



BMCC LOSES TO YAKIMA
BASEBALL/1B

Crude oil train crash
NATION/7A



EAST OREGONIAN

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139th Year, No. 145

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One dollar



EO Media Group photo by Sean Hart
Joseph Day holds a sign asking for help from people driving by near the southbound Interstate 82 offramp on Highway 730 in Umatilla in April. Day said he has been homeless "off and on" for 20 years.

UMATILLA

City halts handouts

New ordinance targets offramp panhandlers

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Panhandling is still legal in Umatilla, but the city council just made it more difficult.

The council passed an ordinance on Tuesday making it illegal to transfer anything between a pedestrian and a vehicle in a lane of travel.

That means handing money or food to panhandlers holding signs at the Interstate 82 offramp could result in a ticket for both the driver and the person receiving the gift.

Last month citizens complained to the council that panhandlers standing by the interchange were creating a bad first impression for people coming into Umatilla. At Tuesday's meeting residents

also noted they had seen people holding signs almost get hit by trucks taking a wide turn.

"It's a safety issue," Elaine Shepherd said.

Panhandling is constitutionally protected free speech, but City Manager Bob Ward told the council the ordinance would at least deal with the potential safety hazards created by pedestrians walking up to cars at busy intersections.

See PANHANDLING/8A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A mother and her waddlers

A family of Canada geese walk through the grass Wednesday at Hat Rock Park east of Hermiston.

PILOT ROCK

Cellphone photos lead to child porn charges

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

A mother who found inappropriate messages on her 13-year-old daughter's cellphone led police to arrest a Pilot Rock man for child pornography.

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office arrested 51-year-old Richard Lee Rowe on a warrant Tuesday for using a child in a display of sexually explicit conduct, second-degree encouraging child sexual abuse, second-degree attempted rape and luring a minor. Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan said the victim lives in Morrow County so the district attorney's and sheriff's offices there helped in the case.

Sheriff's detective Kacey Ward wrote the affidavit for warrants to seize and search cellphones involved in the case.

The affidavit stated the girl's mother came to Rowan in late January with her daughter's cellphone and reported she was in love with a much older man who was a close friend of the girl's father. The parents are divorced, the affidavit stated.

Ward found the phone had multiple nude photos the girl took herself, including some that were sexually explicit.

She told investigators she had a crush on Rowe since she was 10, the affidavit states. She cried during police questioning and she said she felt like a bad person for sending the photos to a married man.

The early photos Rowe asked for were G-rated, but that developed into asking her to send nude and sexual photos. He sent her messages that stated he envisioned a pretty, young girl falling for an old cowboy.

Ward reported he found no evidence

the two had sex. The girl told investigators the two had never even kissed, though the affidavit states she refused to undergo a medical examination.

Sheriff's detectives seized Rowe's flip-style cellphone on Feb. 14 at his Pilot Rock home. Ward found the phone went through a "hard reset" four days before, a process that restored the phone to factory settings and overwrote data.

The girl admitted she used a friend's phone on Feb. 10 to warn Rowe of the police investigation.

In spite of the reset, Ward reported he found 2,900 images on the phone, though many were distorted. He also found images and messages going back to 2013.

Rowan said the case is now in the hands of Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson. Rowe is out of jail on \$7,500 bail.

EOU search for president nearing end

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

At a crucial time for the school, EOU has not yet decided who will be the next president of the university.

"I can't tell you which it's going to be," said David Nelson, Eastern Oregon University board of trustees and search committee president.

The board plans to discuss the candidate finalists in executive session on Thursday.

Nelson said all three are good choices, but the school's search committee has to decide if it wants a president with business experience or one from a more traditional academic background.

"It's such a diverse pool of candidates," he said. "There's a wealth of experience and energy and they all bring different strengths."

Cynthia Pemberton is provost and vice president for academic affairs at Dickinson State University in Dickinson, N.D.

Martin Tadlock was provost and vice president for academic affairs at Bemidji State University in Bemidji, Minn. and has been chief academic officer at Northwest Technical College since 2014.

Tom Insko is area manager of Boise Cascade's Inland Region in La Grande and is on the EOU board of trustees.

Nelson said some people in the community and on the board feel that a businessman like Insko could be the right choice to take the reins in light of the university's struggles with finances and enrollment over the last few years. But he said students and faculty seem to be leaning toward someone with experience running a university.

See EOU/8A



Tadlock



Insko



Pemberton

Farmers get approval to spray crops from drones

FRESNO, Calif. (AP)—A drone large enough to carry tanks of fertilizers and pesticides has won rare approval from federal authorities to spray crops in the United States, officials said Tuesday.

The drone, called the RMAX, is a remotely piloted helicopter that weighs 207 pounds, said Steve Markofski, a spokesman for Yamaha Corp. U.S.A., which developed the aircraft.

Smaller drones weighing a few pounds had already been approved for limited use to take pictures that help farmers identify unhealthy crops. The RMAX is the first time a drone big enough to carry a payload has been approved, Markofski said.

The drone already has been used elsewhere, including by rice farmers in Japan. The FAA approved it for the U.S. on Friday.

"I certainly understand their cautious approach," Markofski said. "It's a daunting

task given our airspace is complicated."

The drone is best suited for precision spraying on California's rolling vineyards and places that are hard to reach from the ground or with larger, piloted planes, said Ken Giles, professor of biological and agricultural engineering at the University of California, Davis. Giles tested the drone in California to see if it could be used here.

"A vehicle like this gives you a way to get in and get out and get that treatment done," Giles said.

Brian Wynne, president and CEO of the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International, said in a statement that the approval highlights other potential uses.

"The FAA is taking an important step forward to helping more industries in the U.S. realize the benefits (drone) technology has to offer," he said.



AP file photo by Rich Pedroncelli

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