



Kathy Aney/East Oregonian, File

Seventeen-year-old Weston-McEwen senior Bailey Munck testifies remotely from Pendleton on March 25, 2021, for Senate Bill 649, known as Bailey's Bill. The bill increases penalties for criminal sexual contact with an underage victim when the defendant is the victim's teacher.

BILL

Continued from Page 1A

also doesn't remember the rule being used. "This is an extremely rare occurrence," Sekerak said. "When this many members of a committee want to do something, the chair usually works something out." Noble, a former McMinnville police chief, said he knew about the rule because he studied the rule-book the same way he studied the criminal code as a law enforcement officer.

gonian. "I just have a problem with picking and choosing who gets justice."

Levy is all in. She hopes to meet Munck, now 17, and tell her how proud of her she is.

"It's criminally wrong that teachers aren't held to the same high standard as coaches," she said. "Children are our greatest assets and we need to protect them."

Levy will testify on May 18, along with Hansell, Munck and others.

"Children are our greatest assets and we need to protect them."

— Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo

"It's in my nature to get a feel for what's out there," he said.

Noble said committee members tried other strategies first. When efforts to urge Bynum to schedule a hearing failed, they finally resorted to House Rule 8.20. Noble said all nine members simply thought the bill deserved to be considered.

"People who we entrust with our youth must be held to a higher standard," he said. "They have to be held accountable."

Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo, who is shepherding the bill on the House side, felt relief when the bill became unstuck. Bynum had stopped by Levy's desk to let her know the bill was moving again.

Levy said she had communicated with Bynum about her reasons for holding up the bill, but said, "I'm going to let her speak for herself."

A request to Bynum by the East Oregonian was not returned by press time. However, Bynum told Oregonian reporter Chris Lehman that she is frustrated about legislation designed to dial back the effects of Measure 11 that is stalled. She expressed no reservations about Bailey's Bill, but seemed to be using it as a bargaining chip.

"I don't have any problems with the bill itself," she told the Ore-

"What is the significant difference between a teacher and a coach? Do coaches somehow carry more authority than a teacher might?" she asked the senators. "Coaches and teachers should be prosecuted equally as they both have responsibility for students' safety and they both have positions of authority and power over their students and parents."

If Munck's abuser, DeYoe, had been a coach, he might have been convicted of a Class C felony, a crime that carries sentences up to five years in prison and a \$125,000 fine. But DeYoe wasn't technically a coach. Instead, DeYoe, 31, got a lighter sentence. In the plea deal, he forfeited his teaching license, terminated his housing lease in Athena and agreed to have no contact with minors who are not family members. He spent a night in the Umatilla County Jail and will serve five years probation. He wasn't required to register as a sex offender.

Adding the words "and teachers" to the existing law would close the loophole, said Munck and others who testified that day. This is a simple fix, they said.

"This is a solid bipartisan bill," Levy said. "It should pass out of the House with full support and go to the governor's desk to be signed."

STEM

Continued from Page 1A

ReMake Learning Days Across America also funded several local events throughout Oregon to enlist caregivers, parents and children in STEM activities. Meghan Ballard hosted two such events, May 11 and May 14, in La Grande.

One was a visit to Pete's Pond on Miller Drive, where Ballard and Boy Scout Troop 515 planted native trees and shrubs with the goal of strengthening the water quality and stimulating the local ecosystem.

"For young learners, and all ages really, getting that hands-on experience really helps cement the concepts in their brain," Ballard said. "Being able to see it visually and learn about it through talking and discussions while seeing your peers do it helps out a lot."

The local scouts planted upward of 20 trees and shrubs, including Oregon's state flower, the Oregon grape. GO STEM Hub and Plantworks in Cove donated the plants for the event.

On May 14, a younger crowd gathered to take part in an aquatic insect and water quality survey at Pete's Pond. The preschoolers in attendance sampled for macroinvertebrates in the pond and created arts and crafts.

While COVID-19 limited the scope of in-person events, the largely virtual STEM Week went



Alex Wittwer/The Observer

From left, Xavier Green, Avery Durr, Lucy Wright and Aria Wright inspect water samples from Pete's Pond, La Grande, on Friday, May 14, 2021, during a STEM Week event.



Davis Carbaugh/The Observer

Members of the Boy Scout Troup 515 plant trees near Pete's Pond in La Grande on Tuesday, May 11, 2021, as part of STEM Week.

on smoothly throughout Oregon. "We've really focused on being able to provide the

resources we would have done in person," Melville said. "We are holding sessions and different events in

person, but making sure that we're following protocols and providing those opportunities online as well."

Among the online resources, GO STEM Hub purchased the license for an online showing of "Picture a Scientist," a 2020 Tribeca Film Festival selection that documents a new age of women in STEM exploration and careers.

"I hope they find that they can enjoy science, math and engineering," Rainboth said of those who participated in STEM Week. "Experiencing what they're good at leads to critical thinking, problem solving and career connections."

Learn more about STEM education in Eastern Oregon at www.go-stem.org.

RESIDENCY

Continued from Page 1A

from a pre-production standpoint."

The cohort consists of four former film festival participants and two newcomers.

Four of the filmmakers reside in California, while Parker Winship is from Wisconsin and Karina Lomlin Ripper is from Portland. Samantha Crainich is originally from Alabama and Alexander Craven hails from Colorado.

The previous roles of these filmmakers include directing, producing, acting and working in art departments.

Natalie Metzger, a film producer, is using the change of scenery to inspire creativity and experience a new community.

"My bread and butter is mostly producing, so switching from the fast pace of producing to slowing down was a big shift," Metzger said. "Getting to know people, getting to know the area and hiking through the hills has been magical."

Director H. Nelson Tracey said he hopes the residency program continues and more filmmakers can come to know La Grande and experience this creative process.

"It feels like there's a potential for a lot of great stuff," Tracey said. "With Chris specifically and what he's creating, there's a sense of ambition and potential energy here that is not often found in a regional film festival."



Davis Carbaugh/The Observer

The Eastern Oregon Film Festival's inaugural filmmaker residency cohort concludes a meeting Saturday, May 15, 2021, at HQ on Depot Street, La Grande. Festival director Chris Jennings (far left) is in charge of organizing the residency and presenting opportunities for the filmmakers.

In addition to their work, the filmmakers are visiting local restaurants, events, hikes and venues to inspire them during their time in Eastern Oregon. The group visited the La Grande Farmers Market on its opening day Saturday, May 15, and later attended "Love Is a Scandal: An Evening of Anton Chekhov One Acts" at the Elgin Opera House.

Jennings and the cohort primarily meet at HQ on Depot Street, La Grande, a creative media studio and live event venue. After visiting the farmers market, the group gathered at HQ to have an open discussion about logistics of the EOFF and other local filmmaking opportunities.

"I have the mindset of writing a project here,

but also coming back and making a movie here," Tracey said.

The group of filmmakers also visited the Liberty Theatre on Adams Avenue in La Grande. The 2021 EOFF will host most of its showings at the historic venue following the completion of renovations this fall.

"It feels like there's a lot of stuff happening in La Grande, with the Liberty Theatre being renovated too," Metzger said. "It feels like there's this energy here, like a cultural hub, which I think is special."

According to the Liberty Theatre Foundation, Eastern Oregon University donated 300 seats to be installed in the theater, and Loso Hall on campus will

be used for the 2021 EOFF as well. HQ also will feature as a venue for this year's festival.

"The next step is for one of them to come back and make a movie," Jennings said. "If we can create a cycle of that with our programming, then not only are we hitting a tourism aspect but we're also building a real viable industry."

Near the conclusion of the residency, the cohort will participate in a public forum, discussing the stay in La Grande and filmmaking opportunities moving forward. The event will begin at 7 p.m. Friday, May 21, at HQ. For more information, visit the Eastern Oregon Film Festival's Facebook page and www.eofilmfest.com.

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