

HERMISTON

Smarter Balanced testing gets spirited start

East Oregonian

Standardized testing is being celebrated at Sandstone Middle School in Hermiston.

On Monday, staff, friends and family were invited to the school's Smarter Balanced Kick Off, an event with music — by the Sandstone Band — enthusiasm and a "spirit line" where adults cheered on the middle schoolers at the start of school.

Each student also received a personal, handwritten note encouraging the student to do their best on the standardized testing and to be "greater than yesterday," the school's theme for the 2015-16 school year.

Choir students from Sandstone also wrote lyrics to the "Sandstone Middle School Testing Theme Song" — to the tune of Rachel Platten's "Fight Song" — and have performed the song for the school. A video of the song is available on the Sandstone Middle School website at sms.hermiston.k12.or.us.



Staff and parents from Sandstone Middle School make a spirit line for students on Monday morning to celebrate the kickoff of the Smarter Balanced testing this week. The school is working on increasing student pride and motivation for standardized testing.

Staff photo by Jennifer Colton

Forrester to retire from DA after 28 years

EO Media Group

Steve Forrester has announced his plan to retire as editor and publisher of *The Daily Astorian*.

"While I am retiring from this job, I will continue to work as president and CEO of our family's company, EO Media Group," Forrester told his managers on Monday afternoon.

The company is recruiting for a group publisher to oversee the *Astorian* and four other EO Media Group publications on the coast. They include the *Seaside Signal*, *Cannon Beach Gazette*, *Coast River Business Journal* and *Chinook Observer*.

John S. Perry, Chief Operating Officer for EO Media Group, said retiring from the *Astorian* allows Forrester to focus more on the company's growing business.

"When Steve arrived at the *Astorian* in 1987, the family owned only two other newspapers: the *East Oregonian* in Pendleton and the *Blue Mountain Eagle* in John Day. Today, EO Media Group owns and operates 11 newspapers in Oregon and

Washington," said Perry. EO Media Group also has invested in digital services, including web sites, mobile communications and social media. The company publishes books and magazines as well. It employs nearly 200 people in four states.

Forrester, 69, said he will conclude his 28 years at the *Astorian* at the end of August. He and his wife Brenda will continue to live in Astoria.

Steve Forrester is the third member of his family to serve as publisher of the *Astorian*. His brother Mike was publisher there from 1971 to 1973, before moving to the *East Oregonian*. Their father, J.W. "Bud" Forrester was publisher in Astoria from 1973 until 1988.

As editor and publisher, Forrester introduced an array of features to the *Astorian* — such as In One Ear, Everyday People and Friday Extra — and related publications including Coast Weekend and Our Coast

magazine. The newspaper produced a number of special series under his leadership, including three examinations of child care in Clatsop County, three on the Port of Astoria, another titled "Teachers Talk About Teaching" as well as others.

The company's newspapers also collaborated on a year-long series on climate change, which won one of three awards of merit in the Grantham Awards for environmental journalism in 2007. Another companywide series covered changing patterns in forest land ownership. Both efforts were initiated by Forrester.

In the 1990s, Forrester committed the resources of *The Daily Astorian* and his extended family to restoration of the Liberty Theater. For about a decade, the *Astorian* absorbed the administrative costs of the non-profit Liberty Restoration, Inc.

The most recent innovation Forrester pushed is EO Media Group's collaboration

with the Pamplin Media Group that established a statehouse news bureau and Oregon Capital Insider, a digital newsletter.

"Steve has made an indelible mark on this newspaper and the greater Astoria community," Perry said. "His community leadership helped restore the Liberty Theatre and put Astoria on the map as a vibrant, historic city."

Forrester is one of three principal owners of EO Media Group. Others are his brother Mike and a cousin, Kathryn Brown, who is publisher of the *East Oregonian*. Both live in Pendleton, where Steve graduated from high school in 1964.

"We know that a hallmark of healthy family-owned businesses is that they plan ahead for the retirements of key family members," Brown said. "Our family began actively planning for success more than 20 years ago, and has managed smooth transitions as Steve's parents, my grandmother and my mother retired over the years. I'm confident that we will manage well through this transition."



Forrester

BRIEFLY

Woman a suspect in three Hermiston cases

HERMISTON — Hermiston Police arrested a woman who is a suspect in three cases. Chief Jason Edmiston said the investigations are ongoing.

Police responded to a report of a car prowling at Ridgeway Apartments, 725 W. Ridgeway Ave., and found Jessica Denise Pankey, 32, of Pendleton, who had a warrant for violating probation. Pankey is serving 18 months probation, according to court records, after she pleaded guilty in February to possession of methamphetamine.

Officers backtracked, Edmiston said, and connected Pankey to two burglaries, a vehicle theft plus the car prowling. He said car prowls ticked up the last two weeks in Hermiston, but police do not know if Pankey is connected to that trend.

Police arrested and booked Pankey into the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, on two counts of first-degree burglary and one count each of second-degree theft, third-degree theft, second-degree criminal mischief and third-degree criminal mischief, as well as on the probation violation warrant.

Edmiston said he is hopeful that warrant means she will be in jail long enough for police to gather more evidence in the other cases.

Steelhead fishing season extended on northeast Oregon rivers

ENTERPRISE — Anglers will have another 15 days to fish for spring steelhead on the Grande Ronde, Wallowa and Imaha rivers — including Big Sheep Creek — under revised regulations by the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife.

ODFW extended spring steelhead season on the three rivers through Saturday, April 30. The old

closure date was April 15. The change was made last year while the department worked to simplify its fishing rules for 2016.

Jeff Yanke, district fish biologist in Enterprise, said they heard from people who felt steelhead fishing was being cut short despite great catch rates in mid-April.

"The suggestions from anglers led to changes in the regulations, resulting in increased fishing opportunities," Yanke said.

Not all hatchery steelhead reach their final destination at trapping facilities before mid-April, and the extension is meant to increase harvest of those fish, according to ODFW. And though April showers can cause the rivers to rise and dampen fishing success, Yanke said the extended season will help increase steelhead harvest during years of low snowpack or late runoff.

Though the fishing season is extended, the Rondowa area at the confluence of the Wallowa and Grande Ronde rivers will still close to ATV access after April 15. Anglers can still hike into the area from Minam or Palmer Junction.

City Council appoints planning commissioner

BOARDMAN — For the first time in years, the city of Boardman has a full seven-member planning commission.

On Tuesday, April 5, city councilors appointed Jacob Cain to finish the remainder of a three-year term ending Dec. 31. Cain works as an engineer at the Port of Morrow and has lived in Boardman for about three years. It was the final vacancy left to fill on the commission.

Planning commission meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at Boardman City Hall. The commission is in charge of considering land use and zoning developments presented by city staff, such as potential subdivision projects. Meetings are open to the public.

COLEMAN: Retired from career as firefighter/paramedic on March 31

Continued from 1A

struggle with mental illness.

Born in Umatilla and raised on the west end of Umatilla County, Coleman has called Pendleton home for 38 years. During most of those years, he has offered his calming presence to Pendleton's residents through mental care services, as a minister, as a chaplain and as a firefighter/paramedic.

While some children dreamed of being firefighters, when Coleman was growing up he set his eyes toward a career in juvenile counseling. After majoring in psychology in college, Coleman took a position as a patient advocate with the Eastern Oregon State Hospital, which later became the Eastern Oregon Psychiatric Center and Blue Mountain Recovery Center.

He worked with mental illness daily, and in his spare time he and his wife, Robbin, raised a family and helped out with the church where her father was a minister. They taught classes, ran the music and eventually became associate pastors.

When work at the state hospital began to take a toll, Coleman took a break from his career, taking on a physically demanding job with Pendleton Grain Growers. During his year at the McKennon Station, Coleman's supervisor became a volunteer firefighter and convinced Coleman to do

so as well, inadvertently changing the course of Coleman's life.

In 1989, Coleman became a volunteer firefighter. In 1990, when his colleagues discovered he was an ordained minister, he became the lone chaplain for the Pendleton Fire Department. Although the department had chaplains previously, Coleman said it had been a number of years since the department had a chaplain active in its ranks. Although the department brought in counselors and psychologists after traumatic events, the firefighters and paramedics kept a wall between them.

"As a working firefighter, paramedic and chaplain, there's a trust level because they know I've walked the walk," he said. "I'm not a professional trying to get in their heads. I know what it's like."

Scott Stanton, now the Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services chief, got to know Coleman as the two commuted twice a week to paramedic school in Wilsonville for 13 months in the mid-1990s. Stanton said Coleman touched many lives and is always a pleasure to be around.

"He is such a great guy," Stanton said. "I couldn't have had a better traveling partner and friend as we attended paramedic school together."

When he retired, Coleman had claimed 26 years as a

career firefighter. In 1993, Pendleton Fire averaged 1,200 calls a year. In 2015, that number was closer to 3,500. He has performed weddings and funerals and seen both the best and worst of Pendleton.

"People never call when they're having a good day. It's the worst day of their life, and we are there to try and bring a sense of calm to a chaotic situation," he said. "The thing that really drew me in was the camaraderie, the family atmosphere, and making a difference in someone's life. ... Plus, you get to drive fast with lights and sirens. Who wouldn't want to do that?"

On March 31, Coleman retired from his career as a firefighter/paramedic. Although he said he will not miss the sleepless nights and

3 a.m. runs to Tri-Cities or Walla Walla, he will miss the relationships with his fellow firefighters and the ability to help people every day.

"It's been a great career. My only regret is not getting into it sooner," he said. "The fire side is getting tougher for me. It's a young man's game."

Coleman will continue as a reserve firefighter and medical responder. He also plans to continue playing basketball and golf, riding his motorcycle, and spending more time with his five grandchildren. He will continue as an adjunct instructor for the emergency medical technician program and plans to remain a chaplain as long as Pendleton Fire will have him.

"We've had some pretty traumatic motor vehicle acci-

dents where the patient was being loaded into the back of an ambulance and it was hit by a truck," he recalled. "The patient perished, and our guys were in the back of the ambulance and watched that happen."

A chaplain provides critical incident stress debriefing, checks in with the troops daily, offers counsel and watches for signs of

emotional or mental strain and struggle in an attempt to keep emergency responders emotionally and mentally healthy.

"These guys are my family, and I care about what happens to them," he said. "When you have a passion about something, it's hard to walk away. I still have something to offer the younger generations."

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