

EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Brown tones down wage plan

Immediate jump to \$15 an hour would cost state \$140 million

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Gov. Kate Brown’s minimum wage proposal apparently was unpopular enough that the governor revised it Friday.

Brown’s revised plan sets lower minimums than the original and begins boosting wages to \$9.75 six months earlier, starting in July 2016.

Under the new proposal, the minimum would gradually climb from the existing \$9.25 to \$14.50 in the Portland metro area and \$13.25 in the rest of the state by 2022.

Her former plan called for minimums of \$15.52 in the Portland area and \$13.50 in the rest of the state by 2022.

“Based on feedback from stakeholders, I have refined my proposal, beginning implementation in 2016,

so workers get higher pay sooner, and extending the glide path to give businesses more time to prepare for higher wages,” Brown said in a statement.

The fiscal office released a report Friday that analyzed the cost to state government in one biennium of hiking the minimum immediately to \$13.50 or \$15 per hour.

Legislative Fiscal Officer Ken



Brown

calculate because there are multiple proposals, and all of the proposals raise the wage gradually rather than

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- **Legislative session starts with pitch to cut personal income tax, add corporate tax. 2A**
- **Democrats block transportation funding bill, likely won’t get to affordable housing bill. 5A**

Rocco said the actual cost per biennium is difficult to calculate because there are multiple proposals, and all of the proposals raise the wage gradually rather than

all at once.

“It would never happen all at once,” Rocco said. “No one is going to say we are going to raise minimum wage from \$9.25 to

See WAGE/10A

PENDLETON

Houk won’t run in 2016

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Change is coming to the Pendleton City Council.

Mayor Phillip Houk announced Monday that he would not seek a fourth term before it expires at the end of the year, which will end a city council career spanning more than two decades.



Houk

“After serving nineteen years on the Board of Education for Blue Mountain Community College, eleven years on the City Council (seven of those as Council President), and now twelve years as Mayor, I find that it is time to pass the torch,” Houk said in a statement on Facebook. “My leadership responsibilities with the Railroad Law Department have increased significantly, therefore my time commitment needs to be placed there.”

Houk said in an interview with the *East Oregonian* that he went back and forth the past year about running for another term, but an expansion in responsibility at his job as a risk management manager with Union Pacific Railroad Co. tipped the scale toward focusing on his work.

This year will mark the

See HOUK/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A blue heron stalks prey in a field off Tutuilla Church Road on Monday near Mission.

Heron on the hunt

January wetter than previous three

Forecast calls for drier months ahead

By GEORGE PLAVERN
East Oregonian

Eastern Oregon is still ahead of the curve on rain and snow after a slightly wetter-than-usual January.

The Pendleton area received 1.51 inches of precipitation last month,

and is about .35 inches above normal for the water year dating back to October. Snowpack is 119 percent of average in the Umatilla, Walla Walla and Willow basins, compared to a measly 46 percent a year ago.

That’s good news for

local farms and ranches trying to rebound from three straight years of drought. Mountain snow acts as a natural storage system for water to gradually refill streams and reservoirs later in the spring, while the rain also catches dryland farmers up on much-needed soil moisture.

According to the

National Weather Service, last month was the wettest January since 2012 in Pendleton, Hermiston and Heppner. But meteorologist Dennis Hull said the momentum could start slowing down in February as the effects of El Niño take hold in the Pacific

See RAIN/10A

HERMISTON

Sheriff’s office puts man to the polygraph

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Umatilla County Sheriff’s Office took to the polygraph for answers in the death of David Wayne Newton of Hermiston.

Sheriff Terry Rowan said Lloyd Allen Terpening, 54, of Irrigon, was undergoing the examine Monday afternoon, and the results would probably dictate the next direction of the investigation.

Newton and Terpening were close friends working to clean up commercial property at 81252 Highway 395, Hermiston. They fought at the site the night of Jan. 20, according to the sheriff’s office, and Newton suffered a head injury. His family took him off life support two days later. He was 53.

Rowan said at this point, he could not call Terpening a suspect.

“Early on he was a suspect,” Rowan said, “but now it’s hard to say what he is.”

Rowan said the polygraph

See NEWTON/10A

HARNEY COUNTY STANDOFF: DAY 30

Bundy Lawyers try to get him out of jail

By STEVEN DUBOIS
Associated Press

PORTLAND — Lawyers for the leader of the armed occupation at a national wildlife preserve in Oregon have appealed a judge’s decision to keep him in jail, while four holdouts remain holed up in the frozen high desert Monday, nearly a month after the standoff began.

Group leader Ammon Bundy should be released with a GPS monitoring device and orders that the Idaho resident not leave the state except for court appearances, his lawyers, Mike Arnold and Lissa Casey, said in documents filed Sunday. They contend government prosecutors failed to provide “clear and convincing evidence” those steps would not suffice.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Stacie Beckerman said last week that Bundy,

See STANDOFF/10A



AP Photo/Nick K. Geranios

A makeshift roadside memorial for rancher LaVoy Finicum stands on a highway north of Burns on Sunday.



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