



BLAZERS HANG ON TO SERIES
NBA/1B

Boardman man in jail for attempted murder REGION/3A

EAST OREGONIAN

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139th Year, No. 138

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All signs point to drought

Umatilla levels falling, snowpack paltry, county asking for help

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

Barring an unexpected spring monsoon, the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners is expected to ask Oregon Gov. Kate Brown to declare a local drought emergency for farms and fish.

Commissioners will likely vote Tuesday to send their request to the state Drought Council for review as water supplies have dried up quickly throughout the Umatilla Basin.

If approved, an emergency drought declaration could allow the Oregon Water Resources Department to issue temporary water permits and transfers to satisfy irrigation rights, while balancing flows for native salmon and steelhead.

The department says Umatilla County will likely experience drought this year, given an almost-complete lack of mountain snow to recharge streams that are already down to summertime

flows. Gov. Brown has already declared drought in Baker, Wheeler, Crook, Harney, Klamath, Lake and Malheur counties.

Umatilla County Commissioner Larry Givens is optimistic they could soon be added to that list.

"All the conditions are there for drought," Givens said. "We're feeling the impact already."

Any discussion of drought in Oregon usually begins with the state's abysmal snowpack in 2015. Typically, snowpack will act as a natural reservoir

See DROUGHT/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Water streams out of the McKay Reservoir on Monday and into McKay Creek outside Pendleton. Water is being released from the reservoir to help fish runs in the Umatilla River, which is already running at low summer levels.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Swallows circle overhead as inmates use a water hose to knock down the birds' nest from the walls of the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution on Monday in Pendleton.

Prison ruffled by return of swallows

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

The state prison in Pendleton again commenced its annual battle with the birds.

Swarms of swallows flock in late March and early April to Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution where they build mud nests on eaves and windowsills along prison walls that are four stories tall. A three-inmate work crew three days a week shoots a jet of water from a large hose to dislodge the nests.

The crew was at it again Monday. The swallows swooped and darted to avoid the powerful stream. Seconds after the workers moved on, the persistent birds

went back to building homes, sometimes in the same spot they built the first time.

EOCI spokesman Lt. Jeff Carey said the intent is to have the birds nest somewhere else. The clock is ticking on that because swallows fall under the protection of the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. That means once there are eggs in the nests, or even indications adult birds are sitting on eggs, the removal efforts must end. One member of the inmate crew wears gloves and checks for eggs in nests that fall.

Swallows often lay eggs in early April, and those hatch in about two to three weeks.

See BIRDS/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Swallows build nests out of mud in a window at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution on Monday in Pendleton.

HERMISTON

City council opts to build senior center by Wal-Mart

To be named after longtime councilman Harkenrider

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

After lengthy testimony touting two different sites for Hermiston's new senior center, the city council voted Monday to build on Northeast Fourth Street behind Wal-Mart.

The council vote was split 6-2 in favor of accepting the senior advisory group's recommendation that the \$2 million project be built on the Aspen.

Lori Davis and John Kirwan were the dissenting votes, favoring a senior center built across Ridgeway Avenue and the parking lots behind the Hermiston Public Library instead.

"It would almost be sacrilegious for the city of Hermiston to make an investment of \$2 million outside of downtown," Kirwan said.

Hermiston Parks and Recreation director Larry Fetter said the advisory

See SENIOR CENTER/2A



Harkenrider

HERMISTON

City gets serious about dog licenses

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The Hermiston city council is hoping more owners will license their dogs after making changes to its fee structure and animal code Monday night.

Assistant city manager Mark Morgan said city staff hope that changing the dog license program from an annual process to a one-time fee will encourage more people to license their dogs, making it easier for the ones picked up by law enforcement to be returned to their owners in a timely manner instead of being held for days.

"It puts a strain on the pound," Morgan said.

Dogs that are spayed or neutered will cost \$5 for a lifetime license instead of a license that expires after one year. And unaltered animals will cost \$25 once instead of \$10 a year.

The fee for an unlicensed dog is up to \$700, but the police haven't been enforcing the penalty in recent years. Morgan said the new lifetime license should make it easier to enforce the licensing code.

"There was some concern about losing revenue but frankly we don't see much revenue anyway because

See DOGS/2A

PENDLETON

As schools close, boundaries redrawn

Parents presented with proposals ahead of closures

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

The Pendleton School District's \$55 million bond project affects more than building improvements.

Because Lincoln Primary School and West Hills Intermediate School will be decommissioned in a few years, school officials need to redraw the district's elementary school boundaries in time for the 2016-2017 school year.

Students from the North Hill will be consolidated into the district's three remaining elementary schools — Sherwood Heights, McKay Creek and Washington.

How those students will be

distributed rests in the hands of Superintendent Jon Peterson, and the district is gathering input through a series of public meetings that will factor into his decision.

The district held its first meeting at Lincoln April 22, where Assistant Superintendent Tricia Mooney presented the several parents who attended with two options.

Option A sends almost all North Hill students to Washington.

The boundary between Washington and Sherwood is divided by Highway 37, with the exception of Northwest 21st Street and the surrounding area, which has been drawn into the Sherwood boundary.

Be heard

The proposed boundaries will be available for view and comment at these meetings:

- **April 28: Sherwood Heights, 3111 SW Marshall Ave.**
- **April 29: McKay Creek, 1539 SW 44th St.**
- **April 30: Washington, 1205 SE Byers Ave.**

All meetings start at 6 p.m.

Under Option A, all the area between Court Avenue and Interstate 84 is within the Sherwood boundary, covering most of the flats and South Hill. The Sherwood boundary ends to the east at

See SCHOOL/2A



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