



**BUCKAROOS
DEMOLISH
THE DALLES
FOOTBALL/1B**



Students
invest in
doughnuts
LIFESTYLES 1C



**NATION: Inside a
poaching warehouse 9A**

EAST OREGONIAN

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Want to believe?

Local UFO sightings fit national increase

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

It was 4:30 in the morning, but Ivan Dame swears he was wide awake when he saw an unidentified flying object.

He knows what drones look like, he said. This was no drone.

"This was way bigger than drones," he said, noting that he does see unmanned aerial vehicles hovering above his property from time to time. "It's the first time I've seen that particular one."

The lights, shaped like an upside-down "U" with square corners, appeared Oct. 15, floating about 200 feet in the air over Townsend Road in Hermiston, according to Dame. He said the formation didn't correspond to any man-made aircraft he had ever seen.

The lights were — technically — unidentified by Dame, flying, and an object.

"I read all I can about UFOs and stuff, I just never thought I'd get a chance to see one," he said.

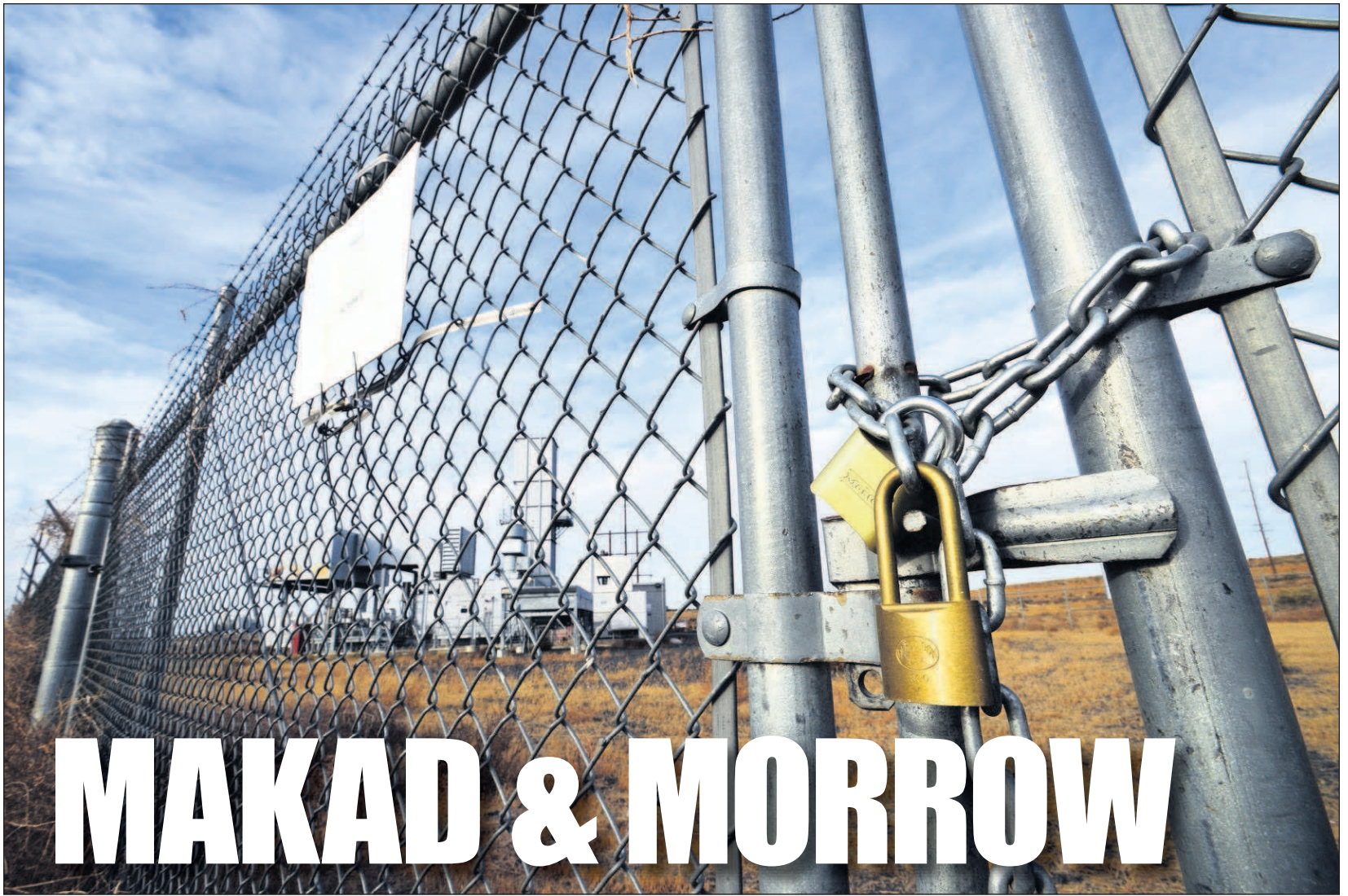
It's not the first time a Umatilla County resident has reported seeing a UFO, and it probably won't be the last. Peter Davenport, director of the National UFO Reporting Center, said there has been a "marked increase" in reported UFO sightings across the country in recent years.

He didn't think that the trend was based on the rise of unmanned aerial vehicles, or even necessarily an increase in alien visitors to Earth. He said it could just as easily be based on an increased interest in presentations and articles on the Internet about UFOs, or a "host of other factors."

"I doubt that drones have a significant effect on our work," he wrote in an email. "If they are flown at night, they have to have standard lighting, as required by the Federal Aviation Regulations, so they probably would be recognized as an aircraft."

On the National UFO Reporting Center's website are several local sightings. One anonymous reporter, describing himself as a truck driver, said he saw a diamond-shaped light hovering in the

See **UFO/12A**



MAKAD & MORROW

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Makad Corp. built a 31 megawatt electrical generation facility at the Port of Morrow in 2001 but only produced power for a short time before it was shuttered.

Lawsuit, unbuilt projects checker corporation's past

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Before the Pendleton City Council unanimously approved a 30-year ground lease on Airport Road for a \$45 million data center, Mayor Phillip Houk touted Makad Corp.'s history of developing projects in Eastern Oregon.

But a series of failed projects and a lawsuit in a neighboring community casts doubt on that assertion.

In an earlier version of the Makad Corp. website, the corporation touted three collaborative projects

at the Port of Morrow. The business partner was Monsanto Enviro-Chem Systems Inc., a subsidiary of the agrochemical giant.

Two out of those three projects — a fertilizer plant and ethanol plant — never came to fruition.

The project that did see completion was a 31-megawatt power plant, but despite being finished in 2001, it hasn't run in years and was the subject of a lawsuit between MECS and Morrow Power LLC, the subsidiary created by Makad Corp. to manage the plant.

On April 4, 2007, Portland

attorney Douglas Pahl filed a motion on behalf of Monsanto Enviro-Chem Systems — which had since changed its name to MECS Inc. when it split off from Monsanto Co. in 2005 — in Morrow County Circuit Court to appoint a receiver for the power plant property. A receiver is a neutral party appointed by a judge to take charge of property and businesses and hold profits while the rightful owner of the profits is decided by a court.

In a declaration supporting the motion, former MECS vice president of administration John Merz

detailed the deal: in exchange for covering the costs of building the multi-million dollar power plant, Makad Corp. would operate the plant and pay back MECS.

The agreement got off to an inauspicious start.

On Dec. 5, 2002, MECS agreed to extend the date when Morrow Power would have to pay back the full cost of the plant from March 15, 2002 to Feb. 28, 2003.

Morrow Power took out a \$650,000 loan from Columbia

See **MAKAD/10A**

BOARDMAN

Building hundreds of homes to keep up with job growth

70 percent of port workers commute

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**
East Oregonian

Just shy of a year after breaking ground, Boardman's new Tuscan subdivision celebrated the completion of its first two houses Friday on South Main Street and Wilson Lane.

The development marks a major step forward for a city in dire need of housing to accommodate a rapidly growing workforce. Employees of businesses at the nearby Port of Morrow now outrank the city's overall population, and estimates show 68 percent of those workers commute from other areas.

Riverwood Homes, of Meridian, Idaho, began developing the Tuscan and Chaparral Park subdivisions late last year to capitalize on the market in Boardman. Two homes are finished in Tuscan, and foundations laid for two more. Fourteen lots are slated for the project's first building phase.

Greg Johnson, president of Riverwood Homes, said one of the finished houses has already sold. Residents were invited Friday



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Two homes have been completed so far in the first phase of building at the Tuscan subdivision in Boardman. The completed subdivision could add as many as 160 homes to the city.

"The ball is rolling, but it's not an avalanche."

— **Barry Beyeler**, community development director

afternoon for an open house to tour the two-story, 2,406-square-foot model.

Meanwhile, Johnson said two more homes will be finished in the next 60 days at Chaparral Park, located west of city hall at the end of Kinkade Road. Another four homes will begin construction there before the end of the year. The neighborhood will include

units for rent.

Their goal, Johnson said, is to provide higher quality housing at Tuscan and more moderately priced townhomes at Chaparral Park. With more options available, Johnson said some port workers might decide to live locally instead of driving from Hermiston or the

See **HOUSING/12A**

DOC looks to open prison in Madras

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

State lawmakers say they may have to take more than \$9 million from a state fund designed to keep offenders out of prison to pay for expanding prison space.

A 2013 law intended to flatline growth in the state prison population has been less successful than anticipated. The state is projected to have 150 more prisoners in March than previously forecast, according to the Office of Economic Analysis.

The Department of Corrections plans to accommodate the extra prisoners by opening a vacant medium-security facility at Deer Creek Correctional Institution in Madras, said Colette Peters, department director. Executing the plan by March would cost about \$9.5 million, she said. The department plans had called for opening that facility in 2019.

House Majority Leader Rep. Jennifer Williamson, D-Portland, said the only option for covering that cost is to siphon the money from the Justice Reinvestment Fund.

The Justice Reinvestment Fund was

See **PRISON/12A**



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