



TRE NEAL
TO PLAY
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EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2016

140th Year, No. 64

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Momentum grows for wage hike

Lawmakers work fast on legislation to forestall ballot measure

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — State lawmakers received a sobering message Wednesday about their prospects of striking a legislative deal to hike Oregon's minimum wage.

Petitioners for a ballot initiative to boost the minimum to \$15 statewide by 2019 said they intend to continue gathering signatures to place their proposal on the November ballot unless lawmakers meet their demands.

Opponents to hiking the

minimum indicated they're gearing up to thwart the initiative.

Meanwhile, lawmakers have revealed no specific numbers for a potential deal and none were expected before a public hearing at 6 p.m. Thursday at the Capitol. The lawmakers have just two weeks

before the legislative session starts Feb. 1.

Justin Norton-Kertson, campaign manager for Oregonians for \$15, said the group has collected nearly 40,000 signatures for its ballot initiative and projects having 50,000 to 60,000 signatures by early March.

See WAGE/8A

PENDLETON

District considers later start

Construction won't be finished by Round-Up

East Oregonian

A year after committing to school starting in late August, the Pendleton School District could be forced to revert to a late September start date next school year.

According to a press release, Kirby Nagelhout Construction recently informed the district that the new Washington and Sherwood Heights elementary school buildings won't be ready until mid-September while crews demolish the old facilities and install the surrounding infrastructure.

Kirby Nagelhout said workers won't be able to start tearing down the old Washington and Sherwood Heights until after June 8, the last day of school. After demolition, they can begin building parking lots, playgrounds and sidewalks around the new schools.

The district will form a committee to propose calendar options for the 2016-2017 school year, including opening all schools in late September after Round-Up or allowing high school and middle school students to start in August while waiting to start elementary school students in late September.

The first Monday after the 2016 Round-Up is Sept. 19.

After the committee finalizes the calendar options, they'll be presented on the district website for a public vote.

Last year, the community overwhelmingly supported moving the first day of school to late August in a similar online survey, electing to give students time off during Round-Up week.

The new Washington and Sherwood Heights will allow the district to consolidate Lincoln Primary and West Hills Intermediate schools, changing the elementary school boundaries.

Although the Pendleton School Board voted on the new boundaries months ago, its members unanimously voted Monday to make alterations to the borders between Sherwood Heights and McKay Creek Elementary School to ensure McKay Creek has only two classes per grade.

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

PENDLETON



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Shelley Whitney, left, and Deana Echamn are a mother-daughter duo that run Deana's Car Biz used car lot together in Pendleton.

LADIES ON THE LOT

Mother and daughter run car dealership; a rarity in the business

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

When it comes to shopping for a car, the terrain is changing.

Internet-savvy buyers often peruse the web for prices, mileage, features and dealer costs before ever setting foot on a car lot. Once there, customers won't necessarily be subjected to a stressful negotiation that can take hours.

The stereotypically pushy salesman might never appear. The salesperson might even be female.

Deana Eckman and Shelley Whitney are two women who know their way around a car lot. You will find the mother-and-daughter duo at Deana's Car Biz, a small, independent dealer in Pendleton.

Deana opened the business 14 years ago. Shelley came on board recently.

"We are the Pendleton car ladies," said Whitney.

The women relaxed inside a cozy single-wide office that sits on the Court

See CARS/8A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Shelley Whitney, right, works on a loan application while her mother, Deana Echamn looks on Tuesday at Deana's Car Biz used car lot in Pendleton.

HARNEY COUNTY STANDOFF: DAY 11

Eastern Oregon commissioners warn protest could migrate

Grant County sheriff declines occupiers invitation to join cause

By SEAN HART
EO Media Group

Members of the armed group occupying the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge traveled to John Day Tuesday to ask the Grant County sheriff to join their cause.

He declined, but county commissioners throughout Eastern Oregon have discussed the possibility that

the protest could "migrate" elsewhere in the region.

Grant County Sheriff Glenn Palmer said three members of the militia asked him to travel to Harney County, but he refused to do so without the approval of the Harney County sheriff. Palmer would not say whether he agreed with the occupation, but described those participating as "patriots."

"I think it's brought some things to light that might not have otherwise got the attention that they did,"



Palmer

More inside

Rancher says he didn't let group remove fence
Page 2A

he said of the occupation. "I do believe that the resolution and solution to the way this is going to be handled, if it's handled properly, could have a long-lasting effect on our county as well."

Palmer said any positive outcome, however, would require the government to make some concessions.

"I believe the government is going to have to concede to something," he said. "I don't think these guys are going to give up without knowing that they've done something that benefits the people of our country or our region."

Palmer said the members of the group did not discuss their future plans of their occupation with him. He said he met the militants Tuesday at a John Day restaurant. He was invited to lunch by a constituent and was unaware members of the militia group would be there. He

See SHERIFF/8A



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