

LOCAL WEATHER

Pet of the week



Hi, my name is Jade. I am a female pit bull available for adoption at the Humane Society of Eastern Oregon Pet Rescue in Hermiston.

I was surrendered by my owner, and I need a new home. I've already had my shots, and I am good with children and other dogs. I am 6 months old and can be adopted for \$150. I come with a free vet check and a three-day return policy. If I am spayed within 60 days of adoption, my owner will receive a \$50 refund.

If you are interested in welcoming Jade to your family, please stop by the humane society, 1844 N.W. Geer Road, Hermiston, or call 541-564-6222.

IMESD:

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If Hermiston opts out, as the largest district, it will significantly weaken the region, not only financially, it would weaken us as a unit in moving forward in the state."

Mulvihill said what is especially disappointing about Hermiston leaving the IMESD is, this year, for the first time in several years, the service district would have been able to add some programs and staff previously cut. Instead, that funding will have to be allocated elsewhere.

"We have a better optimistic picture than we have had in several years," he said. "Now, we'll have to use money set aside to backfill the loss."

Mulvihill said he and his team will work with the superintendents of the remaining districts to determine where the cuts should be made.

He said he hopes a plan, identifying what reductions will be made and where, will be finished by February. Mulvihill said, while specific cuts have not been determined, the IMESD has unfortunately gotten good at making reductions. Since he started with the IMESD seven years ago, he said they have lost 85 positions.

Mulvihill said the IMESD will try to be creative, however, in recouping some of the revenue lost by working with different agencies.

"We do the technology for the city of Hermiston police," he said. "We do the city of Pendleton technology. We do printing for a lot of folks. The more the economy upticks, we can use that branch of our budget to help offset costs."

Maiocco said Tuesday, while the district appreciates what the IMESD does, the district will make more gains by opting out of the consortium.

"Unfortunately, while they say they are striving for excellence, Hermiston is striving to be the premier school district in the state," he said. "By definition, a consortium means that you are going to have to pull some folks down to some kind of common level of service provision."

Mulvihill stated in the board meeting, however, that the dollars allocated to the ESD based on Hermiston's student enrollment were never intended to serve only the Hermiston School District; they were supposed to benefit the common welfare of the districts and provide equity of services across the board.

IMESD board member Kelly Bissenger warned the Hermiston School Board that other districts and their students could suffer because of the lost revenue and possible staffing cuts that might ensue.

Maiocco, however, urged the board not to listen to the IMESD's "scare tactics."

"You have a \$2 million entitlement for students in Hermiston," he said. "\$1.8 (million) is what the state

has made available for flow-through to us, but it is a \$700,000 loss that we currently see in programming. We have advocated strongly, for years, to try and allocate an additional portion of that \$700,000 to Hermiston, but instead, we get the pinto program and the Cadillac goes to the surrounding districts."

Mulvihill said it was disappointing that the Hermiston School District decided to leave a team that has accomplished so much in recent years, but the IMESD must abide by the decision.

"This has been a very difficult decision for the Hermiston School District," he said. "I used to live in Hermiston. I recognize it has been very difficult. I don't agree with the decision, but I will agree to disagree and will support their decision."

Prior to making their vote Tuesday, Hermiston board member Jason Middleton said he has been a long-time supporter of the ESD and still is.

"It saddens me that what is good politically doesn't echo what is possibly good for the students in our district," he said.

Board member Duron, who voted against Hermiston opting out of the IMESD, said, as a parent, she thought about the students in other districts who could be impacted.

"I'm thinking about how one decision, that is made tonight, could impact other students not being able to have access to the services they need because of a decision we made," she said.

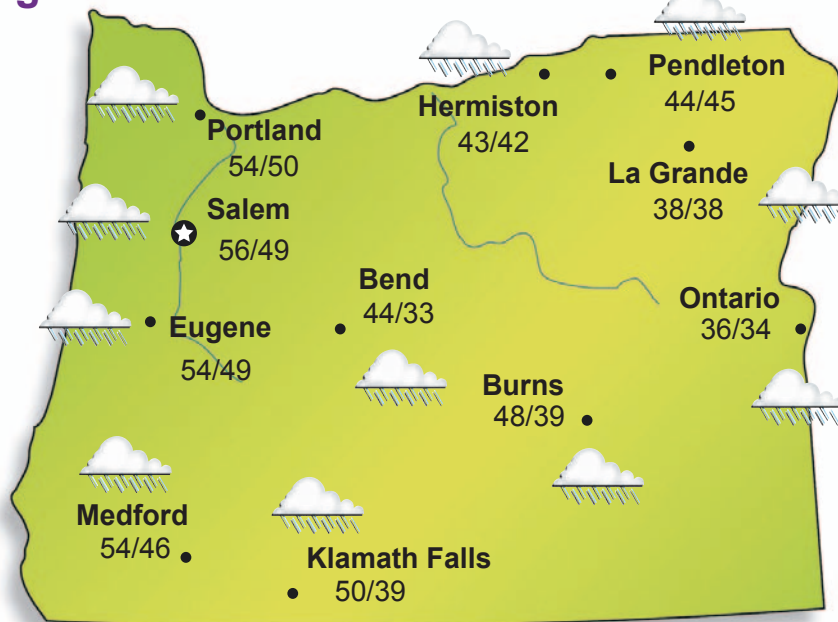
Today's Weather

Local 5-Day Forecast

Sat 1/17	Sun 1/18	Mon 1/19	Tue 1/20	Wed 1/21
43/42	55/39	51/34	45/29	41/30
Showers early, becoming a steady rain later in the day. High 43F.	Morning showers. Highs in the mid 50s and lows in the upper 30s.	Abundant sunshine. Highs in the low 50s and lows in the mid 30s.	More sun than clouds. Highs in the mid 40s and lows in the upper 20s.	Mostly sunny. Highs in the low 40s and lows in the low 30s.
Sunrise 7:33 AM Sunset 4:41 PM	Sunrise 7:32 AM Sunset 4:42 PM	Sunrise 7:32 AM Sunset 4:44 PM	Sunrise 7:31 AM Sunset 4:45 PM	Sunrise 7:30 AM Sunset 4:46 PM

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Oregon At A Glance



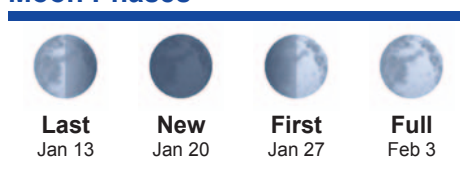
Area Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Albany	55	50	rain	Florence	56	50	rain	Newport	57	51	rain
Ashland	51	47	rain	Grants Pass	49	47	rain	Pendleton	44	45	rain
Astoria	52	46	rain	Hermiston	43	42	rain	Portland	54	50	rain
Baker City	33	32	mixed	John Day	42	40	rain	Redmond	49	40	rain
Bend	44	33	rain	Klamath Falls	50	39	rain	Roseburg	54	51	rain
Brookings	56	51	rain	La Grande	38	38	rain	Salem	56	49	rain
Burns	48	39	rain	Lakeview	48	38	rain	Springfield	53	49	rain
Coos Bay	59	51	rain	Lincoln City	57	50	rain	The Dalles	44	43	rain
Corvallis	55	50	rain	McMinnville	55	48	rain	Tillamook	58	48	rain
Eugene	54	49	rain	Medford	54	46	rain	Vale	35	33	rain

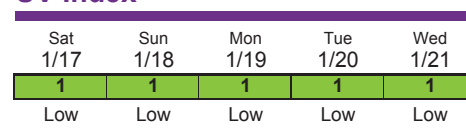
National Cities

City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.	City	Hi	Lo	Cond.
Atlanta	57	37	mst sunny	Houston	66	45	pt sunny	Phoenix	72	49	sunny
Boston	23	19	sunny	Los Angeles	75	52	sunny	San Francisco	65	52	pt sunny
Chicago	38	30	windy	Miami	77	64	pt sunny	Seattle	47	47	rain
Dallas	67	38	sunny	Minneapolis	38	26	windy	St. Louis	56	33	pt sunny
Denver	50	29	mst sunny	New York	28	26	sunny	Washington, DC	39	33	mst sunny

Moon Phases



UV Index



The UV Index is measured on a 0 - 11 number scale, with a higher UV Index showing the need for greater skin protection.

RESCUE:

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which is much different than Pendleton's process, he said.

"What's interesting is the city of Pendleton is in the process of trying to renegotiate their contract with PAWS because, right now, the police department has their own facility where they hold their dogs for the five days," he said.

After the holding period, Morgan said PAWS employees do not take all of the dogs from the police department. He said PAWS employees choose what dogs the shelter will admit, and the city is forced to pay additional fees for the remaining animals.

"There have been several instances where the city of Pendleton has had to take those animals to Pet Rescue because PAWS didn't want to destroy them," he said.

Putnam said Pet Rescue is an open-door shelter; it will accept all the animals brought in by the police department or surrendered by their owners, who are also charged a fee to cover the costs. HPD brought



SEAN HART PHOTO

Humane Society of Eastern Oregon Pet Rescue Executive Director and Manager Beau Putnam poses with Kit, a dog he personally adopted from the Hermiston shelter, Thursday afternoon.

in 204 dogs last year, Putnam said, and when no-kill shelters in Pendleton and the Tri-Cities are at full capacity, people will bring in animals that are turned away there to his shelter. Pet Rescue has 30 dog kennels, and sometimes two dogs are housed in a single kennel.

In order for the shelter to

be able to continue accepting all dogs, some that have not been adopted must be euthanized, he said.

"Euthanasia is always a last resort," Putnam said. "As long as they're healthy and not aggressive, I will do the best I can to find that animal a home. It's every shelter's goal to be a no-kill."

He said the term "no-kill" can also be confusing and misleading: Some believe animals are never euthanized, while others believe only healthy, non-aggressive animals are kept, and others believe no-kill shelters have a 90-percent adoption rate. Some shelters even use the term for marketing but still have some animals euthanized elsewhere by veterinarians or other facilities.

Putnam said Pet Rescue is honest with the community and has never claimed to be a no-kill shelter. He said 61 percent of the dogs brought in find homes through adoption or are reunited with their owners. Of the animals euthanized, some are unhealthy while others are aggressive. He said the 39-percent euthanasia rate is also inflated because some owners bring in injured and sick animals just to be euthanized.

Putnam said some animals are transferred to other shelters, but breed and temperament restrictions prevent some from being placed elsewhere. He said most of the animals are listed on Petfinder.com, and the shelter is in

the process of creating a website to help find homes for the animals.

He said, while people have complained the shelter does not accept donations or volunteers, that is not true. People can fill out volunteer applications at the shelter and donate supplies or money at the shelter, through the mail or online via PayPal through a link on the shelter's Facebook page. He said other people have complained the facility is dirty, but many who come in comment on its cleanliness.

"I'd say most of the negative flack that we get is from people who are not here regularly," he said. "There's many reasons people have negative comments about us, but 90 percent of people have a good experience because we're finding homes for animals. ... I encourage people to come and see for yourself."

Judy Kopta, Hermiston, said she recently read negative comments about Pet Rescue on Facebook and was surprised when she visited the shelter Thursday.

"It's very nice," she said of the shelter. "I'm very, very impressed with it. It's clean,

smells good. I think they do a wonderful job taking care of Pet Rescue."

Two of Kopta's grandchildren took volunteer applications home to fill out, as two Hermiston student volunteers came in and walked some of the dogs.

Putnam said the shelter was built in 1994 after his wife's grandmother felt there was a need for one in the area.

"Prior to this facility being created, animals were just running everywhere," he said. "Basically, there was no place to take them. She saw a need, and she basically took them all home. People don't necessarily see us as home, but they're warm, and they're fed. They're watered. They're taken care of while we do our best to replace them in homes. I often question what would happen if we did close down. I think people should ask that. We're doing the best we can here, and we're always trying to improve each day."

The Humane Society of Eastern Oregon Pet Rescue is open to the public from noon to 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays at 1844 N.W. Geer Road.

SIPE:

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the world championships. Merklely visited the team in November 2014 to congratulate them on all their accomplishments.

"Umatilla's robotics team is a home-grown Oregon success story to be incredibly proud of, and I'm excited to honor Umatilla's success by bringing Superintendent Heidi Sipe to the State of the Union this year," Merklely said in a press release. "One of the biggest challenges our country faces today is how to ensure that our kids are getting a strong STEM education that will prepare them for the global econ-

omy and help keep good, middle-class jobs here in the United States."

Merkley said the work that Sipe, her students and Umatilla community members have put into building the program is creating huge returns.

"Getting our students engaged in STEM projects and providing them with hands-on experience is exactly what we should be doing, and exactly what this program provides," he said in the press release. "I'm thrilled that she'll be here in the Capitol as the President lays out his vision to take on these and many other challenges."

Sipe said Umatilla students now have access to STEM classes during

the day and after school and can take dual credit courses through Eastern Promise to help them leave high school with both training and college certifications, participate in an after-school program focused specifically on STEM education and take online computer and technology classes that have spurred a state-wide effort for job seekers.

"It is all very overwhelming, to be honest," she said of Umatilla's STEM education program success. "All I was ever trying to do is just create opportunities for our students in Umatilla. I didn't expect that the excitement would grow beyond borders of our town. This gives me

such hope for our region. I think eastern Oregon will grow more and more with STEM, and I think it will become a destination for STEM. I am proud of our whole region."

Sipe said students in Umatilla now have amazing opportunities, and it all started with the nudge from Merklely in 2011. She said she is incredibly grateful for all he has done for the Umatilla community and is honored to join him in Washington, D.C., for the State of the Union speech.

Sipe said she received the invitation during a meeting which continued for the rest of the afternoon.

"I hung up the phone and had to go back into

that meeting," she said. "It was just torturous sitting through the meeting when I had all these questions developing."

She said during a meeting break two hours later she called Merklely's staff member back.

"I phoned her back, and I had to ask, 'Is this a joke? Is this real?'" she said. "It did not possibly seem that it could be real."

Sipe said she will be paying her own way to Washington, D.C., so her husband and children can also attend. She said, while she attends the State of the Union festivities, her children and husband will be meeting with Susan Lexter, Merklely's policy adviser on health and education

and talk with her about robotics and opportunities for STEM education in rural areas.

As a family, they will also tour various places including the White House, the Capitol building and the Library of Congress.

"The whole experience, it is just phenomenal," Sipe said. "I just wish that others could join me in the experience because it doesn't seem right that it is just me going. The honor is mine because of the work of so many others. I wish that everyone could go and celebrate as a community because Umatilla has really embraced STEM."

The State of the Union will be delivered at 6 p.m. Pacific time Tuesday.