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EAST OREGONIAN

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AP photo by Don Ryan

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown forms a heart with her hands as she says "I love Oregon" Friday during her State of the State address in Portland.

Now settled, Brown ready for challenges

Governor restates support for Umatilla Basin water project in first state of the state speech

By HILLARY BORRUD
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Gov. Kate Brown says the most difficult days of her transition to the role of governor are behind her, and she is ready to focus on major policy challenges including transportation, affordable housing and education.

"My sense is, as a state, we're through the hardest part of this transition," Brown said Friday during her first state of the state address as governor. "Although there is much still to be done, we are back on track, working together and moving forward."

The governor also used the speech to highlight ethics reform bills she wants the Legislature to pass this session, in the wake of an influence peddling scandal that enveloped former Gov. John Kitzhaber starting in October. Brown, who was previously secretary of state, took office Feb. 18 after Kitzhaber abruptly resigned.

"And although the circumstances may have been less than ideal, let me just say up front: I didn't feel like I was thrown into the deep end of the pool," Brown said. "I dove in."

Brown's ethics and transparency reform bills introduced earlier this month would reduce the governor's power over the state ethics commission, require the first spouse and all the governor's advisors to file economic interest disclosure forms and initiate an audit of state agencies' handling of public records requests.

Brown delivered the address during a meeting of the Portland City Club, at the Governor's Ballroom in the Sentinel Hotel in downtown Portland. The speech was an opportunity for Brown to set out major policy goals for her administration, nearly two months after she was sworn in as governor.

Brown called for lawmakers to send her a transportation funding package by the end of the 2015 legislative session, and said she is "fighting for a seamless education system spanning birth to career." Oregon needs to control the cost of four-year degrees from the state's public universities, "so that it's actually affordable for Ore-

See BROWN/10A

Equipped to observe

Body cameras introduce both accountability and complexities to policing

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

If you come in contact with a Hermiston police officer, remember to smile — you're on camera.

Hermiston police Friday became the first local law enforcement agency to equip officers with body cams. Within a few years the cameras could be as standard as flashlights, but getting there will take grappling with issues of police integrity, public records access and more.

Hermiston Chief of Police Jason Edmiston said officers for the last two years volunteered to wear GoPro cameras, but they found while they worked they were not cop friendly, proving to be too big and difficult to attach to uniforms. So the department selected Taser, the maker of the law enforcement's stun gun of choice, to provide camera equipment as well.

Staff photos by E.J. Harris

The lapel-mounted body cameras have a power and recording device officers wear on their utility belts.

Edmiston said those stun guns have been reliable for Hermiston police, and he liked what he saw of the Taser camera system at a demonstration last year. Hermiston police were set to pay $59,000 to Taser on a five-year contact for 12 Axon Flex camera units and secured cloud data storage to keep videos. Taser also will replace the units at two-and-a-half and five years.

But Edmiston said the cost increased to $70,000 after he ordered three more cameras and Taser sent a trainer to Hermiston at the start of the month. The original plan was to have officers share units, he said, but cops can be tough on equipment. Having 15 cameras means there is enough to go around.

Four patrol officers on duty at any given time will wear cams, he said, plus the motorcycle officer handling traffic and the officers working street crime. Sergeants will share one unit. On average, Edmiston said, four or five units will be in the field at once.

Officers will wear the cams on their collars or epaulets, and a cord connects to a battery and storage pack that rests on their

See CAMERAS/12A

Frey pleads not guilty, out on bail

By PHIL WRIGHT and ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Former Pendleton teacher Timothy Walter Frey pleaded not guilty Friday to charges he had sex with a 17-year old student.

Frey was in circuit court, Pendleton, in a dress shirt and tie to face eight counts of second-degree sexual abuse. That crime does not fall under Measure 11, Oregon's mandatory sentencing law. His attorney, Jason Thompson of Salem, was by his side as were two other adults who looked to be his parents.

Frey was quiet during the brief court proceedings. Thompson entered the not guilty plea on Frey's behalf. He also said Frey was moving from his apartment in Pendleton and asked Circuit Judge Christopher Brauer to seal the record on his client's new address. Brauer told the attorney to file a motion.

Pendleton police received a call April 4 about Frey, which led to an investigation and his arrest two days later. Pendleton schools Superintendent Jon Peterson reported Frey's last day teaching was March 13. He is charged with having sexual relations with the teenage girl five times beginning on his last day in the district.

See FREY/12A

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Blurred rides

Lights from the Octopus blur in a circular pattern in this 8-second exposure at the Davis Shows carnival Thursday evening in Pendleton. The carnival will be in town through Sunday.

Response planned for oil train tanker spills

By GEORGE PLAVEN
East Oregonian

Imagine a train derails along the Columbia River just south of the Oregon-Washington border east of Umatilla — similar to what happened on Aug. 1, 2014, when five empty cars jumped the tracks and tumbled down into the water.

Except this time, imagine the cars are tankers filled with 30,000 gallons of crude oil. And one of them is leaking.

Officials with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and Washington Department of Ecology joined Friday to break down what would happen if there was an oil spill in the Mid-Columbia, how emergency responders would contain the mess and strategies for preserving the region's most sensitive resources.

About 75 people, including local government and tribal leaders, participated in the three-hour workshop at Columbia Gorge Community College in The Dalles. Presentations focused primarily on the different types of crude being shipped around the Pacific Northwest, as well as site-specific plans tailored to direct cleanup efforts on the

See OIL/12A