



**BULLDOGS CLAIM
THIRD STRAIGHT
STATE TITLE
WRESTLING/1B**



**Mumford & Sons,
Foo Fighters headline
Walla Walla festival
ENTERTAINMENT/8A**

EAST OREGONIAN

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015

139th Year, No. 98 WINNER OF THE 2013 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar

PENDLETON



A city of Pendleton work crew cleans a sewer line in February at the corner of Southwest Emigrant and 16th Street in Pendleton.

With old pipes at leaking point, city considers big rate hikes

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Doing more with less was a mantra many public entities adopted during the recession, and Pendleton was no exception. But as Pendleton cut jobs and slashed budgets, the city's infrastructure continued to deteriorate. Now Murray, Smith and Associates, the consulting firm

hired to help the city update its master plan, is suggesting the city reverse course to fix the city's aging utility system with rate increases and new fees. The firm's report was presented in front of the city council at a workshop Saturday. Over the next 10 years, the firm estimated the city would need to spend \$56.9 million to replace, maintain and add to Pendleton's water and sewer in-

frastructure. In order to pay for the improvements, the report suggested doubling water rates, raising sewer rates by 57 percent and creating a systems development charge — a fee assessed to new developments. The report also suggested charging for an entirely new utility — stormwater. The stormwater utility would cover the costs of improving,

operating and maintaining the city-owned levees and the city's stormwater drainage system. For the first five years, the report suggested charging a flat rate of \$7.25 to help cover the \$7.5 million cost of improving the stormwater system. It will take more people to improve and maintain the new system, and the report also pro-

See **PENDLETON/9A**

MEACHAM

Train goes off tracks above creek

One car loaded with hazardous materials; no spills reported

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Monday was a rough day for Union Pacific Railroad in Oregon, as two trains derailed at opposite ends of the state. The more serious derailment happened at about 6:20 a.m. in a remote and forested area of the Blue Mountains near Meacham, east of Pendleton. Ten cars jumped off the tracks, including one car loaded with hazardous material that rolled down an embankment within 100 yards of Meacham Creek. Nobody was hurt and no spills reported, said Union Pacific spokesman Francisco Castillo. Meacham Creek is a tributary of the Umatilla River, where the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation have spent years working to restore sustainable fish populations. The creek provides habitat for steelhead, bull trout, white fish and rainbow trout. Though the derailment was not on the reservation, tribal spokesman Chuck Sams said their fire department was the closest to respond and soon after called for help from the railroad and regional Hazardous Materials Response Team. A member of the tribes' natural resources staff also responded to view the damage, but did not find any chemicals leaking into the creek. Castillo did not know what exactly was in the loaded car, but did confirm it was not crude oil. The other nine cars were emp-

See **TRAIN/9A**

Senate promises break to rural data centers

By **PETER WONG**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Data centers in rural areas would get a tax break, and telecommunications companies would have their property taxes clarified, under a bill that has cleared the Oregon Senate. The 27-3 vote Monday sent Senate Bill 611 to the Oregon House. The bill has several aims. It would exempt from central assessment by the state data centers such as those Google opened in The Dalles in 2006, Facebook opened in Prineville in 2011, and Apple has completed in Prineville. Amazon, the electronic retailer, also has data centers near Boardman. But Apple and Amazon, among others, delayed plans for more data centers because of uncertainty over future tax policy. Lawmakers had passed a temporary fix for data centers in 2012.

"We can't risk losing the investment of companies like Facebook and Apple."

— **Sen. Bill Hansell,**
R-Athena

"We can't risk losing the investment of companies like Facebook and Apple," said Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, whose district includes Boardman. Those communities were seen as desirable because of their available land, drier climate and access to lower-cost power required to operate such centers. "With SB 611 we have tackled an economic development challenge and agreed on a solution that will create jobs in rural Oregon while bolstering the state's reputation as a technology hub in the U.S.," said Sen. Mark Hass, D-Beaverton, chairman of the Senate Finance and Revenue Committee that originated the bill.

See **DATA/9A**

HERMISTON

Students show off guts of energy efficient house

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Students put the inner workings of their modern, energy-efficient house on display Monday with tours of the in-progress abode the Columbia Basin Student Homebuilder Program class has been constructing since August. A steady stream of visitors to the student-led tour declared themselves impressed. "People say, 'I wish this was my house,'" student homebuilder Cody Boggs said in between answering questions about the



Student homebuilders Nathan Hurty, Chris Topher and Cody Boggs listen to a community member taking a tour of the home they have been building as part of a high school class.

master bedroom. The three bedroom, two bathroom house known as Fieldstone #1 is located at 895 W Angus Court next to Armand Larive Middle School. Energy Trust of Oregon predicts the house, when finished, will have an energy performance score of 72 on a scale of zero to 200, with zero being a house that doesn't use any energy not produced by the house itself. Susan

Badger-Jones, an outreach manager for Energy Trust of Oregon, said the average score for similarly-sized houses built in Oregon is 112. "This house is considerably better," she said. The homebuilding class — which includes students from Hermiston, Umatilla and Stanfield — learned the latest techniques in energy efficiency, including a "flash and batt" insu-

lation technique that lays down thick spray-on foam before installing fiberglass insulation. "It just seals everything," Badger-Jones said. "This house is not going to leak." Students also put in one of the area's first "inside duct" systems for home's heating and air conditioning. Traditionally, HVAC ducts run through attics or crawl

See **HOUSE/9A**



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