



HIGH SCHOOL RODEO IN HERMISTON SPORTS/1B



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WAGONS HO! HERMISTON/3A

EAST OREGONIAN

APRIL 23-24, 2016

140th Year, No. 136

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50



Pre-nursing student Tyler Robinson leads a campus tour last week during a visit to Blue Mountain Community College by about 300 Sunridge Middle School students. Part of the Eastern Promise program is to increase the college-going culture of the region by helping seventh graders consider career possibilities and make a 10-year plan.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Living up to the promise?

Eastern Promise earns kudos, faces criticism

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Edith Velasco will start at Oregon State University next fall as a sophomore.

The 18-year-old Riverside High School student will have earned more than 40 college credits by the time she graduates this spring. When Velasco was an underclassman, she learned about the Eastern Promise program where she could earn college

credit while attending high school. Riverside, she learned, would foot the bill.

"When I found out about it, I didn't even think it was possible," she said. "To me, it seemed like a no-brainer."

Velasco is bright — she will study engineering at OSU and already has an internship lined up for this summer with a civil engineer at the Port of Morrow — and she took full advantage of Eastern Promise.

Velasco and 2,865 other students from roughly 40 high schools earned a total of 17,828 credits in 2014-15.

"That's \$1.7 million that parents saved in tuition last year," said Kris Mulvihill, who directs the K-12 portion of Eastern Promise.

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, Eastern Promise is awash in it.

See PROMISE/12A

2,865

Eastern Promise students in 2014-15

40

High Schools offering EP courses

17,828

EP credits earned

PENDLETON

A new party in town

Pendleton Whisky Music Fest aims for 15K visitors

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Hopes are high for the first year of the Pendleton Whisky Music Fest, headlined by country megastars Zac Brown Band.

Ticket sales opened to the general public Friday, and organizers Doug Corey and Andy McAnally said Friday afternoon that the phone had been "ringing off the hook" at the ticket office already. They estimate as many as 15,000 music fans could come to Pendleton for the event.

"This has the potential to be as big as Saturday Round-Up," McAnally said.

The festival, slated for July 16 at the Pendleton Round-Up Stadium, will feature the Grammy-award winning Zac Brown Band, as well as country musicians Drake White and Jackson Michelson. DJ Govern-T will serve as the event's official DJ, campsites will be available for overnight stays and a variety of games and activities will take place before the concert.

McAnally said outside of the iconic rodeo, the Round-Up Stadium hasn't played host to such a large regional event. The Pendleton Whisky Music Fest is an opportunity to see if such an event is a viable use for the Round-Up Grounds.

Corey said if the festival goes well, organizers will talk to sponsors — including Pendleton Whisky (by Hood River Distillers) and Legacy Dodge — about their interest in making it an annual event.

"We've had a lot of local interest, a lot

More inside

Travel Pendleton turning hipsters into 'tripsters' Page 2A

See FESTIVAL/8A

PENDLETON

Ward 3 candidates give their take on communication

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Over the past year the Pendleton City Council has been discussing ways to improve communication with the public, including the idea of hiring a dedicated communications employee.

One of the councilors taking part in those discussions, Tom Young, has declined to seek

re-election for his Ward 3 position, and three candidates are campaigning for the seat. Cody Cimmiyotti, Dale Primmer and Don Bennett are the new candidates for the ward, which primarily covers McKay Creek, Southgate and the Tutuilla areas.

Cimmiyotti has based much of his platform around being a councilor open to ideas and suggestions from the public

"Listen to everybody and do research and consult with people," Cimmiyotti said about his approach to making decisions. "That's what I intend to do. Be more open-minded."

In a municipal election where the average age of a candidate is 56, the 24-year-old Cimmiyotti, who splits his work time between jobs at Red Lion and SeaPort Airlines, thinks his youth could be an asset to the council.

While Cimmiyotti is a lifelong resident of Pendleton, Primmer came to Pendleton to work.

Primmer grew up in Hermiston, where his brother Doug Primmer is a city councilor, but moved to Pendleton to supervise

work crews for Umatilla County Community Corrections.

Since then, Primmer rose through the ranks and is now the Umatilla County director of community justice.

Primmer said an employee should be assigned communications duties within city government, which would include tasks like meeting with citizens and civic groups and sharing pertinent information.

Bennett is also a native of Hermiston, but has spent the past 48 years in Pendleton.

Bennett worked an assortment of blue collar jobs throughout his career, including stints working the Eastern Oregon Training Center and the Transportation Security Administration.

As a person who's lived and paid taxes in the community for a long time, Bennett said he can relate to the everyday citizen.

"I know what you have to go through," he said.

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Don Bennett

Age: 65

Occupation: Retired, Eastern Oregon Training Center employee and Transportation Security Administration agent

Hometown: Hermiston

Years in Pendleton: 48

Highest Level of Education: Some college at BMCC

Family: Married, five children, four grandchildren, two great-grandchildren



Cody Cimmiyotti

Age: 24

Occupation: SeaPort Airlines customer service agent, Red Lion Hotel server/bar-tender

Hometown: Pendleton

Years in Pendleton: 24

Highest Level of Education: Some college at BMCC

Family: Single



Dale Primmer

Age: 43

Occupation: Umatilla County director of community justice

Hometown: Hermiston

Years in Pendleton: 15

Highest Level of Education: Bachelor's degree, Western Oregon University

Family: Married, two children



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