

PENDLETON

Happy Canyon introduces princesses

Reception Saturday at Convention Center

East Oregonian

The 2016 Happy Canyon princesses are Appollonia Saenz and Elena Van Pelt.

They will attend a reception Saturday at 10 a.m. at the Pendleton Convention Center, 1601 Westgate. The public is welcome.

“We are so excited to be represented by Appollonia and Elena for our centennial celebration,” said Clay Briscoe, court chaperone, in a press release. “They provide the poise and confidence that’s so necessary to promote Happy Canyon during this historical year.”

Saenz, 20, is the daughter of Marcus Conner and Terri Carnes-Conner. She graduated from Pendleton High School in 2013 and is employed at Sally Beauty Supply. At PHS, she ran cross country, played softball and was a varsity and junior varsity cheerleader.

Her family has participated in Round-Up since it began in 1910 and has had several relatives serve as Round-Up and Happy Canyon royalty. In 2010, Saenz was crowned the winner of the Junior American Indian Beauty Contest and in 2015 she won the Senior American Indian Beauty Pageant.

She’s held a number of roles in the night show, and has shared the role of the bride with her cousins since 2006. She’s also ready to appear in the numerous parades to promote Happy Canyon. She’s been riding a horse since she was 8.

In the future, Saenz hopes to study to become a pediatric nurse. She also has a goal of making a traditional outfit of her own that she can pass down to future generations.

Van Pelt, 17, is the daughter of Onawa and Jeff Baumgartner and Anthony and Paula Van Pelt Jr. She is a student at Pendleton High School where she plays softball. She also enjoys cooking, reading and spending time with family and friends.

Van Pelt has had several family members on her mother’s side who volunteer and take part in Happy Canyon, as well as several who have served as princess. They begin with



Elena Van Pelt, 17, left and Appollonia Saenz, 20, are the 2016 Happy Canyon princesses.

her great-grandmother, Mary Johnley-Hines, who began participating in Happy Canyon the year it began. The new princess is one of the women riders in the night show.

Van Pelt has been riding a horse since she was 6, and considers it one of her favorite pastimes.

When she graduates from high school, the princess plans on attending

Concordia University in Portland to study business. She then wants to attend Le Cordon Bleu Culinary School and own a restaurant.

The Happy Canyon Indian Pageant and Wild West Show — which was named Oregon’s official outdoor pageant in 2011 — is celebrating its centennial in 2016. For more information, visit www.happycanyon.com.

Photo by Dallas Dick/Confederated Umatilla Journal

Pendleton grads dispense college tips at PHS

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Six Pendleton natives on their first winter break as college students were back at school Wednesday.

The former Pendleton High School students returned to their alma mater to speak on a panel about their initial impressions of college life and the challenges they face.

Throughout their speeches, there was one theme that grew out of the advice the alumni gave to their former peers: start thinking about finances now.

“As far as financial aid goes, you should do that. A lot,” deadpanned Riley Kendrick, a first-year student at Oregon State University studying chemical engineering.

Panelist Shyla Davison said she originally intended to go to a four-year university but ultimately committed to Blue Mountain Community College, which she thought was more financially viable.

Davison decided against a four-year institution because she wanted to avoid debt. She said going to BMCC has allowed her to earn income while being a full-time student.

In addition to holding down a job and living independently, the financial aid Davison gets through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid covers the cost of college, allowing her to bank the money she received from 10 scholarships she was awarded for the four-year university she’ll eventually transfer to, where she plans to study paleontology.

Besides scholarships, the panelists urged kids to seek out ASPIRE, a program that assists students consid-



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton graduate Gerry Chavez speaks about his experiences going to college at Oregon State University to a group of students Wednesday at Pendleton High School.

ering college and professional opportunities, and to enroll in dual credit courses, which can give students a head start in obtaining college credits and better prepare them for the rigors of a university curriculum.

The panel was comprised of students from OSU, BMCC, the Oregon Institute of Technology and Eastern Oregon University.

Debbie McBee, the vice chair of the Pendleton School Board and an ASPIRE volunteer, said the panel usually features students from private and out-of-state colleges in addition to students from state schools to offer the audience a variety of experiences.

While Pendleton High School graduates attending out-of-state schools

participated in the afternoon edition of the panel, McBee said the students from private universities won’t start their winter break until next week, which coincides with the beginning of the district’s winter break.

Besides offering financial advice, the panel also gave timeless college admonishments to their audience, including the importance of surrounding yourself with the right people, managing your time well and making new friends.

“If you don’t talk with somebody,” OSU student Gerry Chavez said, “you’ll be watching Netflix by yourself the whole year.”

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STANFIELD

Market robbery suspect arrested

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Police arrested a Hermiston man for the Dec. 6 robbery of Center Market in Stanfield. Alfredo Lopez Rodriguez, 22, is in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on charges of first-degree robbery, unlawful use of a weapon, coercion and failure to appear.

Hermiston police Chief Jason Edmiston said Stanfield’s lone on-duty officer, plus police from Hermiston and the local drug enforcement team, caught up to the suspect Tuesday at about 3 p.m. at a Hermiston restaurant where he worked. Rodriguez cooperated with police and went without incident, Edmiston said.

Umatilla County Circuit Court records show Rodriguez pleaded not guilty to charges Wednesday, and Circuit Judge Dan Hill set his bail at \$75,000.

Stanfield city manager Blair Larsen previously said the suspect was “clearly visible” on surveillance footage and police knew who he was. Umatilla County Circuit Court records show Rodriguez

is serving two years of court probation after pleading guilty in August to second-degree theft from Wal-Mart.

Rodriguez was the only suspect in a robbery that happened Dec. 6 at 2 a.m. on at Center Market, Stanfield.

Market owners Gurbal Singh and Jaswinder Kaur reported a man came in, pointed a gun at Kaur and demanded she take all of the money out of the cash register and put it in a bag. According to Kaur’s account he

hit her on the arm, then fled with the cash.

Edmiston said Hermiston stepped up patrols through Stanfield in the wake of the robbery. The small city near Hermiston is down to just one officer while the police department’s chief and lieutenant are on paid leave and under investigation.

Edmiston also said he knew the robbery was a traumatic experience for the victims and his department would assist another any time it could to help resolve crimes.

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Rodriguez

Woman injured by logs thrown from truck

By CHERISE KAECHLE
The (La Grande) Observer

One North Powder woman was taken to the hospital after a log truck wreck Wednesday morning on westbound Interstate 84.

According to Sgt. Kyle Hove of the Oregon State Police, Adam Cole of Pilot Rock was driving a log truck near milepost 282 on I-84 westbound when he slammed on his brakes to avoid hitting another semi on the side of the road.

Cole, 25, lost control of his trailer and his load spilled onto the interstate. Cindy Martin, 52, North Powder, was standing in the chain up area next to her pickup truck when the trailer of the semi fishtailed and struck the pickup, which then struck Cindy. Her husband, Jeff Martin, 51, was standing near another semi on the side of the road, had to dive underneath the semi but was struck in the knee with

a log, according to Hove.

“Witnesses said the log truck was trying to avoid something,” Hove said. “They said there was a May Truck in the roadway, but I don’t know that for sure. The semi (driver) did react and the trailer came around to strike the pickup.”

Hove said Jeff Martin helps drivers chain up their trucks and that’s likely the reason the couple was on the side of the road.

Cindy Martin was taken to the hospital with serious injuries. Her husband was taken with a left knee injury.

“Cindy has been taken to the hospital with impact damage,” he said. “The logs were scattered around her, but there was no indication (in the report) that one fell on her.”

According to Mardi Ford, community relations at the Grande Ronde Hospital, Cindy Martin was awake and in fair condition Wednesday afternoon.

I-84 closed for two hours between Pendleton, La Grande

East Oregonian

Interstate 84 was closed for two hours between Pendleton and La Grande Wednesday afternoon due to extreme fog in the Meacham area. The highway, and Highway 204, were re-opened at about 2:15 p.m.

About 50 miles of the highway were closed over the pass in both directions, and traffic headed west-bound was stopped at Baker City.

A winter storm is expected Thursday, according to the National Weather Service in Pendleton, bringing between 2-5 inches of snow and up to a tenth of an inch of ice. A dense fog advisory is also in effect until 6 p.m. for the Blue Mountains region, according to the National Weather Service in Pendleton.

Check tripcheck.com for updated conditions, or call 511.

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