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NATION/7A

# EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2015

139th Year, No. 225

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

## Kicker will return \$402.4M to taxpayers

### Estimated Kicker Value

Income Group	Income	Kicker
Bottom 20 percent	< \$10,200	\$10
Second 20 percent	\$10,200 - \$23,800	\$55
Middle 20 percent	\$23,800 - \$43,800	\$125
Fourth 20 percent	\$43,800 - \$79,900	\$235
Next 15 percent	\$79,900 - \$157,100	\$469
Top 4 percent	\$157,100 - \$336,400	\$1,073
Top 1 percent	> \$336,400	\$4,614
<b>Average</b>	\$53,900	\$244
<b>Median</b>	\$30,000 - \$35,500	\$124

— Source: Oregon Office of Economic Analysis

By **PETER WONG**  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregonians can expect an average of \$124 off their 2015 tax returns due in April 2016, according to the state's latest economic and revenue forecast.

State Economist Mark McMullen said Wednesday that the amount of excess income tax collections from the previous two-year budget cycle is \$402.4 million, down from the \$473 million forecast May 14.

He said tax collections dipped more than anticipated in late spring and the result is the smaller amount.

Wednesday's forecast is the first of the new budget cycle, and also is the one immediately after the close of the 2013-15 cycle.

Unlike the practice of the past two decades, the excess — known as the "kicker" — will be returned to individual taxpayers in the form of a credit against the following year's tax bills. Lawmakers in 2011 ended the practice

of mailing checks directly to taxpayers that was started in 1995.

The average rebate of \$124 is for Oregon median incomes — half of them above and half below — ranging from \$30,000 to \$35,000. Because the rebate is based on liability, higher-income households will get far more than the average; low-income households will get as little as \$10.

The most recent kicker was in 2007, when \$1.1 billion was rebated a few months before the official

start of the latest economic downturn.

A 1979 law, which voters wrote into the Oregon Constitution in 2000, requires a rebate of excess taxes when actual collections exceed budget projections by 2 percent.

The law also applies to corporate income taxes, but in 2012, voters earmarked any excess collections of corporate taxes for the state school fund. That amount is built into the current state budget cycle that started July 1.

### PENDLETON

## City staff compiles lists of roads that fees would fix

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
East Oregonian

A little more than two months before Election Day, Pendleton city staff have produced lists of roads that could be addressed using revenues from a \$5 street utility fee and a 5-cent gas tax.

City staff presented two rough draft lists to the Pendleton City Council at a work session Tuesday. One was a list of streets that would be funded by a utility fee. The other was a longer list of streets that would be funded if voters pass a gas tax in addition to the utility fee.

The council is looking to pass the utility fee within the next few months, while voters will need to approve the gas tax in November for the city to implement it.

The lists use a funding formula determined at a previous work session. All new revenue would be used for less-traveled, residential streets, with 70 percent going toward well-maintained streets and 30 percent earmarked for roads currently in poor condition.

One of the poor streets targeted for repair, regardless of which list is used, is Southwest Perkins Avenue. The residents of the McKay Creek-area road submitted a petition to the city in November to fix their street, igniting council discussion over fixing the city's flagging transportation system.

See **PENDLETON/8A**

**"We don't want to burden the taxpayer too much, but I don't think another \$2.10, if they understand what we're doing and what we're using it for, is asking for too much."**

— **John Brenne**, Pendleton city councilman

## Totem pole journey makes stop in Boardman



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A color guard with the Yakama Warrior Association participates in a ceremony for the 2015 Totem Pole Journey on Wednesday at the Boardman Marina Park.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The 22-foot totem pole created by Jewell James is traveling from British Columbia to Montana and is following the route potential coal trains will follow from the mine to the sea.

## Tribes try to squelch fossil fuel exports

By **GEORGE PAVEN**  
East Oregonian

It took Jewell James and his family four months to carve a colorful 22-foot totem pole depicting American Indian drummers among traditional wildlife including an eagle, turtle, badgers and lizards.

Each figure tells a story about the tribes' connection to the earth, said James, head carver for the Lummi Nation's House of Tears Carvers in Bellingham, Washington. Yet many of those natural resources are now under threat by proposed fossil fuel exports across the Pacific Northwest, he said.

In an effort to raise awareness and unity for the environ-

See **TOTEM/8A**

### HERMISTON

## Schools see record number of students on first day

Hermiston district enrollment almost 5,600

By **SEAN HART**  
East Oregonian

More students were enrolled Wednesday for the first day of school in the Hermiston School District than ever before.

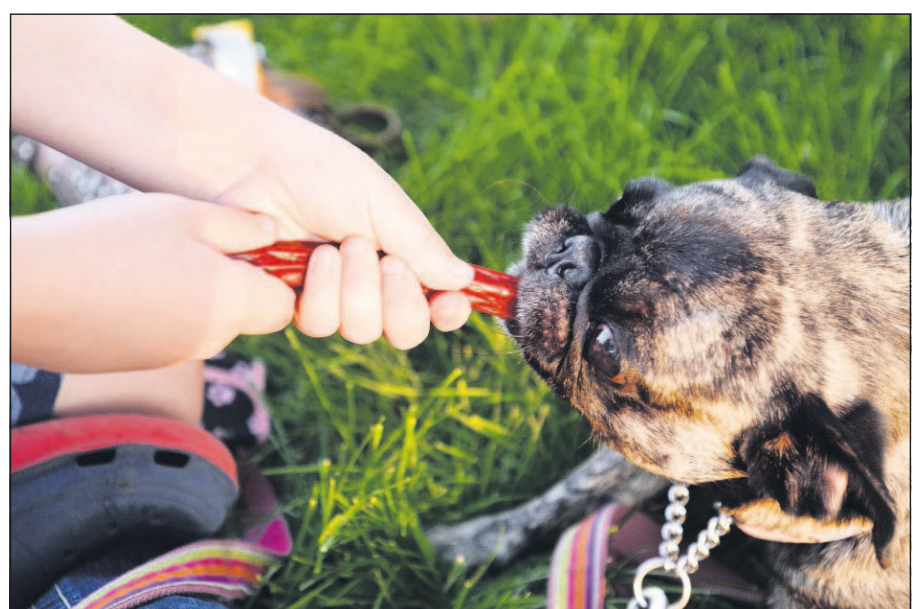
Deputy Superintendent Wade Smith said, although the numbers usually decline as school gets underway from families who moved during the summer, the district currently has close to 5,600 students enrolled.

"Last year, we peaked at about 5,300 students and settled into a 5,200 student

count," he said. "If we follow suit similarly this year, we should settle in between 5,400 and 5,500 students."

The district freed up some space for students by leasing a 24,000-square-foot district office building at 305 S.W. 11th St. and consolidating many different functions there that were previously housed in other schools, Smith said. Even with three additional classrooms at the high school, however, the facility is already full and exceeding its capacity

See **SCHOOL/8A**



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

## Pug-of-war

Yoshi, a 2-year-old pug, plays tug-of-war over a pepperoni stick with Blake Self, 8, of Pendleton during the Wednesdays in the Park music series at Roy Raley Park in Pendleton.



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