

BRIEFLY



EO file photo

A RQ-7B Shadow unmanned aerial vehicle lands at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport after a short inaugural flight in Pendleton in 2014.

Pendleton UAS test range reauthorization bill passes Senate

PENDLETON — The Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range received some good news Tuesday as the U.S. Senate approved a provision that extends congressional authorization of test ranges from 2017 to 2022.

According to a press release from U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, the provision, a part of a larger Federal Aviation Administration bill, “will provide much-needed certainty to Oregon’s test sites in Pendleton, Tillamook and Warm Springs as well as three test sites outside Oregon.”

“This Oregon industry stands ready to soar even higher, creating jobs and boosting the economy statewide with commercial uses that include mountaintop rescue and agricultural applications,” Wyden said. “This legislation ensures a solid flight path for that growth over the next several years.”

The provision also received support from SOAR Oregon, a statewide nonprofit focused on expanding the state’s drone industry.

“(Wyden’s) efforts, and those of his colleagues, have gone a long way to significantly improve those aspects of the reauthorization bill that will affect the ranges,” SOAR Oregon CEO Chuck Allen said. “These improvements will allow the Oregon ranges to continue to develop business, grow jobs and attract customers from outside the state.”

Judge denies lower bail for sex crimes defendant Jason Glen Drake

PENDLETON — Sex-crimes defendant Jason Glen Drake of Rieth lost a bid to lower his bail.

Drake, 41, had a hearing Monday in circuit court in Pendleton to seek a lower bail.

Circuit Judge Christopher Brauer, though, denied the request and kept the bail at \$400,000.

Umatilla County sheriff’s detectives arrested Drake on March 30 for felony sex crimes against two children. The survivors are younger than 12, the sheriff’s office reported, and court records show Drake is related to both.

The district attorney’s office took the case to a grand jury, which handed down an eight-count indictment: six counts of first-degree sodomy and two counts of first-degree sexual abuse. Drake pleaded not guilty.

The charges are felonies that fall under Oregon’s mandatory minimum sentencing law.

He has another pre-trial hearing Thursday, and the court set a two-day trial for Drake starting May 26 in Pendleton. He remains in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton.



Drake

Assaults drive increase in violent crime rate in Hermiston

HERMISTON — Total calls are down, but violent crime is up in the city of Hermiston in the first part of 2016.

The Hermiston Police Department releases quarterly statistics on crime rates, and the report for the first quarter of 2016 — Jan. 1 through March 31 — show the department responded to fewer total incidents but made more arrests than in the same time period in 2015.

The total number of incidents — including 9-1-1 calls, traffic stops and officer-initiated activity — is down 5 percent from the first quarter of 2015. The department had 5,832 documented incidents in 2016, compared to 6,114 in 2015. Arrests, however, are up 10 percent (from 370 in 2015 to 407 in 2016), and felony arrests shot up 22 percent (from 79 to 96).

Felony arrests also came with a large increase in one violent crime: aggravated assault. In the first quarter of 2015, the Hermiston Police Department handled three violent crimes: one murder, one rape and one aggravated assault. In the first quarter of 2016, however, officers report six aggravated assaults, an increase of 500 percent over 2015.

Cases of burglary (an increase of 11 percent) and larceny (an increase of 16 percent) also rose.

“On the surface, I believe it is relatively flat,” Edmiston said Monday. “Inasmuch as there may be a draw to report violent crime is up and out of control, over the course of a 10-year window, we are still relatively flat. Factoring in crime with the rise in population, I think we are doing as good as we can with the limited resources we have.”

The population of Hermiston, as reported in the HPD crime report, was 17,345 in the first quarter of 2015 and was 17,520 in the first quarter of 2016.

First-quarter juvenile crime is down in both detainments and offenses from the same period in 2015.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Send emails to news@eastoregonian.com

Another bighorn ram poached

OSP asks for help to track down culprit

By **GEORGE PAVLEN**
East Oregonian

A third bighorn ram was shot and killed earlier this month along Interstate 84 in Gilliam County, east of Biggs Junction.

On April 10, Oregon State Police received several reports from passing motorists about a sheep that was in an unusual position and possibly dead near the highway. Fish and Wildlife troopers found the ram on top of a rock slide, and a necropsy later determined it had been shot with a high-powered rifle and left to waste.

The discovery came just

one week after and one mile away from the place state police arrested two men for poaching a pair of bighorns from the I-84 herd. Cody Plagmann, 37, and Justin Samora, 32, will face charges at a court hearing on May 6. There is no indication the two incidents are related.

This time around, authorities are asking for help from the public to track down the culprit. Anyone with information is asked to call senior Trooper Mark Jubitz at 541-705-5330, or the Turn-In-Poachers hotline at 1-800-452-7888. Tips can remain anonymous, and a reward up to \$500 is avail-

able for information leading to an arrest.

The TIP line is jointly sponsored by OSP and the Oregon Hunters Association. Jim Akenson, OHA conservation director, said the I-84 bighorns are a highly visible and unique resource. He called on sportsmen to be vigilant in putting a stop to poaching.

“I think all sportsmen and our organization are going to be on full point to put a stop to any more of this,” he said. “Poaching really just riles up our members, and riles up ethical hunters. It really makes them mad.”

There are approximately 80-100 California bighorns in the I-84 herd, and 4,500 bighorns statewide. The

animals were reintroduced in Oregon in 1954 after they were wiped out due to disease and unregulated hunting.

Drawing a bighorn tag is now a once-in-a-lifetime hunting opportunity in Oregon. Some hunters might even pay up to \$100,000 for a tag at auction, Akenson said. There is no legal hunting season for sheep from the I-84 herd.

Poaching game animals is a class A misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail and \$6,250 in fines. The state could also seek up to \$25,000 in restitution.

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

ARLINGTON

Saddle club introduces Boardman teen as queen

East Oregonian

The Arlington Saddle Club recently announced Rileigh McClure will reign as queen during the Arlington Jackpot Rodeo.

The 16-year-old Boardman teen is the daughter of Tracy and Mindy McClure. She is a junior at Arlington High School and has served as both student body president and president of the National Honor Society. McClure also has been an active member on the volleyball and basketball teams. Her future educational plans include attending college to study animal science.

In her spare time, McClure enjoys activities with friends and riding her horses. The queen will ride Sugar, a quarter horse, during official appearances representing the Arlington Saddle Club, which includes events throughout Oregon and Washington. McClure extends a special invitation to the public to join her for an action-packed weekend during the Arlington Jackpot



Contributed photo

Rileigh McClure of Boardman is queen of the 2016 Arlington Jackpot Rodeo. The event is April 30-May 1 in Arlington.

Rodeo. In its 69th year, the rodeo activities kick off Saturday, April 30 at 10 a.m. with a parade through

downtown Arlington. The queen’s luncheon follows at the United Methodist Church, 150 Hemlock St., Arlington.

Rodeo action begins at 12:30 p.m., which features traditional rodeo events, including bull riding and ranch bronc riding. Money will be added each day — the rodeo continues Sunday, May 1 at 12:30 p.m. — except for specialty events. The specialty events are junior and pee wee barrel racing, steer riding, mutton bustin’ and a calf scramble. The 14th annual Kevin Johnson Memorial buckle will be awarded to the all-around cowboy or cowgirl.

Also, be sure to bring a hearty appetite for the cowboy breakfast Sunday, May 1 from 7-10 a.m. at the Arlington Masonic Lodge, 50 Shane Drive.

Rodeo tickets are \$6 for ages 13 and up or \$4 for those 12 and under. The two-day pass prices are \$9 and \$6. The cook shack will serve food both days.

For more information about the Arlington Jackpot Rodeo, call 541-980-1593 or 541-980-7108. For royalty-related information, call 541-384-6251.

HERMISTON

Oregon Rising asks people to dream big for schools

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

A brand-new education initiative in Oregon was showcased at Hermiston’s Hispanic Advisory Committee meeting Monday night.

The initiative, called Oregon Rising, seeks to involve more than 10,000 Oregonians across the state in a discussion about creating a brighter future for Oregon’s schoolchildren.

Craig Hawkins, executive director of the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, told attendees that the conversation about schools over the last few years has mostly centered around a lack of money.

“That’s been necessitated by a number of economic factors, but it’s also been a disheartening one,” he said.

Hawkins said Oregon Rising seeks to be more aspirational, encouraging people to come up with creative solutions for schools and leave the money talk for another day.

“We think it’s time to start dreaming for our kids,” he said.

Until mid-June, parents and community members are invited to watch a video and take a survey online at oregon-rising.org in English or Spanish. There will also

be future announcements about face-to-face events where people can learn more about the project and participate in interactive surveys using their phones.

Hawkins said Oregon Rising launched six days earlier but he was already in Hermiston because the project’s sponsors (the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators, Oregon School Boards Association and Oregon Education Association) see Hermiston as a “key community in this

conversation.”

Dr. Fred Maiocco, Hermiston School District superintendent, said the district was honored to be one of the first committees the sponsors are engaging in the project.

Underscoring the growing relationship between Hermiston School District and the Hispanic Advisory Committee, the committee meeting was also the first place in Hermiston Maiocco presented Oregon Rising.

He said he hoped the area’s Hispanic community contributed toward the conversation of ways to make Oregon schools a better place for children to be educated.

“Hermiston is very excited about this conversation, because for too long our conversation has been limited to what resources we have,” he said.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

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Worried About Falling?

Presented by Adrian Cagigas, MA, ATC/L

More than half of people over the age of 80 will fall every year, and 87% of all fractures in this age group, are due to falls. The good news is that falls can be prevented. Join us for an educational session on what causes people to fall, and what can be done to reduce the risk of falling.

Space is limited for this FUN educational series. For more information and to reserve your seat please call (541) 276-1987.

McKay Creek Estates
1601 Southgate Place
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