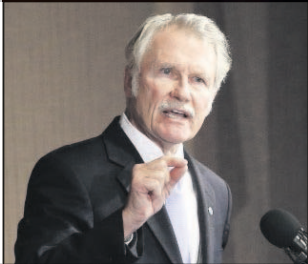




**BULLDOGS WIN
DISTRICT TITLE
WRESTLING/1B**



**Kitzhaber probe
aims at financial
crimes** **PAGE 2A**

EAST OREGONIAN

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2015

139th Year, No. 88 WINNER OF THE 2013 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar

Courthouse gun ban on table

Trying to increase safety after Pendleton security breach

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Umatilla County is considering tighter security at courthouses in Pendleton and Hermiston that could include building-wide bans on firearms.

George Murdock, chairman of the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, said

courthouses all over the country exercise higher levels of security than other government buildings, and the Umatilla County Courthouse, Pendleton, presents a challenge because it has several public entrances.

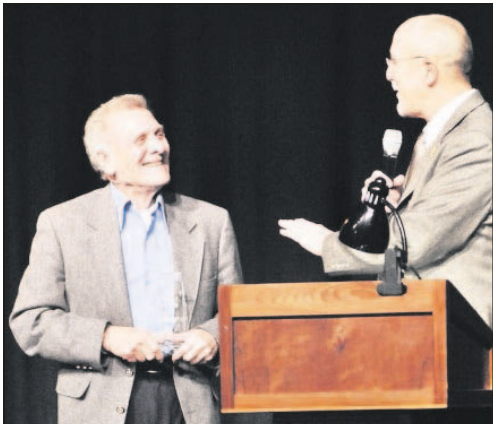
“We’re studying more and more ways to make it secure,” Murdock said, “but we’ll try to do more security checks and planning to ban firearms from the courthouse.”

A recent security breach at the Pendleton courthouse prompted a discussion between Murdock and other officials, in-

cluding sheriff’s Capt. Stewart Harp, who heads courthouse security, and Roy Blaine, trial court administrator of the 6th Judicial District, which encompasses Umatilla and Morrow counties. The sheriff’s office arrested Amanda Anderson, 30, of Pendleton, on suspicion she brought a gun Feb. 5 into the courts area of the building. She pleaded not guilty to one count of possession of a firearm in a public building, a class C felony, in relation to the incident.

See **GUNS/6A**

ECHO



EO file photo

Phil Hamm jokes with 2010 Man of the Year Chet Prior during the Distinguished Citizens Award Banquet at the Hermiston Conference Center. Prior died Sunday in Tucson, Arizona.

Prior, a staple and mentor in agriculture, dies at 78

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Umatilla County lost a giant in the agricultural community on Sunday when Chester “Chet” Prior died at age 78.

Prior owned Eagle Ranch outside of Echo and lobbied on a local, state and national level on agricultural issues. He held a number of prominent roles, including previous chair of the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center Authority and sitting president of the Hermiston Development Corporation. But he was also characterized by those who knew him as a humble man who preferred to work behind the scenes.

He was so modest, in fact, that when he was presented with Hermiston Man of the Year for 2010 he stood up as soon as he realized presenter Phil Hamm was talking about him and told him that he didn’t need to list any more accomplishments.

Craig Reeder, vice president of Hale Farms, was sitting at Prior’s table during the incident and remembers Prior’s embarrassment at being honored.

He said Prior was a “true gentleman” who earned the respect of everyone who associated with him and it is hard to imagine the agricultural community without Prior at the table.

“He mentored a lot of us younger guys. ... He’s one of those guys that for the next generation, we’ve never known the business without him,” Reeder said.

He said Prior often called to persuade Reeder to join him in donating to scholarships and other worthy causes.

“He’s how communities are built,” Reeder said.

— **Lloyd Piercy,**
owner of Sno Road Winery in Echo



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Home for herons

Great blue herons occupy nests in a heronry on the north side of the Umatilla River on Monday in Pendleton. A heronry, sometimes called a heron rookery, is a communal breeding ground for great blue herons.

HERMISTON

City seeks extension for tax exemptions

Enterprise zone provides tax breaks for new, expanding businesses

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Learn more

What: Enterprise zone informational meeting
When: Friday, 3-5 p.m.
Where: Hermiston Conference Center

After attracting millions of dollars of investment to Hermiston, the city’s enterprise zone will expire this year if it isn’t renewed.

Assistant city manager Mark Morgan said the city plans to apply for another 10 years, however, and there is a good chance the state will grant the extension.

“What we really have going for us is that we can show we’ve been actively using ours,” he said.

The enterprise zone encourages economic development by exempting companies that build or expand in the zone from paying property taxes for three years. In order to qualify, the company must add jobs in

See **TAX/6A**



EO file photo

A worker loads seasonings into a machine that flavors potato chips at the Shearer’s potato chip plant in July 2011, outside of Hermiston. Shearer’s was granted a \$3.5 million tax exemption in 2014 as part of Hermiston’s enterprise zone.

Top U.S. labor official arrives as West Coast ports back up



EO Media Group photo by Joshua Bessex

Ships wait in the Columbia River near Astoria due to port shutdowns in Portland.

By **JUSTIN PRITCHARD**
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The nation’s top labor official flew Monday to California in an attempt to resolve a damaging contract dispute between West Coast dockworkers and their employers.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez headed for San Francisco, where months-long negotiations between the dockworkers union and a maritime association of companies have come to a halt.

So, too, has the movement of billions of dollars of cargo that is supposed to pass through 29 seaports

from Southern California to Seattle. The ports are a critical trade link with Asia and the gateway not just for imports such as electronics, household goods and clothing but also U.S. exports including produce and meat.

Starting Saturday, companies locked out workers who would load or unload ships, saying they would not pay weekend or holiday wage premiums to crews they accuse of intentionally slowing work to gain bargaining leverage. As a result, cranes that would otherwise be moving containers onto dockside yards were raised up, stationary

See **PORT/6A**



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