

EAST OREGONIAN

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2015



The Heppner Mustangs celebrate as time runs off the clock in their 48-0 rout against Kennedy in the state 2A championship game Saturday in Hermiston. For more on the game, see Page 1B.
Staff photo by E.J. Harris

140th Year, No. 33

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

HERMISTON

Miracle on Second Street

City tries out festival street concept with Christmas tree

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

A tree is blocking the street next to Hermiston's City Hall, but it's no accident.

The 30-foot Christmas tree donated by RDO Equipment was "planted" in the middle of Northeast Second Street by the city after workers used a jackhammer to create a three-foot deep hole in the road.

The display is part of a larger vision that includes a nightly light show set to music on the side of the former RoeMarks building. The block of downtown where the tree and light show are located will remain closed to vehicles during the month of December.

When Parks and Recreation director Larry Fetter announced the light show in October he said he planned to utilize "as many of the festival lights as possible" from the now-disbanded Eastern Oregon Festival of Lights, along with the long-empty RoeMarks storefront, to help draw shoppers downtown.

"I hope people say, 'We have 25 minutes to kill before the next show, let's look around,'" he said.

Eventually the city of Hermiston plans to make the block of Second Street between city hall and East Main Street a permanent "festival street" with decorative brickwork, landscaping, benches and gates that could be pulled closed to block off the street for events. For now, however, the street will reopen in January after the tree is removed and the hole covered.

Revitalizing downtown is one of the top five priorities Hermiston residents listed in a recent



The city of Hermiston has planted a Christmas tree in the middle of Northeast Second Street near City Hall in Hermiston.
Staff photo by E.J. Harris



The city of Hermiston used jackhammers to dig a hole in the pavement of Northeast Second Street to plant a Christmas Tree for the holiday season.
Staff photo by E.J. Harris

survey asking what "livability" issues the city should prioritize.

One group that has been working to do so is the Hermiston

Downtown Association. The city is holding a tree-lighting ceremony on Thursday in conjunction with the association's First

See it light up

The city is hosting a tree lighting ceremony and light show premiere on Thursday at 6 p.m.

Thursday event, when businesses offer deals, refreshments and longer hours once a month.

The lighting ceremony for the Christmas tree in the middle of Second Street will be Thursday at 6 p.m., featuring Santa Claus and live entertainment. The light show will also premiere that night. It will continue each Thursday, Friday and Saturday every 30 minutes from 5-9 p.m. until Dec. 26, with live entertainment on Thursdays.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

PENDLETON

Next city bronzes on ballot

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The city of Pendleton is holding another election, this time to determine the next two Main Street statues.

Tuesday will mark the first day Pendleton residents can vote on the historical figures they wish to see depicted in bronze,

Cast your vote
Cut out your ballot on Page 4A.

ranging from people that honor the city's Western and tribal heritage to former civic leaders that made a mark on the Round-Up City.

Pendleton Mayor Phillip Houk, a member of the Pendleton Arts Committee, said the nominees were culled from candidates from the previous bronze election in 2012 and suggestions made by citizens.

The three candidates for the 100 block of Main Street across from the Jackson Sundown statue are all former chiefs from the Umatilla Indian Reservation: Poker Jim, Clarence Burke and William Minthorn.

Poker Jim, the former chief of the Walla Walla tribe, brought a team of racing horses to the first Round-Up in 1910 and encouraged his fellow tribal members to attend the nascent rodeo. He served as the chief of the Round-Up.

See BRONZE/4A

Clinic attack suspect faces murder charges

By SADIE GURMAN
Associated Press

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — The man accused in the shooting rampage at a Colorado Planned Parenthood clinic made his first court appearance Monday and learned that he will face first-degree murder charges in the deaths of three people killed in the standoff with police.

Speaking in a raspy voice, Robert Lewis Dear appeared via a video hookup from the El Paso County Jail, where he has been held since surrendering after Friday's five-hour siege.

The white-bearded suspect wore a padded vest with black straps that authorities described as a standard-issue "safety smock." He gazed downward during most of the hearing. Victims' relatives watched from a courtroom.

When asked by Chief District Judge Gilbert Martinez if he understood his rights, Dear replied, "no questions."

Public defender Daniel King, who represented Colorado theater shooter James Holmes, stood beside Dear and will act as his attorney. The suspect is expected to be formally charged on Dec. 9.

Dear, 57, is accused of fatally

See ATTACK/10A

PENDLETON

Burning owl flies from fireplace

Bird doing well, but will take a year to regrow feathers

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

John and Deb Schlichting arrived home Sunday night and settled in for what they thought would be a peaceful evening at home.

It wasn't to be.

Deb had just started a fire in the fireplace when she noticed movement deep inside the box and spotted an owl. The bird flew out as she ran to the basement to get John. When they got back to the living room, the only evidence of the owl was a trail of burnt aroma. Together they searched.

"We couldn't find him, but there was a distinct burnt hair smell," John said.

See OWL/4A



Blue Mountain Wildlife Executive Director Lynn Tompkins pulls out the wing of a screech owl that was burned in a chimney to look at the damaged feathers Monday while treating the animal at Blue Mountain Wildlife in Pendleton. Holding the bird is her husband Bob Tompkins.
Staff photo by E.J. Harris

