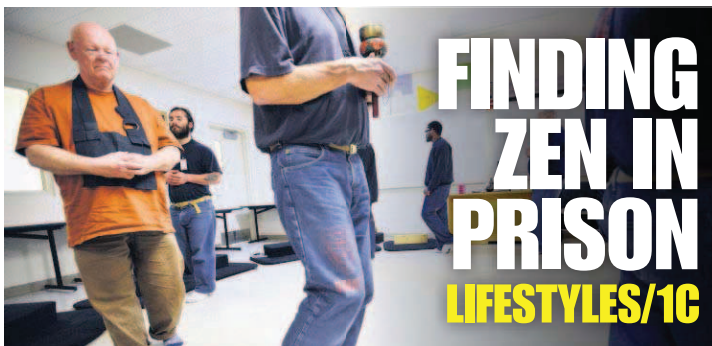




**PILOT ROCK
GIRLS BEAT
ENTERPRISE**
BASKETBALL/1B

WEEKEND EDITION



**FINDING
ZEN IN
PRISON**
LIFESTYLES/1C



CONGRESS PASSES BUDGET
NATION/8A

EAST OREGONIAN

DECEMBER 19-20, 2015

140th Year, No. 47 WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD \$1.50

MISSION \$3.1M will help finance new clinic

Settlement comes from
Bureau of Indian Affairs

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Most of us know the feeling of impatiently waiting for a refund to arrive.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is well acquainted with that feeling. Late last year, the CTUIR finally received a long-overdue reimbursement of \$3.1 million from the federal government. The chunk of money represented unpaid administrative costs of providing health care to tribal members between 2006 and 2011. The federal government, though bound by treaty and contractual obligations to provide tribal health care services, made only partial payments of tribes' costs during that time. This was a common scenario in Indian Country. Finally, some Alaskan tribes sued. Other tribes, including the CTUIR in 2012, followed suit.



Gilbert

The CTUIR received a settlement late last year. Recently, the tribes' Health Commission and Board of Trustees decided to invest the entire \$3.1 million in a new 61,000-square-foot health center that has been on the drawing board since 2014.

Tim Gilbert, chief executive officer of the Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center and an Alaskan Native, watched the settlement process with keen interest.

"All tribes have had some sort of contract with the federal government," Gilbert said. "What has happened over the years was that Congress never really fully funded the amount of money needed to carry out the contracts."

The Indian Health Service, responsible for making the payments, couldn't cover all the tribes' administrative costs.

"The shortfalls carried over each year," Gilbert said. "We were asked to keep track of the underpayments all those years. We still had to carry out the work so we paid overhead out of our own pockets."

In 2012, the Supreme Court directed the federal government to pay after determining that between 77 percent and 92 percent of support costs had been underpaid.

The settlement comes just as the CTUIR is gearing up to break ground on a new clinic. Gilbert estimated the cost at between \$21 million and \$23 million. The old clinic outgrew its walls a while ago and has overflowed into four modular units. In the new building, everything will move under the same roof. With the settlement, the CTUIR has about \$11 million to infuse into the project and a smaller amount of projected debt.

See CTUIR/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton Police Cpl. Ryan Lehnert radios in to dispatch while checking on a foreclosed residence on Friday in Pilot Rock. Pilot Rock is currently without its own police force and has been receiving help from Pendleton Police.

VERY THIN BLUE LINE

Pilot Rock problems nothing new for small town police departments

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton Police Cpl. Ryan Lehnert talks with Corey Griffith while out on patrol Friday in Pilot Rock.

The people of Pilot Rock want to keep their own police department.

But the city of about 1,500 has been without a police chief since the last one quit 11 months ago. City council in November fired officer Gary Thompson for lying. The city's other officer is completing the basic police course at the Oregon Public Safety Academy, Salem. If he graduates, he will have months of field training ahead of him before the state certifies him as an officer.

The hurdles of operating a police department in rural Oregon led

Weston in 2014 and Athena at the start of 2015 to shut down their departments and contract with the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office for services. Pilot Rock residents spoke out against such a contract Monday night at a city council session to discuss the police situation.

Pendleton police Chief Stuart Roberts said much of this is a consequence of what's happening nationally, and the situation may not improve anytime soon. A glut of people entered law enforcement from the 1970s through the early 1990s, he said, and now they are

See POLICE/10A

Proposed route puts portion of B2H along I-84

Final EIS expected next year

By GEORGE PLAVERN
East Oregonian

A portion of the proposed Boardman to Hemingway transmission line could follow Interstate 84 in Morrow and Umatilla counties, avoiding high-value agricultural land and Navy property to the south.

The Bureau of Land Management revised its preliminary environmentally preferred

More online

Head to www.eastoregonian.com for a map of the proposed transmission line.

route for the project, which will allow the Columbia Basin to share electricity with southern Idaho during peak demand.

Routing the 500-kilovolt line has been a source of contention since Idaho Power first pitched the project in 2006. Boardman to Hemingway would cross five Eastern Oregon

counties before ending at a substation near Boise. Local farmers have voiced concerns the towers would take chunks of irrigated farmland out of production.

Both Idaho Power and the BLM initially favored a route starting at the proposed Longhorn Substation near Boardman, running south for roughly 22 miles along Bombing Range Road. On Wednesday, the BLM altered its environmentally preferred alternative to instead parallel I-84 from Boardman

See B2H/10A



EO file photo

Nearly one-third of the 25,000-acre Boardman Tree Farm is being sold to the Willow Creek Dairy.

BOARDMAN

Willow Creek Dairy relocates to tree farm

By GEORGE PLAVERN
East Oregonian

Nearly one-third of the massive Boardman Tree Farm has been sold to a local dairy that plans to move operations within the next year.

Willow Creek Dairy purchased 7,288 acres of the tree farm from Greenwood Resources in November. Owner Greg te Velde said the land he purchased runs along the property's southern boundary — out of view from Interstate 84 — near Finley Buttes Landfill.

"The whole community is great. It's all about agriculture. It's really easy to do business here."

— Greg te Velde, owner of Willow Creek Dairy

Once trees have been removed from the property, te Velde said he will put in a center pivot to grow irrigated wheat, corn and alfalfa. His

See TREES/10A



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