

**ECHO**

**Spring Fling fundraiser offers full evening**

East Oregonian

Live music, a barbecue dinner, wine and a live auction will help raise money for the Oregon East Symphony.

The Spring Fling provides a full evening of fun, including a chance to go home with some great auction items. In addition, the event helps raise money to support the symphony.

Auction items include vacation getaways, works by local artists and even a seat on stage during an Oregon East Symphony concert. Money raised will be used towards maintaining a strong community orchestra and Playing For Keeps, the symphony's kindergarten through high school classical music education program.

The Spring Fling is Friday, April 10 from 6-9 p.m. at Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased at the symphony office, 345



Contributed photo

**Local artist Tammy Burnett works in her studio. The glass mosaic violin is included in the auction during the Oregon East Symphony Spring Fling fundraiser April 10 at Sno Road Winery in Echo.**

S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton; Armchair Books, 39 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton; or [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1387205](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1387205).

For more information, contact 541-276-0320, [oesprograms@gmail.com](mailto:oesprograms@gmail.com) or visit [www.oregoneastsymphony.org](http://www.oregoneastsymphony.org).

**BRIEFLY**

**Easter fun supports Fourth of July event**

STANFIELD — An evening of fun will raise money to help support the Stanfield Fourth of July celebration.

The event is Friday, featuring a spaghetti feed and bingo from 6-8 p.m. at Stanfield Elementary School, 1120 Main St. Tickets are \$7 if purchased by Thursday at Main Street Market, the Stanfield Public Library or Bare Necessities. Tickets are \$10 at the door.

Also, free Easter egg hunts are planned for three age groups, including kids under 4, ages 4-8 and those 9 and older. Don't forget to bring a flashlight and an Easter basket. The egg hunts start at 7:45 p.m.

For more information, call Cecili Longhorn at 541-571-3812 or 541-449-1254.

**Umatilla gets ready to slam dunk the junk**

UMATILLA — Slam Dunk the Junk Day in Umatilla coincides with Shred Day for the Umatilla Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center.

The community-wide cleanup day encourages volunteers to sign up to help discard trash and old appliances. The city will provide dumpsters for local residents to use free of charge. For more information or to volunteer, call 541-922-3226.

CI Shred's truck will be available Saturday from noon to 2 p.m. at H Street across from the Umatilla Public Library, 700 Sixth St., to shred documents for citizens of Umatilla and the surrounding area. People are encouraged to make a donation for the shredding service. For more information, call 541-922-4825.

**Rotary Club to distribute trees**

HERMISTON — In celebration of Arbor Day, free trees will be given away to all who are willing to plant them.

Sponsored by the Hermiston Rotary Club, the event is Saturday beginning at 9 a.m. in the parking lot at Smitty's Ace Hardware, 1845 N. First St., Hermiston. The event will continue until all trees are given away. Trees available include red maple, river birch, green ash and Peking lilac and a conifer.

**Umatilla chamber plans annual Easter egg hunt**

UMATILLA — Personnel and volunteers with the Umatilla Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Center are gearing up for the fifth annual Easter Egg Hunt.

The event is Saturday at 10 a.m. at West McNary Park, located near the dam. Kids ages 0 to 10 are welcome to come and participate in the egg hunt.

A pair of lucky winners in each age group will win an Easter basket filled with all kinds of goodies.

For more information, call 541-922-4825.

**Discover China orientation set**

HERMISTON — Have you ever wanted to visit the Great Wall of China, tour the Bund in Shanghai or take a boat ride on the West Lake?

Join the Hermiston and Umatilla chambers of commerce Tuesday, April 7 at 4:30 p.m. at the Hermiston Conference Center boardroom, 415 S. Highway 395, for an orientation meeting about an all-inclusive, 10-day trip to China for \$2,399 per person.

The price includes round-trip airfare from Seattle, accommodations in four- and five-star hotels, three meals a day, all in-country transportation, gratuities, taxes, fees, deluxe bus tours and professional English speaking tour guides. The trip will tour seven of China's ten wonders of the world.

Tour dates are Oct. 19-28, 2015. Hermiston chamber Executive Director Debbie Pedro will share a power point presentation of the trip she took in October 2014 and answer any questions.

For more information, contact 541-567-6151, [debbie@hermistonchamber.com](mailto:debbie@hermistonchamber.com) or visit [www.hermistonchamber.com](http://www.hermistonchamber.com).

**County worries bill would give veto power to irrigation districts**

By **GEORGE PAVEN**  
East Oregonian

The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners is opposing a bill in the legislature they say would essentially give veto power to irrigation districts over proposed land division and development.

Under House Bill 2894, cities and counties would not be able to approve a development until they have determined the project does not interfere with or threaten local irrigation districts and their operations.

If the project does interfere with irrigation facilities, such as pipelines or canals, the district would have 30 days to suggest further conditions for approval.

Building without the district's input can lead to serious unintended consequences, according to the bill's chief backer, the Oregon Water Resources Congress. Past issues have included canal breaches, flooding of property and impacts to water quality.

But Umatilla County officials argue existing laws already guarantee districts a voice in the subdivision review process. Commissioners said HB 2894 would create a second, parallel review process with no obvious venue for developers to appeal.

A public hearing for the bill was March 19 in the House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water. A second hearing has not been scheduled.

"There are more than 30 irrigation districts, water improvement districts and water

control districts in Umatilla County," the board wrote in its testimony. "Our planning department provides notice to those entities for land use decisions and incorporates recommendations shared by those districts. In our view, there is not a problem with that process."

April Snell, executive director of the water resources congress — a Salem-based nonprofit organization representing agricultural water suppliers statewide — acknowledged the positive working relationship in Umatilla County. However, she said not all areas enjoy that same luxury.

The subdivision review process varies from city to city and from county to county, and some districts are given no ability to weigh in on development until after it has been finalized, Snell said.

Irrigation districts used to have the authority in state law to review and approve subdivision plats until 1993, when the statute was removed without a clear explanation, Snell said. Since then, she said districts have faced a number of costly lawsuits and insurance claims from developers who built too close to irrigation canals and other infrastructure.

HB 2894 would once again establish a consistent process for the districts to communicate with city and county planners, Snell said. The bill is not meant to give districts a veto stamp over plats, just ensure the review process does not bypass critical information about irrigation facilities.

"We don't want to get in the way of development, but

we want to make sure development is going to be informed by the district," she said.

Umatilla County Planning Director Tamra Mabbott said she believes the OWRC's intentions are good, but the planning department can't defer permit decisions to a third party.

"We have this great working relationship with our (irrigation) districts, but I can't hold up a permit based on the standards or desires of a district," Mabbott said. "I just think the irrigation districts have gotten a bit ahead of themselves on this thing."

The county already notifies districts when a plat is proposed or amended, a process Mabbott said has been tried and true for more than 40 years. Rather than pass a new law, she said it would be more productive for the OWRC to provide training materials to city and county planners if there are ongoing disputes in other parts of the state.

Ray Kopacz, manager of the Stanfield Irrigation District, said the bill is nothing new. In order to remain in high-population areas, he said there must be something on the books that makes developers contact their neighboring irrigation district before they build.

"We can't stop the development, but we can help organize or move it if there's a problem," Kopacz said. "There has to be some kind of safety net in there."

Contact George Paven at [gplaven@eastoregonian.com](mailto:gplaven@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4547.

**BOARDMAN**

**Coal terminal secures DEQ water certification**

By **GEORGE PAVEN**  
East Oregonian

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality says a proposed coal shipping terminal on the Columbia River near Boardman will meet state and federal water quality standards, so long as the project developer satisfies a lengthy set of conditions.

Officials with DEQ issued what is known as a 401 Water Quality Certification Tuesday to the Coyote Island Terminal, part of Ambre Energy's plans to export 8.8 million tons of coal per year to Asia.

The embattled proposal already received air quality, water quality and construction storm water permits from DEQ, but faces more legal challenges to breaking ground. Ambre has appealed a decision by the Oregon Department of State Lands to reject a remove-fill permit needed for construction of a dock at the Port of Morrow.

That hearing won't take place until December.

Critics also question whether Ambre could break even on its \$242 million investment, given slumping coal markets overseas. Last year, the Australia-based company sold its entire North American coal assets to Resource Capital Funds, a private equity firm in Denver, after failing to draw other investors.

At the time, Ambre spokeswoman Liz Fuller said the project's leadership team would remain intact.

The company received another potential boost from the Wyoming Legislature, which approved a bill allowing the Wyoming Infrastructure Authority to issue up to \$1 billion in bonds to support Northwest coal exports. Coal shipped out of Boardman would come in by rail from the Powder River Basin region of Wyoming and Montana.

Both states are participating as limited parties in Ambre's appeal against the Oregon Department of State Lands. The agency ruled in September 2014 the terminal would interfere with tribal fishing rights on the river.

If the appeal is successful, Ambre says the project would add 25-30 jobs and 2,000 construction jobs. Meanwhile, DEQ imposed nearly eight pages of conditions in order for the terminal to maintain its 401 Water Quality Certification, including spill prevention, water quality monitoring and handling of waste materials.

Ambre would be required to immediately shut down operations at the terminal and notify the appropriate agencies if they experience a water quality problem that leads to dead or distressed fish.

More information about the DEQ permit can be found online at [www.oregon.gov/deq/pages/coalexport.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/deq/pages/coalexport.aspx).

**UMATILLA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ANNUAL MEETING & MEMBERSHIP DINNER**

**Saturday, April 18, 2015**  
**Hermiston Conference Center**  
**5 p.m. - 7 p.m.**

**Our Annual Meeting theme "Homegrown" will recognize an array of products grown and processed in our local area.**

**Learn about UEC accomplishments in the past year, and what we expect in the year ahead. As always, attendance is free to UEC members. We hope your will join us!**

**Featured Speaker**  
**Judy Hill Lovins of Aspen Colorado, a fine art photographer and "homegrown" native of Hermiston, will share her life story.**




McKay Creek Estates presents:

**SAFETY FIRST**



Join us as we host a lecture series to increase safety awareness on fall prevention, common home injuries and provide solutions to keep you and your loved one safe!

**SafetyMan says**  
**"Always be Safe to Ensure an Active & Independent Lifestyle"**

**Avoid Bathroom Dangers - CONCLUDED**  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 3:30 PM  
Dangers exist all around your home, and unless safety precautions are in place, you leave yourself in danger. Aside from the kitchen, the bathroom is one of the most dangerous rooms in your home. Recognizing these dangers, and making some common sense decisions, will go a long way in protecting you and your family.

**Learn the 411 on Medicare Coverage - CONCLUDED**  
TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 3:30 PM  
Medicare is a government-sponsored program that people over the age of 65 and those who meet their special criteria turn to for their social insurance. This program provides health insurance, normally to seniors. Come and learn more about what it covers and what it does not.

**Durable Medical Equipment Can Keep You Independent**  
TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 3:30PM  
Durable medical equipment is any medical equipment used in the home to aid in a better quality of living. It is a benefit included through most insurance. In some cases, certain Medicare benefits may pay for them.

For more information or to RSVP, call us at (541) 276-1987 or visit us today!

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