

**SEAHAWKS BACK TO WINNING WAYS**  
FOOTBALL/1B



Hermiston students get down & dirty



REGION/3A

# EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2015

140 Year, No. 6

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

## Your Weekend



- A Very Poplar Run at Boardman Tree Farm
- Day of Service, Saturday in Milton-Freewater
- Free health screenings, Saturday in Hermiston

For times and places see Coming Events, 5A

## Weekend Weather

Fri	Sat	Sun
62/37	59/38	64/43

## Watch a game



Hood River vs. Hermiston  
Friday, 7 p.m., at Kennison Field

## Ryan to run for Speaker

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rep. Paul Ryan formally declared his candidacy for speaker of the U.S. House Thursday evening, pledging in a letter to GOP colleagues, “We have an opportunity to turn the page.”

“Instead of rising to the occasion, Washington is falling short—including the House of Representatives. We are not solving the country’s problems; we are only adding to them,” he wrote. It is time, he said, “to start with a clean slate, and to rebuild what has been lost.”

Ryan will face elections next week in a closed-door House GOP meeting on Wednesday and then on the House floor Thursday. His success is assured.

Awaiting him will be a mess of trouble: a Nov. 3 deadline to raise the federal borrowing limit or face unprecedented default, and a Dec. 11 deadline to act on must-pass spending legislation or court a government shutdown.

Despite initial reluctance, Ryan told colleagues he was excited for the opportunity at hand.

## PENDLETON

# Plute’s path out of pot-hole

Marijuana tax could help pay for roadwork

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

The Pendleton City Council has debated nearly every aspect of medical and recreational marijuana sales, but Councilor Al Plute hopes a new equation will convince his colleagues to consider the positive impact the tax revenue would have.

Wood’s previous estimate that the state profit share for recreational marijuana would only bring \$5,900, Plute argued that his math showed the city would generate significantly more money.

Plute provided a copy of his calculations to the city council on the back of a frequently asked questions sheet about marijuana regulations from the League of Oregon Cities.

Using first-year marijuana sales

## More inside

The OLCC is close to approving its rules on marijuana sales. 2A

from Colorado, the state tax distribution formula and an estimate over how many people would live in towns that allowed marijuana sales, Plute projected the city could generate \$89,250 from the state marijuana tax and \$42,000 from a city-imposed 3 percent tax on Pendleton marijuana retailers.

Plute said he didn’t want to “cast aspersions” on Wood, but maintained the councilor made a error in how he

calculated his estimate.

Until July 1, 2017, the state will disperse its marijuana tax to cities and counties based on the population of localities that opted into marijuana. Plute said Wood compared Pendleton’s population to the state population rather than the total population of cities that opted in.

Wood is on a month-long vacation and couldn’t be reached for comment.

Plute admitted in an interview Thursday that his calculations were

See POT/10A



Oregon State Police troopers and school administrators gather in front of McKay Elementary School after the school was evacuated after reports of a suspicious powder emanating from a student’s backpack Thursday in Pendleton. Upon further investigations it was determined to be a false alarm and students returned to their classrooms.

## False alarm becomes evacuation drill

McKay students return to school after powdery false alarm

East Oregonian

McKay Creek Elementary School in Pendleton was evacuated for about an hour Thursday.

Initially, there was a report of a possible explosive device inside a military-style backpack. That turned out not to be the case.

A 9-year-old third grade student brought his father’s camouflage backpack to school for show and tell. The boy’s father served with the National Guard in Iraq and the boy wanted to bring a picture of his father and the pack to show his classmates. Also in the bag, unknown to the boy, was some weightlifting powder.

See MCKAY/10A



McKay Creek Elementary School students are loaded onto buses after the school was evacuated Thursday in Pendleton.

## Pendleton Round-Up snags top stock award



Evan Jane of Marseille, France, rides Rapper Margie from the Calgary Stampede Ranch during bareback riding last September at the Pendleton Round-Up.

Remuda Award given for selecting best bucking horses

By KATHY ANEY  
East Oregonian

Dave O’Neill and Randy Bracher are riding high these days.

Two years ago, the pair of Pendleton Round-Up directors started selecting the rough stock animals to burst out of the chutes each September at the Pendleton Round-Up. This week, they learned that the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association has honored their efforts with the Remuda Award for providing “the best, most consistent pen of bucking horses.” The Round-Up will collect the award at December’s National Finals Rodeo Awards Banquet in Las Vegas.

See STOCK/10A

## COUNTY COUNSEL: Sheriff is overstepping his authority

By KYLE SPURR  
EO Media Group

Grant County’s legal counsel released an opinion Wednesday claiming Sheriff Glenn Palmer is overstepping his authority by creating his own Public Lands Natural Resources Plan.

Palmer deputized 11 county residents last month to write and adopt the plan to invoke coordination with the U.S. Forest Service



Palmer

and influence the management of public lands.

Authority to create such a plan belongs to the county court, not the sheriff, according to county counsel Ron Yockim.

“Bottom line is he is overstepping his authority and reaching into legislative land use matters that are the county court’s role,” Yockim wrote. “He may have authority to develop plans and policies that are within his statutory authority as sheriff (e.g. law enforcement policies) but any coordination of these plans and policies is under a different coordination authority than the one he cited.”

The legal opinion was publicly released during a county court work session Wednesday. The work session was scheduled to discuss concerns about the working relationship between the sheriff and the Forest Service.

Palmer did not attend the work session. He declined to comment on why he did not attend, but did say he believes the county court should not be getting involved with another elected official’s business.

“It’s none of the county court’s business to interject themselves into another elected official’s affairs like this,” Palmer said.

Commissioner Chris Labhart said he called for the work session after reading Palmer’s comments in a *Blue Mountain Eagle* article earlier this month where he said, “I ask for things from the Forest Service to do my job, and I get the door shut in my face.”

Labhart hoped the work session would open dialogue between the two parties and

See SHERIFF/10A



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