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One dollar

PENDLETON Council's consensus cracks over gas tax defeat

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Consensus was in short supply at a Pendleton City Council workshop Tuesday as council members tried to glean lessons from the defeat of the gas tax.

While the overall rejection of the gas tax was a voter decision, proposals for a street utility fee, utility rate hikes and system development charges remain in the hands of the council.

According to a report provided by Public Works Director Bob Patterson, city staff recommends the council enact a street utility fee at the Nov. 17 meeting and set new fee rates at the Dec. 1 meeting.

To give the city more time to discuss a stormwater rate, the recommendation is to wait until April 2016 to consider it.

If the council follows the recommendations laid out by the master plan, the combined cost of street, water, sewer and stormwater rates will raise the average Pendleton utility bill from \$67.33 a month to \$86.58 a month, eventually rising to \$91.73 in five years.

Councilors have discussed these fees for months. But after the gas tax was defeated in a landslide, they couldn't agree about the right approach going forward.

Councilor Al Plute suggested the city abandon the proposal for a \$5 street utility fee, which would raise \$481,000 for street repair, and instead charge utility customers an extra \$2.50 per month for street lights, which currently comes out of the street fund.

This would free up \$200,000 in the street fund for maintenance, which Plute would want the city to use for crack sealing and patching.

Plute said passing a \$5 street utility fee would force a fee on residents that just rejected a similar tax.

"If you don't know why they voted against it, it wasn't a matter of not being educated," he said. "It wasn't a matter of not enough advertising. It was a matter of the fact that they're sending a message to the city: 'We want you to find money somewhere else.'"

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"War is not something you can sanitize or glamorize."

— George Murdock, Umatilla County Commissioner



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

World War II veteran Bob Deeter of Pendleton receives a hug from Tina Newson of Pendleton after Newson presented Deeter with a Quilt of Valor on Wednesday at a Veterans Day ceremony in Pendleton.

A tribute to our WWII veterans

Four veterans receive quilts sewn by Quilts of Valor in gratitude for their service

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

The two World War II veterans flipped through a stack of old black-and-white photos on the tablecloth in front of them.

Daniel Lopez, 88, and Ted Flaiz, 95, seemed transported back to 1945 Japan, where they had been stationed as young Army soldiers to occupy the country after the formal end of WWII. Snapshots showed military vehicles, soldiers and the effects of war on a cityscape.

The pair of veterans had come to the Pendleton Convention Center for Wednesday's "A Special Tribute to the Veterans of World War II." They set

aside the photos as the Color Guard proceeded up the center aisle. Around the room dozens of other veterans snapped to attention, too. Many wore hats identifying them as WWII veterans.

The tributes came in a steady rush. "I'm humbled to be in the presence of so many heroes," said Umatilla County Commissioner George Murdock, who served as master of ceremonies.

Murdock spoke immediately after a video portraying the devastation of the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor that kick-started United States involvement in World War II. Smoke billowed from

See VETERANS/8A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Tom Tangney, right, of Pendleton shakes hands with World War II veteran Clelan Dudek of Pendleton after presenting him with a congressional citation during a Veterans Day ceremony in Pendleton.

HERMISTON

Girl Scouts rededicate peace pole after vandalism

Moved from McKenzie Park to front of police station

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

After a "peace pole" honoring veterans was vandalized at McKenzie Park, a local Girl Scout unit put its replacement in the safest place they could think of: right in front of the police station.

The pole was rededicated on Wednesday in front of the Bob Shannon Safety Center by the Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southeast Washington Service Unit 22.

Troop leader Michelle Kane said the original peace pole was installed in 2007 after the Girl Scouts decided they wanted to use the funds from their annual father-daughter ball for a community



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Girl Scouts pass the microphone while reciting a poem during the dedication of a peace pole, pictured at right, in front of the Bob Shannon Safety Center Wednesday.

project. "Since the funds came from the community we wanted to give back to the community," Kane said. "After much thought and discussion with the girls we decided we wanted to do something for veterans and those currently serving our country." The four sides of the pole say "May peace prevail on earth" in English, Spanish,

See POLE/8A

Salmon return to Hanford Reach in record numbers

Fall chinook run on greater Columbia, Snake river system also doing well

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS
Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — The number of fall chinook salmon returning to the Hanford Reach section of the Columbia River this year is the most since dams were constructed in the 1930s, the Bonneville Power Administration said this week.

Scientists estimate 200,000 chinook are spawning in the Hanford Reach, which is the last free-flowing section of the Columbia in the United States. The Hanford Reach flows past the giant Hanford Nuclear Reservation, where the government for decades made plutonium for nuclear weapons.

Approximately 50,000 of the fall chinook are spawning in a one-mile section of the Hanford Reach called Vernita Bar, the BPA said. Historically only a small number of salmon spawned at Vernita Bar because that stretch of the river was too shallow, the BPA said. But special efforts have been made to keep salmon spawning grounds submerged there, the BPA said.

The BPA also said this year's fall chinook run on the greater Columbia and Snake river system is the

See SALMON/8A

