



RIVERSIDE
SHUTS OUT
UMATILLA
SOCCER/1B



Book thieves
take from library
fundraiser
REGION/3A

EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2015

139th Year, No. 260 WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar

TONS O' POTATOES

Several acres of test crops harvested, donated to feed the hungry

By SEAN HART
East Oregonian

Truckloads of Hermiston potatoes that would have gone to waste will soon be delivered to needy families, thanks to the collaboration between a variety of businesses and organizations.

For the second year, several acres of potatoes at Oregon State University's Hermiston Agricultural Research & Extension Center were harvested Wednesday morning. The potatoes, planted from seeds provided by area growers, were part of a test plot funded by the Oregon Potato Commission that helped the growers determine whether any problems with their crop originated from the seed or something at their farm, HAREC director Phil Hamm said.

For the last 40 years, he said, the plot consisting of different varieties of potatoes were destroyed each year after the growing season. Last year, people and organizations came together



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Workers at John Walchli's potato processing facility work the sorting table for a shipment of potatoes donated by the Hermiston Agricultural Research & Extension Center to the Oregon Food Bank on Wednesday outside of Hermiston.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Processed potatoes sit in bags stacked on a pallet waiting to be shipped to the Oregon Food Bank.

to turn that waste into 160,000 pounds of food. This year the gross haul weighed in at 250,000 pounds, though the potatoes still needed to be cleaned.

"We are pleased to be able to provide potatoes that basically would have gone to waste to folks who can actually eat them," Hamm said. "If you're hungry, potatoes are potatoes. They all taste good. It doesn't matter what color they are."

Diana Quezada, a resource

developer for the Community Action Program of East Central Oregon, helped bring everyone together. CAPECO, she said, serves as a regional food hub that supplies 17 partner agencies, such as food pantries, in Umatilla, Morrow, Wheeler and Gilliam counties. With a list of contacts who already helped the organization, Quezada organized the resources necessary to harvest, pack and transport the potatoes.

"It's pretty significant for a

See POTATO/8A

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— Phil Hamm, HAREC director

PENDLETON Nickel gas tax goes to voters

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

When ballots were sent out to Pendleton residents Wednesday, there was only one question for prospective voters — adopt or reject a 5-cent per gallon gas tax.

After a late start, both opponents and proponents have started vying for votes ahead of the Nov. 3 election.

Earlier this week, voters began receiving mailers criticizing the tax.

"The City of Pendleton has a long and sordid history with the fuel tax," a section of the mailer states. "The last one we had went to Airport Road, aka 'The Road to Nowhere.' This boondoggle has done nothing to improve our employment situation."

The mailer was paid for by the Oregon Fuels

See FUEL/8A

UMATILLA City tries again on fire bond

Hope to replace
outdated equipment

By SEAN HART
East Oregonian

The air packs Umatilla firefighters use have a recommended lifespan of 12 years, but their current units are already 19 years old.

The Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District board hopes a new bond effort on the November ballot will help the agency procure safer equipment, replace 30-year-old vehicles and improve fire stations.

District residents will soon see ballot measure 30-107, which would generate about \$1.8 million

See FIRE/8A

Cougar kill quota rises amid population increase

BEND (AP) — More cougars are prowling around Oregon, prompting state officials to raise its kill quota for the animals for the first time since 2006.

The state is allowing 193 more cougars to be killed this year, the *Bend Bulletin* reported. Salem-based Oregon Department of Fish

and Wildlife spokeswoman Michelle Dennehy says the state is responding to population growth.

"Our population modeling shows that we are over 6,200 (cougars) now," she said.

The Oregon cougar population grew 9 percent from 2006 to 2013. From

1994 to 2013, the increase is at 96 percent.

"We are just responding to the number of cats," said Craig Foster, the state's district wildlife biologist in Lakeview.

State data shows the number of cougars killed in Southeast Cascades has fallen far short of the quota,

which is a limit rather than a goal. The department says these areas are being targeted to reduce safety concerns and livestock conflicts as well as improve populations of big game.

Wildlife officials do have kill goals for four cougar target areas next year.

Carnivore advocate

Sally Mackler with Eugene-based nonprofit group Predator Defense said she questions raising quotas when they are not being reached.

"I don't think there is any real, scientific backing that there is a need to hunt cougars or other large predators," she said.

Agency issues plan for coastal coho recovery

By GOSIA WOZNIAKKA
Associated Press

PORTLAND — A federal agency has released a road map for the recovery of threatened Oregon Coast coho salmon.

The draft plan from the National Marine Fisheries Service focuses on protecting and restoring freshwater and habitats that have a mixture of freshwater and saltwater, including streams, lakes and wetlands.

The plan also calls on the state to strengthen regulations on activities such as agriculture and logging to protect water quality and habitat.

The Oregon Coast coho was first listed under the U.S.

Endangered Species Act in 1998. It was later taken off that list, but litigation forced the government to grant it federal protection again in 2008.

The listing was retained in 2011, and in 2015 a federal review found that while aspects of the species' status have improved, the species still needs protection.

In July, two environmental groups sued the federal agency over its failure to write the recovery plan in a timely manner.

Between 1 million and 2 million coho salmon once returned annually to Oregon's coast, but the number plum-

See COHO/8A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A poplar trail

The poplar leaves are turning to fall colors on Wednesday at the Boardman Tree Farm east of Boardman. Wednesday's summer-like weather will take a turn toward autumn by the weekend, with lower temperatures and rain according to the National Weather Service. For more weather see Page 2A.



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