

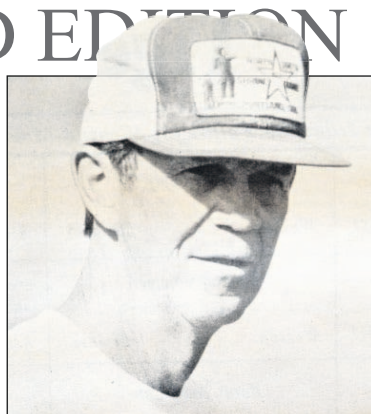
Spring forward

Don't forget to set
clocks ahead
one hour
at 2 a.m.
Sunday.



Requa's
résumé

LIFESTYLES 1C



NATION:
Remembering Selma
50 years later **8A**

NORTHWEST:
City-owned pot shop
opens in Gorge **10A**

EAST OREGONIAN

MARCH 7-8, 2015

139th Year, No. 102

WINNER OF THE 2013 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50



Celebrating wins

ABOVE: The Pendleton boys basketball team celebrates with their fans on Warberg Court after the Bucks' 63-57 win against Corvallis on Friday in Pendleton.

LEFT: Irrigon fans celebrate late in the game in the Knights' 74-43 win against Regis on Friday in the state 2A basketball tournament. The Knights will play Toledo on Saturday in the championship game.

Staff photos by E.J. Harris

BELOW: Nixyaawii's Hunter Melton is congratulated by teammates after helping lead the Golden Eagles to a semifinal upset of Horizon Christian and onto a state title game.

Photo courtesy Will Phinney/CUJ



For more
tournament
results see
Sports 1B

Oregon GMO authority debated

Bills give state
more authority
over biotech crops

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Critics claim proposed restrictions on growing biotech crops in Oregon would undermine voluntary coexistence efforts and spark new conflicts between farmers.

Legislation that would give state regulators more authority over the production of genetically modified organisms is touted by supporters as protecting organic and non-GMO growers.

House Bills 2674 and 2675

would both provide the Oregon Department of Agriculture the power to decide where GMOs can be planted and whether to restrict their cultivation to prevent cross-pollination with other crops.

"I want all farmers to succeed and the only way to do that is to coordinate how we're doing it," said Rep. Peter Buckley, D-Ashland, who introduced the bills.

Under HB 2674, ODA would be required to establish "control areas" for biotech crops that allow the agency to set conditions for their production. Any GMOs growing outside such control areas would be considered "an infestation subject to eradication." Farmers who produce biotech crops would pay an assessment to ODA, with the funds compensating growers who suffer from

"contamination" from GMOs.

HB 2675 would authorize ODA to designate production areas for biotech crops, with any GMOs growing outside those zones subject to "control area" conditions. The agency could also create reserves where no biotech crops can be cultivated. Buyers of GMO plants or seed would have their royalty agreements with biotech developers reported to ODA.

The ODA can currently set up control areas to protect crops from pests and diseases and to prevent cross-pollination between canola and related seed crops, said Ivan Maluski, policy director for Friends of Family Farmers, a group that supports stronger GMO regulation.

See **GMO/12A**

Local police face few formal complaints

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Police agencies that do not heed citizen complaints can find themselves heading down a dangerous road, local law enforcement leaders said.

The *East Oregonian* contacted nine local law enforcement agencies in Umatilla and Morrow counties about their complaint procedures and asked for data they may have about the number of complaints they receive each year. Seven responded, and the information they provided show each year they investigate at most a handful of complaints, although the majority of departments do not keep track of the complaints they receive.

"I always tell people I can't fix something if I don't know about it."

— **Jason Edmiston**,
Hermiston police Chief

There is no citizen group that reviews police complaints in Umatilla and Morrow counties, so people who have a problem with an officer — an officer drove too fast or was talking on their cellphone while driving — have to take it up with the officer's agency. Hermiston police Chief Jason Edmiston said that usually means a call to the station to report an officer did something questionable.

"Those are real simple for us to deal with," Edmiston said. "You tell the police officer to

See **POLICE/12A**

HERMISTON

Council to vote on electricity rate increase

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The Hermiston city council will vote Monday on an ordinance that would raise electricity rates for Hermiston Energy Services customers by an average of 11 percent starting in May.

The new rate schedule would affect about 5,300 accounts in Hermiston.

Under the new plan, base charges for a residential account would go from \$6.50 a month to \$10.50 a month. The charge per kilowatt hour used would also increase by 12.4 percent. Rates for small commercial accounts would increase 7.45 percent and large commercial accounts would increase 11.84 percent.

In a presentation to the city council in February, Hermiston Energy Services superintendent Nate Rivera said that would bring a typical residential customer's bill up to an average of \$112 a month, compared to Umatilla Electric Cooperative's \$118, Pacific Power's \$198 and the state average of \$158 a month.

Rivera told the council the rate increase is needed because rising power prices and a general increase in the cost of doing business has left HES with more expenses than revenue every year since 2011. The utility has been spending money in its reserves to compensate.

During Monday's meeting the city council will also consider a resolution directing staff to send an application to the state to renew its enterprise zone designation.

The city uses the enterprise zone as a tool for recruiting new businesses by offering a three- to five-year break on property taxes for building or expanding in Hermiston.

The council will also consider annexing two acres of property at the corner of Olive Avenue and Southwest 10th Street.

Finally, the council will consider creating a new structure for city council agendas, which would include moving committee reports to near the end of the meeting, creating a consent agenda and taking public comment on each agenda item separately instead of all at the beginning.



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