



EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2013 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

HERMISTON



ROOM TO PLAY

Elizabeth Collins of Kennewick walks along the exercise path at Riverfront Park Tuesday in Hermiston. Collins said she is in Hermiston to be with her ill mother and often takes a break to go on a "walkabout" in the park.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

City considers adding new parks for skaters, dogs, east-side residents

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Hermiston's population has outgrown its park system, according to Parks and Recreation director Larry Fetter.

Fetter told the city council during a Monday work session that the city needed to start seriously looking for opportunities to add another park.

"We are under-served relative to the national standard," he said.

That national standard sug-

gests cities have 10 acres of park space per every 1,000 residents. Hermiston, then, should have about 175 acres of city parks but has only 101.

That shortage is particularly noticeable to families living on the east side of town, Fetter said. Highway 395 splits the city's population roughly in half, but 94 of the city's 101 acres of parks are located west of the highway.

That is because, he said, Hermiston "has enjoyed park growth mostly through donated



Sunset Park is one of three Hermiston Parks on the east side of Highway 395. The city plans to double the size of the park and add new equipment.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

property." The result has been that the increased property values and other benefits of neighborhood parks have mostly fall-

en to residents on the west side. The city did just purchase a

See PARKS/8A

Ranchers get more latitude to kill wolves

Success in Eastern Oregon moves species to Phase II

By GEORGE PLAVERN
East Oregonian

Eastern Oregon's wolf population reached a key milestone in 2014 that not only gives ranchers more leeway to protect their livestock, but could lead to removing the predators from the state Endangered Species List entirely.

For the third year in a row, the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife counted at least four breeding pairs of wolves among packs east of highways 395, 78 and 95, triggering Phase II of the agency's Wolf Management and Conservation Plan.

A breeding pair is defined by ODFW as a pair of adult wolves which produce at least two pups that survive to the end of the year. Of the nine wolf packs in Oregon, seven were breeding pairs in 2014 — six in the state's north-east corner. Only the Innaha pack was found without a breeding pair, and the Umatilla River pack has not yet been surveyed.

Under Phase I of the management plan, ranchers were already allowed to shoot wolves in the process of biting, wounding or killing livestock. Now under Phase II, ranchers can shoot a wolf caught chasing after herds on the

See WOLVES/8A

Driver charged in car wreck that killed Hermiston man

East Oregonian

A Klamath County grand jury Monday indicted the driver in the Dec. 28 crash that killed 22-year-old Hermiston man Garrett Zimmer and another passenger.

Gauge Lee Gray, 22, of Klamath Falls was charged with two counts of first- and second-degree manslaughter and driving under the influence of intoxicants for the single-vehicle rollover that killed Zimmer and Marri D. Young-Wellbaum, 26, of Eagle Point.

Gray was arrested without incident and is lodged in the Klamath County Jail.

Zimmer and Young-Wellbaum died in the early morning wreck on Highway 140 near Klamath Falls. They were traveling west when the Ford Ranger pickup driven by Gray left the roadway. The vehicle collided with a lamp post and highway sign before rolling several times and coming to rest in a pasture.

The two passengers died at the scene after being ejected from the vehicle and emergency workers took Gray to Sky Lakes Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. None were wearing seat belts, according to Oregon State Police.

Zimmer had recently stepped into the shoes of longtime insurance agent and his grandfather, Dell Ray Zimmer, who was set to officially retire Jan. 1. He was also the youngest member of Hermiston Rotary.



Photo by Kayla McKinstry

Ezra McKinstry rests in the hospital in Phoenix after having a stroke Sunday. The toddler is likely the youngest person in Arizona to receive the clot-busting drug tPA to improve odds of recovery.

Toddler suffers stroke

Tiny stroke victim might be youngest person ever to receive clot-busting drug

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

The average stroke victim is older than 65.

So forgive parents Casey and Kayla McKinstry that they didn't instantly realize their 11-month-old son Ezra was having pre-stroke symptoms Sunday. The toddler had woken up that morning out of sorts.

"He was kind of off, irritable and drooling more than usual," Casey said. "He didn't have much of an appetite."

Midday, Kayla put him in his high-chair and gave him lunch. He used his left hand to feed himself, but the food

"This is a reality check — anything could happen at any time."

— Casey McKinstry, Ezra's father

fell from his mouth. His alarmed parents also noticed that the little boy's right arm hung limp and started twitching.

"His right hand was spasming," Kayla said. "He kept clenching his fist."

The couple called 9-1-1. In short order, EMTs loaded the toddler into an ambulance and drove about 30 minutes to the Phoenix Children's Hospital. Doctors started him on a battery of tests including an MRI, heart echocardiogram and blood tests. The MRI revealed a swollen section of brain with no blood flow. Ezra had suffered a stroke.

See EZRA/8A

Kitzhaber to offer ideas on Measure 91 implementation

Favors merging recreational, medical systems

By PETER WONG
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Gov. John Kitzhaber plans to release a statement soon about what he wants the Oregon Liquor Control Commission and lawmakers to consider as they implement recreational use of marijuana in Oregon.

Kitzhaber, at a meeting Tuesday sponsored by The Associated Press, said he would present a "series of principles" probably later this week. He said his more specif-

ic recommendations are likely to emerge later as the OLCC and lawmakers work through the process.

Although Kitzhaber plans to draft a letter to the OLCC, he acknowledges that lawmakers will have to be involved in some of the ideas he wants studied.

The five members of OLCC has begun a statewide tour soon to shape its rulemaking process, and lawmakers begin their 160-day session on Feb. 2.

See MARIJUANA/8A



Gov. Kitzhaber



FILE/Associated Press

A sample of marijuana is shown inside the dispensary at Collective Awakenings in 2014 in Portland. Gov. John Kitzhaber said he supports merging the medical marijuana system with newly passed recreational uses.

