Diesel Engine
- Three Mechanical Rear Remotes • High Capacity 3-Point Hitch • High Spec and Spacious Cab

M6-141

- 141.4 Engine HP,† 4-Cylinder Turbocharged Kubota Diesel Engine
- Grand X Cab Offers Greater Comfort & Visibility • Intelli-Shift Transmission

M7-132D

- 128 Engine HP,† 4-Cylinder Turbocharged Kubota Diesel Engine
- Three Mechanical Rear Remotes • High Capacity 3-Point Hitch

TAKING ORDERS FOR 2023 HAY TOOLS! DM SERIES, DMC SERIES, RA SERIES, RA SERIES, TE SERIES & BV SERIES

BROKE DOWN? NEED MAINTENANCE? NEED PARTS?
WE’VE GOT YOU COVERED!

You chose Kubota for its quality and performance. Keep it running like new with the expert service and quality parts we provide at any of our Platt Equipment locations.

Full-Service Dealer with parts and service
24 hour service truck available for all makes and models!

plattequipment.com

211 Hwy 20 S • Hines, OR 97738
541-573-1322 • 541-589-3877