

TOP 10 STORIES OF 2014

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6 Barreto defeats Turner. John Turner had the blessing and the endorsement of retiring District 58 state senator Bob Jenson. But it was not enough to hold off Union County outsider Greg Barreto, who easily won the Republican primary in May and the general election in November. Barreto, a Cove businessman who has never held public office, said he will bring free-market, constitutional principles to the next legislative session in Salem. He marks the end of a decades-long run of the Pendleton area being the seat of power in District 58.



Staff photos by E.J. Harris

No. 6 Republican candidate John Turner, center, reacts to the Umatilla County election results in his race against Greg Barreto in the Republican primary for House District 58 last May in Pendleton. Turner lost to Barreto by a two-to-one margin in the Republican primary.

7 Craigen sentenced. George West Craigen was sentenced Oct. 7 to 27 years to life in prison for the 2011 murder of Cecil "Rob" Carter in Milton-Freewater. A week earlier, jurors deliberated for just four hours before finding Craigen guilty of shooting and killing Carter, despite arguments by Craigen's attorneys that he suffered delusions and was insane at the time of the murder. The trial, which started Sept. 15, was the first murder trial in Umatilla County in nearly a decade.



Staff photos by E.J. Harris

No. 7 Defendant George West Craigen pleads his case to Malheur County Circuit Court Judge Lung Hung during a motions hearing last February at the Umatilla County Courthouse in Pendleton.

8 EOTEC breaks ground. Decades after officials envisioned a new fair and rodeo grounds outside of Hermiston, that dream became a reality on Dec. 4 at the groundbreaking of the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center. The start to construction came after the EOTEC authority board unveiled detailed plans in April, letting taxpayers see for the first time exactly what they were getting for

their money. The result was mixed reviews from the general public but a show of support from a variety of community partners who

stepped up with in-kind donations. The project will provide a home for the Umatilla County Fair, Farm-City Pro Rodeo and other



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

No. 10 An excavator tears down a wall on a century-old farmhouse overlooking the 5,000-gallon diesel spill cleanup site last April off Highway 37 north of Pendleton.

events starting in 2016, leaving the old fairgrounds in the center of town as room for the rapidly-growing Hermiston School District to expand.

9 Pendleton launches UAS Range. With city money on the line, Pendleton charged ahead with opening a test range for unmanned aerial vehicles based at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport. Pendleton was approved by the Federal Aviation Administration to conduct testing on drones Dec. 30, 2013. Shortly thereafter, the city entered a contract with Peak 3 Technical Services to develop a range at the airport. While the Pendleton UAS Range would conduct its first test nine months after the FAA first approved the city as a test site, a bright future isn't a guarantee. An Oregon State University study projected more than 300 jobs and nine-figure economic impact, but the city has

already invested \$535,000 and is yet to see any revenue.

10 Diesel Spilled. Almost 5,000 gallons of diesel spilled Feb. 28 after a fuel trailer broke loose and tumbled down an embankment onto land belonging to Hill Ranches, just north of Pendleton. The driver of the Maverik truck reportedly swerved to avoid a deer while driving on Highway 37. The spill touched off a massive Oregon Department of Environmental Quality cleanup of one of the largest diesel spills in state history. By the time soil samples tested clean, workers had razed a century-old farmhouse, capped two wells and hauled away 32,094 tons of contaminated soil. Maverik, a convenience store chain, paid a \$2,400 DEQ fine for endangering groundwater and several million dollars for the cleanup.

SHOOTING: 'Even our victims refuse to talk to us, stating they will take care of it later'

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trauma center. Roberts also said the investigation into a shooting that happened minutes before remains hot. Pendleton police Dec. 23 at 11:48 p.m. rushed to the 1400 block of Northwest Despain Avenue in response to several 9-1-1 calls reporting shots fired. An officer arrested

ed ex-con Gregory Tinnell, 43, in connection with that shooting on a weapons violation. Police also found two .45 caliber rounds in the front door of 1112 N.W. Furnish Ave., Pendleton. Roberts said that shooting is connected with a Nov. 23 shooting that left bullet holes in a residence in the 300 block of Northwest 14th Street. "What we have is a couple

of groups of 20-somethings that have been involved in incidents over the last few months," he said. "The majority of which have resulted in subjects being stabbed." But when police arrive, he said, no one talks. Roberts said some of the individuals profess gang membership and claim affiliation with Sureños, which is associated with the Mexican Mafia.

Most couchsurf from place to place and support themselves through illegal activities, Roberts said, but when they get together to drink and party, someone offends someone else and the fight is on. Roberts said the situation is frustrating on several levels, from a lack of sanctions that could keep the offenders

behind bars to the code of silence they live behind. "Even our victims refuse to talk to us, stating they will take care of it later," Roberts said. "It's that kind of mentality." That silence also makes it impossible for police to predict what these groups will do next. At least so far the

bloodshed and violence has been among group members and not inflicted upon the general population, Roberts said, but there is no doubt these groups are a public safety problem.

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NEW YEAR: Every piece fits into the bigger picture

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resources, health and police, the economy and education. You'll find previews of upcoming community events and photos of what the day looked like and what happened. Tick, tick, tick. Every piece fits into the bigger picture, which is being painted each day as the people of the Eastern Oregon go about their lives. As you read the top 10 stories list on today's front page, you're again getting a snapshot. They're incredibly brief blurbs on the complex issues that defined the year. And most of the stories span beyond the confines of 2014. The planned coal export facility planning began well before Jan. 1

and will certainly be a hot issue in the coming years. EOTEC may have broken ground this year, but has been an idea for more than 30 years and won't open for another two. Hermiston's football team sure didn't win the state football title with one season of hard work, and Greg Barreto didn't win a seat in the Oregon House just on the strength of a good election day — and his story certainly isn't over. Because news stories, like the clock, don't have a beginning and an end. We report on the parts that affect us, but can never gather up all the strands that lead to an event or estimate its impact. That's what the history books are for. Instead, we try to explain

the moments as they come. We give the context that we find helpful, but our reporters are given inch counts and deadlines, and know that their task isn't to tell everything every time. We want our readers to be able to pick up any given newspaper and know what's happening on a given day. But we hope by reading the newspaper every day, even the seemingly mundane stories, you'll come away with a better view of the clock — and the world. Daniel Wattenburger is the managing editor of the East Oregonian. Contact him at dwattenburger@eastoregonian.com, 541-278-2673 or on Twitter @DWattenburger.

NEIGHBOR: Was teaching at college by age 23

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scholar who works at the Columbia Basin Agricultural Research Center in Pendleton. Ghimire and his five sisters grew up in a Nepalese farming village near the base of Mount Annapurna, the world's 10th highest mountain. His family grew rice, corn, millet, bananas, guavas, cowpeas, soybeans and pumpkins on land terraced into the side of a hill. He walked up a 50-60-percent slope to get to school each day. In eighth grade, Ghimire decided to become a soil scientist. "We learned that we lose 22 tons of soil a year," Ghimire said. "If we kept losing this amount of soil, Nepal will become a mountain desert." At the Tribhuvan University Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science in Rampur, he saw his first Holstein cow and mango orchard. Ghimire earned his undergraduate and master's degrees and was teaching at the college by age 23. He also met his future wife, Prakriti

"From my home in Nepal, I could see a whole mountain range, but I never touched snow." — Rajan Ghimire Bista, an agriculturist who also works at the agricultural center. Their family now includes 3-year-old son Prasad. The soil scientist's journey to Pendleton included several months in the Netherlands, where he researched organic potatoes, and five years at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, where he worked his way up from graduate assistant to post-doctoral research associate. Oddly, it was in Wyoming that Ghimire experienced snow up close and personal for the first time. "From my home in Nepal, I could see a whole mountain range," he said, "but I never touched snow." In Pendleton, Ghimire and Bista looked at home in their University of Wyoming T-shirts, which bear

a logo strikingly similar to the Pendleton Round-Up cowboy. The family experienced the Round-Up, where their little boy discovered he loved watching horse racing and bull riding, but had to turn his head during the roping. Ghimire and Bista speak three languages — their native Nepali, English and Hindi. Prasad speaks mixed Nepali-English. At work, Ghimire spends his days studying soil organic matter in different management systems for producing dryland winter wheat and doing other projects that keep his brain engaged. One draw of the research station, he said, is its history of 80 years of continuous research. "There is one research plot started in 1931 and another in 1940," he said. Nepal stays in Ghimire's thoughts. He hopes to learn as much as he can about increasing productivity and sustainability to help Nepalese farmers improve food production and conserve soil. Contact Kathy Aney at kaney@eastoregonian.com or call 541-966-0810.

