



EAST OREGONIAN

TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2016

140th Year, No. 102

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

PENDLETON

Nude intruder rescued after leaping from cliff into tree

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

Gail Wilson's surreal Saturday started when a naked man stepped through her front door and said, "Hi, honey."

Wilson, who has muscular dystrophy, had been sitting in a stuffed lift chair drinking soup when the man appeared at the doorway of her Southeast Pendleton residence. She set her soup aside.

"He had a big grin on his face," she said. "He came walking toward me with his arms open wide. I kept saying 'Get away from me. Get out of my house.'"



Burton

She was home alone. Her husband Roger, her son and her daughter were away. When the man leaned over to give Wilson a hug, she pushed him off. Wilson, a former correctional officer at the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution said her training kicked in. She didn't look him in the eye and remained calm and firm. She thought about her pistol in her bedroom nightstand.

Wilson would have to push Steven S. Burton, 30, away several times. He dragged the Wilson's affectionate black lab, Hunter, down the hall and shut him in a back room.

"I thought, 'This is it, I'm going to be raped or murdered,'" Wilson recalled. "I'd more or less accepted my fate. Today was my day. But I wasn't going to let him take me gently."

She managed to dial 9-1-1, and soon police drove up the Wilson's long driveway. Burton, who had wandered outside to



Photo contributed by Monty Severe
Steven S. Burton hangs from a tree above the Umatilla River in Pendleton on Saturday morning as Pendleton firefighter Jared Uselman and Umatilla County Sheriff's Deputy Dwight Johnson try to help him down.

See NUDE/8A

HERMISTON

Cops face silence on cold murders

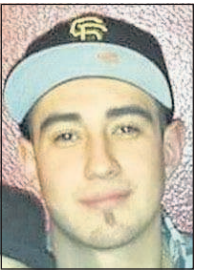
Gang-related killings leave police with few sources, answers

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Alonso Madrigal was killed more than a year ago in a Hermiston parking lot in a round of gun fire. He was 23.

Hermiston Chief of Police Jason Edmiston said his department determined early on gang members were involved and a wall of silence would hinder solving the killing.

"That's still true," he said. "We have not made an arrest yet."



Madrigal

Even so, Edmiston said, the case is "inching forward." Last week detectives took another trip to California to follow leads, just as they have traveled to other nearby states for the investigation. And detectives Randy Studebaker and Robert Guerrero have questioned and interviewed people over and again, often to verify information. The detectives also continue to communicate with Madrigal's family, including on the anniversary of death of their son and brother.

"They have walked with the family through the last year," Edmiston said. "Everybody's got the same goal: Hold the people responsible (for the crime) accountable."

Hermiston police the night of March 4, 2015, responded to a call about gunshots. Officers then heard shooting from the area of the 11th Street Market and rushed there. Edmiston said an

See MURDER/8A

PNNL launches first Pendleton UAS test flight

East Oregonian



Pacific Northwest National Laboratory launched its first unmanned aerial test flight of the DataHawk in the skies above Pendleton last week.

The PNNL flights at the Pendleton UAS Range were the beginning of sensor testing to aid upcoming research and atmospheric testing campaigns.

The DataHawk is the latest tool added to PNNL's aviation program, according

to a press release from the laboratory. The 1.5-lb. craft was developed by University of Colorado at Boulder and based on the Stryker F-27C model aircraft.

"It is great to finally get into the air with these aircraft," said Mike Hubbell, Director of Flight Operations for PNNL. "This is the first of many trips to the (Pendleton UAS Range) that will enhance our ability to gather scientific

See UAS/8A

From left: John McClelland, Jen Armstrong, Mike Hubbell, Clayton Eveland.
Photo contributed ArgenTech Solutions

PENDLETON
Kovach to take top job in district

East Oregonian

The Pendleton School Board has picked Andy Kovach as the district's next superintendent.

Kovach will start July 1 after Superintendent Jon Peterson retires, and the board is working with Kovach on an employment agreement.

"After interviews with numerous candidates, reference checking and having the final three (candidates) spend a day in our district meeting staff and community, Andy Kovach emerged as the right choice to be our next superintendent," Board Chair Michelle Monkman wrote in a news release. "He has a proven record of success as an administrator in the Ontario SD and he felt like the right fit to take our district into the future."

Monkman said the board considered 23 candidates, including finalists Kovach, Pendleton Assistant Superintendent Tricia Mooney and Hermiston Deputy Superintendent Wade Smith. Smith removed himself from consideration after accepting the superintendent



Kovach

See KOVACH/8A

'Municycler' joins bike race in Echo

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

No cyclist took longer than Joe Myers to complete the Echo Red 2 Red Cross Country Mountain Bike Race on Saturday.

But the true accomplishment of his race was not reflected in the seven hours and 15 minutes he spent on the 32-mile course. It was that he was the only person to complete the race on just one wheel.

After hugging his wife, the Bellingham, Washington man gave a simple answer to the question of the biggest challenge of unicycling through a mountain bike course.

"Finishing," he said. Myers, 59, took up mountain unicycling, or "municycling," as



Photo by Antonio Sierra
Unicyclist Joe Myers of Bellingham, Wash. wheels through the finish line at the Echo Red 2 Red Saturday.

See BIKE/8A

