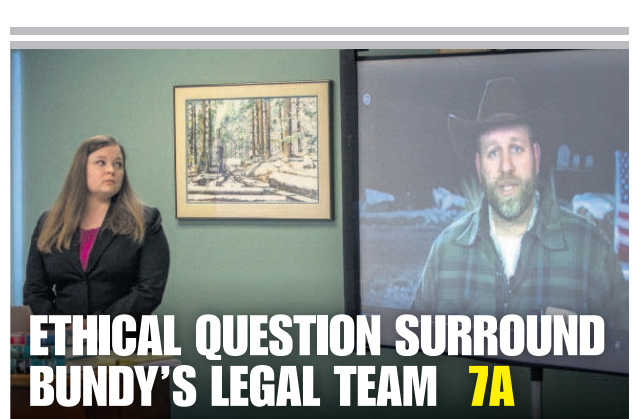


HERMISTON BEATS THE DALLES
BASKETBALL/1B



MEET PENDLETON'S FANDOM CLUB
LIFESTYLES/1C



ETHICAL QUESTION SURROUND
BUNDY'S LEGAL TEAM 7A

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ON THE STREETS

Law enforcement officers increasingly deal with mental illness



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton Police officer Shelly Studebaker checks on the welfare of a man who appeared distressed and was gesturing wildly at traffic near the westbound onramp to Interstate 84 off Southgate on Wednesday in Pendleton.

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

At one time the nation's most severely mentally ill were locked up in mental hospitals, often against their will. Now they wander our streets.

That's how it seems to many law enforcement officers these days as they spend more and more of their time dealing with people in crisis.

"It's much more common than people think," said Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston. "My officers see mental illness daily, if not hourly."

When someone in crisis endangers themselves or others, officers must take action. Sometimes that means getting the person evaluated by a



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton police officer Shelly Studebaker checks in with the dispatch center while on patrol Wednesday.

professional or hauling him or her to jail. Other times, they use words to persuade or soothe and de-escalate.

Most of the time, the interactions end peacefully, but officers likely will see the person again — maybe even later that day.

"We put them on a merry-go-round and we spin it. Pretty soon it's spinning so hard they can't get off."

— **Stuart Roberts**, Pendleton police chief

Changing Minds

Mental Health in Eastern Oregon

The interactions have almost endless variation: A person lying on a city street, getting aggressive, urinating in a public place, hallucinating, in the grip of a suicidal depression or causing a multitude of other scenarios that range from simply strange to severely dangerous.

On a recent day, Pendleton Police Officer Shelly Studebaker stopped her patrol car to chat with a man who stood on a traffic island at the confluence of Frazer and Emigrant Avenues. He was gesturing at the traffic and fixated on a truck parked across the busy street on the gravel beside the Interstate 84 onramp. With some conversation, Studebaker learned he was

See **HEALTH/12A**

SeaPort declares bankruptcy

Will continue current flight schedule, paying employees

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

SeaPort Airlines announced Friday it filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, although the company says day-to-day operations will not be interrupted.

According to a press release, SeaPort will continue to operate its current flight schedule, including the route between Pendleton's Eastern Oregon Regional Airport and Portland.

The airline also promised to continue paying its employees as the company attempts to reorganize in the midst of a national pilot shortage and a severely reduced flight schedule.

In addition, CEO Rob Kinney has resigned. Tim Sieber, most recently executive vice president, was named president.

Although SeaPort has reassured city officials that business will continue as usual, the development follows some downward trends for the Portland-based airline.

Once operating almost two dozen routes in 11 states and Mexico, SeaPort announced that it would dramatically cut its service area in January, focusing most of its attention toward airports in Oregon and Arkansas.

SeaPort was sued in U.S. District Court by Caravan Air LLC last week,

See **SEAPORT/12A**

MEACHAM

Three connected to murder face federal weapons charges

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

The three men arrested in connection to the recent murder of Thadd Nelson of Meacham now face federal weapons charges.

While the U.S. Attorney's Office has not charged any of them with Nelson's death, Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts said he suspected more charges are in the pipeline.

Nelson died after being shot early Jan. 27 on his property near Emigrant Springs State Park on the Umatilla Indian Reservation. Police soon caught Joseph Aaron McIver, 22, of Umatilla, and the Umatilla County District Attorney's Office charged him with murder with a firearm.

Police also arrested Edward Duarte Ayala, 46, and Armando Rueben Vargas, 39, on weapons charges and more in connection to the killing. They are from Fresno, Calif. but moved to Hermiston.

District Attorney Dan Primus dismissed all the cases Wednesday due to a federal indictment that charges McIver, Ayala and Vargas with one count each of felon in possession of a firearm.

Primus said the FBI was not involved at the start of the investigation, but joined soon after. He said it was common prac-

See **WEAPONS/12A**



McIver



Vargas



Ayala

Pendleton joins in Super Bowl's golden anniversary

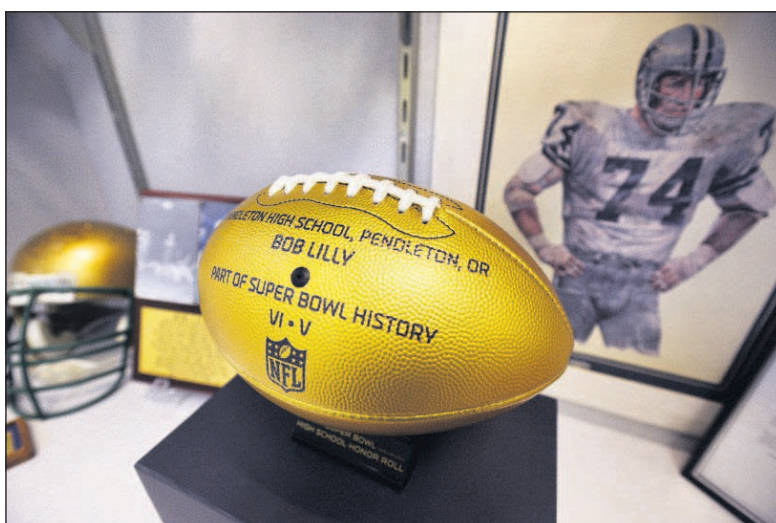
Student helps former Buckaroo receive NFL recognition

By **ERIC SINGER**
East Oregonian

Pendleton High senior Roman Martinez was wandering the hallways at Lebanon High School in early January, waiting for a Bucks basketball game to start, when a shiny gold football in the school's trophy case caught his eye.

It was from the NFL, commemorating former Lebanon football player Paul McQuistan who had played in the 2013 Super Bowl with the Seattle Seahawks. It was part of the NFL's Honor Roll initiative to celebrate the 50th Super Bowl by sending commemorative trophies

See **FOOTBALL/12A**



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton High School graduate Bob Lilly played in the 1971 and 1972 Super Bowl for the Dallas Cowboys.

More Super Bowl coverage inside

For an in-depth look at how the Broncos and Panthers stack up see **page 4B**

