

PENDLETON

# Grant for drone range manager on the table

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

The new year could bring a new manager to the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range.

In its first meeting of the year Tuesday, the Pendleton City Council will consider approving a \$300,000 grant contract with SOAR Oregon, a not-for-profit focused on promoting the UAS industry in Oregon.

According to a report

written by economic development director and airport manager Steve Chrisman, the \$300,000 will be split evenly over two years to cover the cost of a range manager's salary.

Range management duties are currently handled by Anchorage, Alaska-based Peak 3 Technical Services, although Peak 3 hasn't employed an on-site manager since John Stevens resigned to become the chief operating officer

for SOAR Oregon earlier this year.

Chrisman's report did not specify whether the grant would affect the city's relationship with Peak 3. The city is currently in the midst of a three-year contract with Peak 3, although the deal stipulates Peak 3 won't receive any money unless the test range starts generating business.

Generating business is also an imperative for the SOAR Oregon grant, which

sets benchmarks the city must meet in order to access the second year of the grant.

Within the first six months of the grant, the range must sign three customers to testing contracts, have two customer applications in the process of obtaining Federal Aviation Administration authorization to test and two applications approved by the FAA.

On a quarterly basis, the range must facilitate 10 test flights, host 10 test days for

customers and meet a certain number of test hours.

SOAR Oregon does give the UAS range some leeway in meeting those benchmarks. If the city doesn't meet them, officials can either provide an explanation for the shortfall and a recovery plan or request the benchmarks be revised to a lower expectation.

The grant contract also includes a memorandum of agreement that formally acknowledges SOAR

Oregon's role as a liaison between the Pendleton UAS Range, the FAA and the University of Alaska Fairbanks, which acts as an administrator for test ranges in Oregon, Alaska and Hawaii.

The meeting will be at the council chambers in city hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Avenue, Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Contact Antonio Sierra at [asierra@eastoregonian.com](mailto:asierra@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0836.

HERMISTON



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Runners and walkers set out on the Resolution Run along the Oxbow Trail on New Year's Day.

# Resolution Run helps residents start new year goals together

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Dozens of Hermiston residents got a jump start on their fitness resolutions Friday morning at the Resolution Run at Riverfront Park.

Temperatures well below freezing and the occasional snowflake didn't seem to dampen the enthusiasm as runners and walkers lined up at the head of the Oxbow Trail, which presented a roughly three mile round-trip.

The run, which is in its second year, doesn't feature a stopwatch or prizes. Instead it was started as a casual get-together for anyone hoping to start their fitness-related goals on the first day of the new year.

Tim Beal, one of the event's organizers, told attendees at the start of the run not to feel bad if they didn't make it the whole way or if their kids decided they were too cold after 200 yards. That's 200 yards farther than some

people started out the new year with, he said.

"(The organizers) just want to really encourage us to accomplish our goals together, to get in shape and have a healthy New Year," he said.

Kay Edwards went the extra mile (or 13) when she ran from her house to the park and planned to run home again after completing the three-mile round trip to 11th Street and back with the group.

"I took a challenge to run 2,016 miles in 2016 so I wanted to pound out 16 miles today," she said.

The challenge works out to about five and a half miles per day, leaving little room for procrastination. To help herself meet the goal Edwards said she was also training for a 50-mile run during 2016. That might sound like a nightmare to some people, but to Edwards it's just more time doing something she loves.

"It's a great way to relax," she said.

Some participants in the Resolution Run had other draws besides a New Year's resolution.

"I wanted to have some bonding time with my brother and sister," Keely Tromble said, explaining why Dylan Botti and Madi Botti said she "dragged" them there.

Ryan Wiley said he came to run with his family and with Sofia Gispert, who said she came because she wants to start getting into better shape.

"I used to run, but I haven't in forever. I figured this would be a good start," she said.

She said her New Year's resolutions also included healthier behavior like drinking more water and getting more sleep — "the little things."

Wiley said his New Year's resolutions were more about learning new things than about running a certain number of miles.

"I want to learn how to dance," he said.

# Self-defense classes teach more than force

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

A local martial arts center has tailored a four-part self-defense class for young women, and it's about more than just physical force.

Del Loney of Loney's Martial Arts Center said he's heard from his instructors about situations where a boy makes a girl uncomfortable, and the girl has no idea how to handle it. People think about self-defense as physical fighting, he said, but teaching pre-teen and teenage girls how to be assertive with their words and body language is just as important.

"If you're sitting in a chair, and a guy puts his hand on your leg and you don't want it there, what do you do?" he said.

The discussions led to the idea for a set of four self-defense classes that will be offered every Saturday between Jan. 9 and Jan. 30. Girls ages 10 to 13 will meet from 9-11 a.m. and women age 14 and up will meet from 1-3 p.m. The cost is \$10 per class, and while taking all four is recommended it isn't

required.

Some sections of the class will be hands-on learning of escape and takedown techniques, while others will focus on how to avoid or de-escalate situations before they get to a point where physical force is needed. Loney said he is reaching out to the Hermiston School District and police department to get speakers about recognizing abusive situations or grooming by sexual predators.

Karen Baxter, one of the instructors, said she has an 11-year-old daughter who will be taking the class because she wants her to enter the hormone-filled world of middle school with the understanding that she doesn't have to put up with behavior that makes her uncomfortable.

"I don't want her to feel unsafe," she said.

Royceann Taft, who worked at Armand Larive Middle School until this year and teaches taekwondo, said she jumped on board when she heard the idea of offering a special class for pre-teen girls in addition to one for women.

"With the younger girls

it's about teaching them to speak up, to use their voice, to advocate for themselves," Taft said. "It's hard because they don't want to draw attention to themselves at that age. They don't want to be embarrassed."

For the 14 and older class, she said women of all ages, but especially those who are teenagers or college students, can also benefit from talking about preventing date rape or learning to escape an attacker while walking home from

campus late at night.

"With high schoolers, there are definitely a lot of situations that can start out good but go bad," she said.

Hopefully none of the class participants ever have to use any of the training, she said, but if they are put in a bad situation she wants as many girls as possible to know how to handle themselves.

For more information about the class call Loney's Martial Arts Center, 541-720-7706, at 234 E Main St.

UMATILLA

# New park could be constructed at old gas station

Council will also accept resignation of councilor

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

On Tuesday, Umatilla city council will consider a purchase agreement for land to build a new city park.

The council's agenda for its first meeting of 2016 includes an agreement to purchase the old gas station property on Sixth Street across from city hall for \$87,280.

According to the city manager's report, the underground fuel storage tanks on the site have already been removed and the soil remediated.

The city already owns other lots adjacent to the property and plans to turn the whole section into a park in the heart of downtown, connecting city hall with the Umatilla Village/Old Town Site.

During Tuesday's meeting the council will also be asked to accept the resignation of councilor George Fenton, who resigned in December due to health concerns. After officially declaring his seat vacant the council can take applications and appoint someone to finish the term.

The council will also discuss the transition to a new city manager on March 1. In October, the council voted to end city manager

Bob Ward's contract early, with the understanding that current public works director Russ Pelleberg would step into the position.

According to the plan laid out by the city's personnel committee, Pelleberg will take over city manager duties on March 1 and Ward will continue in a transitional role until July 1. At that time Ward will be given a severance package that includes a lump sum payment of the rest of his original contract that had been set to expire on Feb. 1, 2017.

During Tuesday's meeting the council will also consider final approval of an agreement with the Northeast Oregon Water Association.

The city has a water right permit to draw water out of the Columbia River at a rate of 23 cubic feet per second but has not developed any of that right. Under the proposed agreement NOWA would help the city perfect that right, protecting it for future use and allowing it to be transferred to other entities. In exchange, NOWA would be able to lease part or all of the right for irrigation or in-stream mitigation at a rate of \$1,500 annually per cfs.

The city council meeting will be Tuesday, Jan. 5 at 7 p.m. at Umatilla City Hall, 700 Sixth Street.

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SUBMIT COMMUNITY NEWS

Submit information to: [community@eastoregonian.com](mailto:community@eastoregonian.com) or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

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