

Deadline looms for candidates, 66 seats open

East Oregonian

Umatilla County Elections Division announced that with just a week until the filing deadline, there are plenty of openings for district boards to be filled by the May 15 special election.

As of Wednesday, there are 75 candidates running in 138 races across the county, although 66 seats remain open without any candidates.

Despite this fact, some local races are already competitive.

Position 1 on the Hermiston School Board has drawn two men with previous political ambition.

Retiree James Leitch ran unsuccessfully for Hermiston City Council last year while his opponent, insurance agent Joshua Goller, lost to board Vice Chair Ginny Holthus in 2011. Incumbent Greg Harris has not filed.

Position 2 will also be contested, with Robert Lovett running against incumbent Dave Smith.

Although no races in Pendleton are contested yet,

at least one new face will seek a seat on the Pendleton School Board.

Former Pendleton High School wrestling coach Dale Freeman filed for Position 3 on the board. Incumbent Greg Galloway has not filed.

Position 2 on the Milton-Freewater School Board is the only other competitive race in the county ahead of next week's deadline.

Tina Kain, an engineer for the city's electric department, will face incumbent McKenzie Marly in that race.

Candidates have until March 19 at 5 p.m. to file for positions on school boards, fire districts and more. If you are interested in filing for a position, call the elections division at 541-278-6254, or go to www.umatillacounty.net/elections. There you can find election openings and see who has filed. And you can click the link "Election Manuals and Filing Forms" to have access to filing for, SEL 190 for district candidates.

There also is a \$10 filing fee.

BRIEFLY

Craigen heading to more trials

PENLDETON — Convicted murderer George West Craigen is back in Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, getting ready to face new criminal trials.

His three day trial on five counts of possession of explosive devices begins March 16 at the Umatilla County Courthouse, Pendleton. The case stems from police discovering the explosives during a manhunt for Craigen after he shot and killed Rob Carter of Milton-Freewater in 2011.

His defense attorney is Will Perkinson of Pendleton, who told the court in a hearing Monday he still needed an explosives expert.

Craigen also pleaded not guilty in 2013 to a contraband charge for possessing a hand-held weapon while he was in jail awaiting the murder trial. He faces trial in that case April 21-23.

A jury in November 2014 reached a unanimous verdict in finding Craigen guilty of Carter's murder. Craigen was sentenced to life in prison and has appealed the case.

House passes bill to fund child abuse prevention center

SALEM — The Oregon House of Representatives unanimously passed a bill to fund Oregon's 21 community-based child abuse intervention centers, which includes the Mt. Emily Safe Center, La Grande, and Guardian Care Center, Pendleton.

Oregon law does not currently cover reimbursement of the centers for certain services and treatment. Rep. Gene Whisnant, R-Sunriver, who sponsored the bill, explained in a written statement House Bill 2234 would require the Oregon Health Authority and insurers to adopt billing and payment mechanisms to ensure the centers are reimbursed for services, including for medical and mental health treatment and forensic interviews of children.

Nearly 11,000 children were confirmed victims of child abuse in Oregon in 2013, according to the Oregon Network of Child Abuse Intervention Centers, and many more abuse cases were unconfirmed or unreported.

123 unvaccinated children sent home

PENLDETON — The Umatilla County Public Health Department this week released the number of children sent home on last month's School Exclusion

HERMISTON



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Kyle Ketchersid of Hermiston plays the bassoon at the Willow Creek Symphony's educational concert Thursday at the Hermiston Conference Center.

Concert engages students in classical music

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

More than 500 students got an education in classical music on Thursday when the Willow Creek Symphony hosted a concert in Hermiston.

The concert, sponsored by Inland Northwest Musicians, was aimed at exposing Eastern Oregon students in third through sixth grade to a different type of compositions than the pop music they hear on the radio.

"Some of these folks have been playing for a lot of years, others only a year or a year and a half," conductor Lee Friese told the students.

He introduced each section of the ensemble, asking the musicians to hold up their instrument and demonstrate its sound. The tuba, he pointed out, weighs 40 pounds, while the French horn is "one of the most beautiful instruments in the orchestra."

After answering ques-



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Kayden Kendrick plays the trumpet at the Willow Creek Symphony's educational concert for students on Thursday at the Hermiston Conference Center.

tions from students, Friese started the concert that included crowd-pleasers like "Cowboy Rhapsody" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." He also paused to teach students the difference between rehearsed

pieces played from sheet music and improvisation, which a trio of musicians demonstrated.

Afterward Ben Vanderstelt, a 12-year-old home school student from Hermiston, said he was glad he

got to see the symphony. "It was cool because they had so many instruments all playing at once," he said.

Trumpet player Kayden Kendrick of Irrigon said he enjoyed performing for the students.

"I love playing for kids because they always have such good questions and are willing to sit quietly and listen, because a lot of times it's something they haven't heard before," he said.

The Willow Creek Symphony is a 30-musician ensemble that is part of the Inland Northwest Musicians. The group rehearses in Irrigon once a week and its next performance is a public concert on Sunday, March 15 at 4 p.m. at Irrigon Jr./Sr. High School.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

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