

**PENDLETON  
DOMINATES  
HOOD RIVER  
GIRLS BBALL/1B**

Orphans sing out  
despite painful lives  
**LIFESTYLES 1C**



**REGION:**  
Bird flu makes debut in  
Eastern Oregon **3A**  
**ENTERTAINMENT:**  
Warrant to headline  
Umatilla County Fair **3C**

# EAST OREGONIAN

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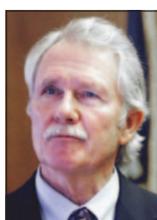
\$1.50

## AG considers Kitzhaber/Hayes investigation

By **HILLARY BORRUD**  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum said her office is looking into whether to launch an investigation of first lady Cylvia Hayes' private consulting business and Gov. John Kitzhaber's possible involvement in securing some of those contracts.

"Recent allegations relating to Governor Kitzhaber and Ms.



Kitzhaber



Hayes

Hayes are very serious — and troubling," Rosenblum said in a statement emailed to the EO

**More inside**

Records reveal more overlap between Hayes' private work, public policy  
**See page 11A**

Media Group/Pamplin Media Group Capital Bureau Friday morning. "My office is considering all of our legal options to ensure that we are best serving the state."

Rosenblum issued the statement after Republican state lawmakers called for her to investigate Kitzhaber and Hayes' activities. News has continued to trickle out in recent months that Hayes used state resources to further her consulting business and was paid by groups with an interest in state policy.

Willamette Week first reported in October that Hayes was paid

See **INVESTIGATION/12A**

## Diploma deficiency

Alternative schools focus on completion, not just four-year graduation

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
East Oregonian

Their names often include buzzwords like "opportunity," "innovation" or "success," but on paper most alternative schools don't look like they're accomplishing any of those things.

That's because when it comes to alternative schools, success is defined a little differently.

Hermiston and Pendleton's alternative schools both graduated 10 percent of their senior class on time in 2014, a combined 12 students out of 131 that took classes there. That rate is in line with the state average for alternative schools, though the definition is loose and apples-to-apples comparisons are difficult. Hermiston's Innovative Learning Center started with 89 seniors and Pendleton's Hawthorne Jr./Sr. High had 42.

When combined with the rest of the student body, Hermiston had a 68 percent graduation rate and Pendleton was at 72 percent, with the state of Oregon also at 72 percent.

**Hermiston**

Ryan Keefauver, principal of Hermiston's Innovative Learning Center, said last year's 10 percent graduation rate isn't quite as bleak as it seems.

Yes, only eight of the school's 81 seniors that were still living in the district at the end of the year earned a high school diploma on time. But he said 58 percent of ILC students were "completers," meaning they got a GED or diploma within five years of starting high school.

That completion rate has been ticking steadily upward each year from a zero percent completion rate in 2010.

"It's a battle we're continuing to fight and I think we're making more progress every year," Keefauver said.

The completer rate will likely never reach the high school average because of the nature of the school. Included on its rolls are students with significant mental disabilities learning life skills at the Kik Center and students studying online because issues like poor health or acute anxiety make sitting in a classroom every day untenable.

Others enter with a record of failed classes, poor attendance and behavioral issues.

Keefauver said 70 percent of ILC students transferred into the program partway through their high school career, sometimes with so few credits that a regular diploma is out of reach. In those cases the ILC works to help them achieve their GED before they turn 19.

In cases where graduation is still within reach, Keefauver said that's where the ILC's true successes lie: Often students return to the main campus to earn a diploma there (and be counted in HHS's graduation rate) after being told they can go back to school with their friends if their attendance, grades and behavior improves.

Keefauver said the true dropouts who never complete a diploma or GED are often supporting themselves and possibly a child. He said they eventually get lured away by the thought of the extra money they could make if they traded school for more hours of work.

"For a lot of them it comes down to finances and the immediate need of financial support," he said.

**"It's a battle we're continuing to fight and I think we're making more progress every year."**

— **Ryan Keefauver**, principal of Hermiston's Innovative Learning Center

## County's warming stations shelter the homeless on frosty nights



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Volunteer Trish Rossell and Board of Directors Chair Carol Johnson help run the Hermiston Warming Station on Main Street in Hermiston. The facility offers spots for 13 guests on nights the temperature drops below freezing.

## Out in the cold

By **KATHY ANEY**  
East Oregonian

Keeping humans from freezing to death — that's the goal.

In 2011, two warming stations started operating in Umatilla County with the notion of getting homeless people off the streets when temperatures drop below 32 degrees. Last year's point-in-time homeless count reported at least 239 homeless individuals in Umatilla County.

The Pendleton Warming Station opened in a city-owned house on Southeast 12th Street. The Hermiston Warming Station recently

moved into a tiny downtown storefront on East Main Street.

The two unrelated facilities face similar trials and tribulations, but also have different challenges.

The Pendleton shelter served 69 different homeless individuals last season in a small bi-level house near Washington School that can accommodate 20 guests. While it has no showers, guests can clean their clothes in a washer and dryer located in the basement. The warming station has a pool of about 40 volunteers. Twice this season, the

See **SHELTER/12A**



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Lonnie Abbott smokes a cigarette and laughs with friends after eating a meal at the Salvation Army. He and his wife Cassie, who are homeless, sleep at the Pendleton Warming Station when the temperature drops below freezing.

**HERMISTON**

## Former legislator, local fixture dies at 90

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
East Oregonian

Hermiston lost a community fixture when Joseph Edward "Joe" Burns died at his home on Thursday at age 90.

Burns, who operated Burns Mortuary in Hermiston for almost 50 years, was involved in local and state politics throughout his life and was Hermiston Man of the Year in 1988.

One of his most prominent roles in the community was as a founding member and president of the Hermiston Development Corporation for 29 years. The nonprofit works to bring new economic development and jobs to the area.

"Joe was a driving force behind that thing for years and years," said Chet Prior, who served as the corporation's president after Burns eventually stepped down.

He said Burns was a "born leader" who was unselfishly passionate about helping his community grow. Some of his efforts — such as a trip to the Wal-Mart headquarters in Arkansas to convince the corporation to locate a distribution center in Hermiston — bore fruit that has had a significant impact on Hermiston's growth.

"He was quite a guy," Prior

said. Burns was a former state legislator, representing northeast Oregon during the 1971 special legislative session after being appointed to a vacant position. In 1986 Burns received the state Volunteer of the Year award from Governor Vic Atiyeh. He also served on the Oregon State Board of Health and was treasurer of the Oregon State Republican Party for three years.

At home Burns had an extensive résumé of civic engagement, including time as a Hermiston city



Burns

See **BURNS/12A**

See **SCHOOL/12A**

