



**CLASH AT THE BORDER BASKETBALL/1B**



**Hottest March in West 2A**

# EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2013 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Staff photo by E.J. Harris  
**A construction crew works on a water treatment facility that will serve data centers at the Port of Umatilla on Wednesday in Umatilla.**

## Deal for big data

Bill will clarify property taxes for large telecom companies

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
*East Oregonian*

Data centers are drawn to Eastern Oregon for the region's dry climate, available land and cheap electricity.

Now, state lawmakers say the companies have another reason to invest in Oregon — greater certainty over their property taxes.

The legislature recently passed Senate Bill 611 by a wide margin, which addresses the unusual way Oregon calculates taxes for large tele-

com companies. The methodology, known as central assessment, includes a company's brand and other "intangible assets" as part of the equation.

SB611 is a complex bill that essentially clarifies what the state will tax from central assessment companies and what it won't, said Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner. He stopped short of calling the bill a tax break for companies like Seattle-based Amazon.com — which already has built several data centers at the Port of Morrow near Boardman — but said it provides

much-needed certainty in the state's tax structure.

"Without tax certainty, you don't want to come to any state," Smith said. "In our case, we're dealing with data centers ... This is going to be another tool in our economic development toolbox."

Both Smith and Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, voted in favor of the bill. Rep. Greg Barreto, R-Cove, was excused from voting.

See DATA/8A

### PENDLETON

## City one step closer to getting hands on state land

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
*East Oregonian*

After nearly unanimous approval from the Oregon Senate, the land that used to house the Blue Mountain Recover Center and the Eastern Oregon Training Center is well on its way to becoming city property.

Senate Bill 671 passed 29-1 in the Senate and will now be referred to the state House of Representatives, where it will be carried by state Rep. Greg Barreto, R-Cove.

Ironically, the only senator to oppose the bill was Portland Democrat Chip Shields, an original sponsor of the bill.

Otherwise, in a legislative session that's seen a steep divide between Republicans and Democrats on many issues, the bill received strong bipartisan support and is expected to receive similar support in the house.

In a press release, state Sen. Bill Hansell trumpeted the positive effects the more than 20 acres of land could have on Pendleton.

"Former Representative Bob Jensen and Former Senator Dave Nelson worked for many years trying to keep the building open; however when I arrived in Salem, I was told that train had already left the station and the BMRC building was set to

See BMRC/8A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris  
**Inmate Justin Schiller-Munnemann feeds a treat to Zoey, an Australian shepherd-border collie mix, while working in a rescue dog adoption program at Two Rivers Correctional Institution on Tuesday in Umatilla.**

## Dog taken from drug house rehabilitated in the big house



Staff photo by E.J. Harris  
**Dog trainer Tracy Hill of Richland simulates a vet visit with Zoey, an Australian shepherd-border collie mix, as her primary handler, inmate Justin Schiller-Munnemann looks on.**

### TRCI inmates train pound dogs for adoption

By **KATHY ANEY**  
*East Oregonian*

If Zoey could talk, she would likely tell a sorrowful tale.

Police confiscated the border collie mix several weeks ago during a drug raid on a Umatilla County house. They took the dog to the Pet Rescue animal shelter, where she shied away from strangers.

A month later, Zoey is a changed pooch. She greets people with her tail wagging and her brown eyes free from fear.

The transformation took place in what might seem the unlikely of places — a

prison. Inside the Two Rivers Correctional Institution, 18 inmates train rescue dogs for adoption. Richland dog trainer Tracy Hill runs weekly sessions in the prison's visiting room. Six dogs each have a team of three inmates at its bark and call. One inmate serves as primary trainer and the other two (a secondary trainer and a "sitter") fill in the gaps.

The program kicked off about a month ago. If all goes to plan, the dogs will be ready for adoption eight to 10 weeks from when they arrived at the prison.

Zoey spends the bulk of her days with her primary trainer, inmate Justin Schiller-Munnemann. He picks her up at the recently constructed prison kennels each morning and takes her back each evening.

See DOGS/8A

## Lawmakers hear testimony on gun-control bill

By **SHEILA V KUMAR**  
*Associated Press*

SALEM — A heated debate over gun control in the Oregon Legislature on Wednesday drew relatives of people killed during an Oregon mall shooting, law enforcement officers and gun owners as Democratic lawmakers push a bill expanding background checks to cover private firearms sales.

The Senate Judiciary Committee heard two hours of public testimony on a proposal that would

require gun buyers and sellers who aren't related to appear in person before a licensed gun dealer who can run a background check through the Oregon State Police. Proponents say it would close a "loophole" that widened with the advent of Internet gun transactions.

"This bill will not take all the guns off the streets, it will not remove all the guns from the illegal buyers," said Robert Yuille, whose wife Cindy was killed during a shooting at the Clackamas Town Center in December 2012 while

she was Christmas shopping. "It will take some off. Hopefully it'll take the one off that would have killed your wife or your daughter."

Opponents said background checks are ineffective, difficult to enforce and disproportionately burden law abiding citizens. Dan Reid, a National Rifle Association representative, said most criminals acquire guns through ways that are already illegal, such as through theft and the black market. The

See GUNS/8A



AP photo by Danielle Peterson  
**Lake Oswego Police Chief Don Johnson speaks during a news conference following a hearing on a bill Wednesday that would expand background checks for private gun sales at the state Capitol in Salem.**

