



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Students take aim during an archery class at a combined Helix and Pilot School school district outdoor school Wednesday at Meadowood Springs near Tollgate.

## OUTDOOR: Some students comeback as counselors

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outdoor school for years.”

The sixth-graders from Pilot Rock and Helix took in classes in archery, forestry, first aid and weather for three days in the mountain setting. The small schools also took photos and made videos about the food chain, competed in obstacle courses and learned about wildland firefighters. Students caught frogs and went on nature hikes, cooked breakfast on a campfire and paddled canoes.

For many districts — Pilot Rock and Helix included — high school juniors and seniors serve as camp counselors, volunteering their time to experience — or re-experience — outdoor school as a teenager.

“They leave here, and the first thing they want to do is come back and be a counselor,” Newton said. “It’s special to see the kids grow up and want to come back.”

Cayce Marshall, a senior at Pilot Rock High School, is one of those students. Marshall returned to outdoor school to lead a watercolor class.

“This is my very first



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Helix senior Makenzie Mize, top left, and Pilot Rock senior Cayce Marshall, top right, teach an art class at a combined Helix and Pilot School school district outdoor school Wednesday at Meadowood Springs near Tollgate.

experience in coaching little kids in painting, but I think it’s going pretty well,” Marshall said Wednesday. “It’s not really about how good it turns out, it’s about that they learn something, that they have fun, and it might inspire them in art.”

Marshall said offering an

art class as part of outdoor school is “awesome” because it allows students to visualize landscapes they can see before them.

Newton added the watercolor class also gives students something tangible to take home with them to remember the experience.

“They’re making memories they’ll keep,” Newton said. “It’s really fun to see the ones that are more shy open up. It’s just a really great experience.”

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## SALMON: About 40 percent of the river is spilled over the dam

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less like slack-water pools.

“Those dams bubble to the top of things that need to be addressed,” True said.

On Wednesday, Judge Michael Simon rejected the feds’ 2014 biological opinion for salmon in the Columbia Basin, saying it violates both the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act. It’s the fifth time a judge has ruled against the biological opinion, or BiOp, since the lawsuit was initially filed in 2001.

True said the judge’s ruling represents a real turning point in the issue, and the clearest indication yet that what the agencies have done to date isn’t working.

“I think the time for government stonewalling is over,” True said. “I think starting over is exactly what the judge is asking us to do.”

Conservationists, along with the state of Oregon and Nez Perce Tribe, sued over the 2014 BiOp, which is prepared by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The nuts and bolts of the plan are handled by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which operates the dams, and Bonneville Power Administration, which markets the electricity to utilities such as the Umatilla Electric Cooperative.

A spokesman for BPA said the agencies are disappointed and will take some time to fully digest the ruling. Terry Flores, with Northwest RiverPartners, said the ruling discounts billions of dollars worth of work on fish passage and habitat improvements that have helped some salmon runs eclipse records in recent years.

Northwest RiverPartners represents the interests of utilities, farmers, ports and businesses on the Columbia and Snake rivers. Flores,



EO file photo

This aerial photo shows the McNary Dam on the Columbia River.

the coalition’s director, said continued litigation will only lead to more process, which does nothing positive for fish. She also said dam removal on the Lower Snake is a frustrating proposition that would eliminate up to 3,000 megawatts of clean, renewable power.

“Obviously, fish would probably be better off without any dams,” Flores said. “But you have to look at the whole picture.”

True said those options — including increased spill over dams and potentially drawing down water behind the John Day Dam — are all part of the equation. He was joined at Thursday’s conference by Glen Spain, with the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Association; Liz Hamilton with the Northwest Sport-fishing Industry Association; Anthony Johnson, chairman of the Nez Perce Tribal

Executive Committee; Marc Krasnowsky, spokesman for the Northwest Energy Coalition; and Dustin Aherin, owner of Idaho River Adventures in Lewiston.

Spain, whose organization represents commercial fishing families along the West Coast, said the 2014 BiOp represented “institutional insanity,” and the judge’s ruling gives them an opportunity to really think about a new way forward. He also said the Lower Snake River dams are, in many ways, no longer necessary.

“It has cost us an enormous amount of money in the region to do the same failed things over and over,” Spain said.

BPA and the Army Corps of Engineers argue they have made improvements at Columbia and Snake river dams to support fish passage. At McNary Dam, the Corps said it installed

two weirs at spillway gates and re-routed its juvenile fish passage channel to boost survival rates. About 40 percent of the river is also spilled over the dam to ensure juveniles can pass, without over-saturating the water with gas bubbles that can actually harm fish.

Salmon advocates say it hasn’t been enough. Warm water in the basin was especially devastating to endangered sockeye last year, when 96 percent of the run died before ever making it to Lower Granite Dam in southeast Washington.

The Nez Perce Tribe has stood alone among those challenging the BiOp. Johnson said the ruling was a powerful statement supporting their effort.

“We know there is a long road ahead,” he said. “We’ll do everything necessary to ensure there are salmon for our children and grandchildren to come.”

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## TEACHER: Worked as a part-time bookkeeper

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in Pilot Rock, Byrnes went back to school to become a teacher after raising a family and took a position as a sixth-grade teacher at Pilot Rock Elementary. Now she has a career she loves and that she said she can use to make a difference.

“I’m really happy I went back to school,” Byrnes said Wednesday, in between activities at Pilot Rock’s outdoor school. “I love working with the kids, and I hope I am encouraging them to do their best.”

While her own children were young, Byrnes worked as a part-time bookkeeper. She had the flexibility to attend all their recitals, games and practices, but as her children grew she took a second look at teaching.

“Being a part-time bookkeeper was great, but I made it to 40 and just needed something different,” she said.

In 2003, Byrnes joined the Curriculum for Undergraduate Elementary School Teacher Education (CUESTE) program at Eastern Oregon University. She worked through

distance learning, taking her homework to baseball games to complete it from the stands while her children practiced.

Her children are now older — 23, 28 and 30 — but Byrnes has a new class to adopt each school year.

“They become my sons and my daughters because I’m with them so much. I go to their Little League games, I give them someone else cheering for them,” she said.

Having already raised her own family, Byrnes has a few tricks up her sleeves to keep her students in line.

“I’ve raised my kids, so I pretty much know anything a kid can pull as a sixth-grader,” she said. “That’s an advantage.”

The biggest challenge Byrnes sees is in standardized testing, preparing students and helping them understand the importance of an education.

“I want them to see the value. I tell them, ‘Your job is to learn. You have a job even though you’re 12. I have a job too, it’s to teach you and help you learn,’” she said. “I love my district, I love my kids and I love my job.”

## MACGREGOR: Best friend lived on the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Continued from 1A

her time at Leech Lake, managing multi-million dollar projects and boosting the number of community partners to two dozen.

Before leaving, MacGregor was working on teen drinking awareness campaign she felt was starting to make a difference in how both teens and adults approached underage drinking.

Despite a lifetime in Minnesota, MacGregor felt a pull out west and to Pendleton in particular, which was aided by the fact that her best friend lived on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

MacGregor made her first move to Pendleton in 2012, working stints at the Wild-horse Casino & Resort and the Rugged Country Lodge.

Although she was named the manager at the Rugged Country Lodge, a change in ownership at the motel meant she was laid off and free to return to Minnesota to take care of her mother while she was recovering from open-heart surgery.

Now that she’s been named the director of Tonya’s House, MacGregor plans on making Pendleton her permanent home. Along with her dog Bojack, MacGregor lives just across

the street from Tonya’s House.

MacGregor said she and the rest of her staff act like family to the girls who utilize Tonya’s House, which takes in a maximum of six girls and is currently housing three.

MacGregor said Tonya’s House has misperceived reputation as a place for pregnant teens, and although the house has served them in the past, she maintained that many of the young women they serve are homeless or the victims of abuse and violence.

While the time they stay at Tonya’s House ranges from days to months, MacGregor said their goal was to help the girls get back on their feet while providing them with a stable environment to do so.

Having long worked for an Indian reservation, MacGregor is already looking to form a stronger relationship with the tribes.

“I really make it my business to understand the culture,” she said.

MacGregor said she’s reached out to Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center about forming a partnership.

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## Oregon Supreme Court limits damages in lawsuits against state

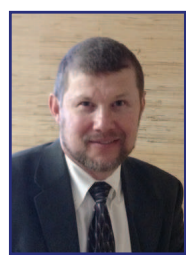
PORTLAND (AP) — The Oregon Supreme Court voted 5-2 to uphold a \$3 million cap on damages injured people can collect in lawsuits against the state or its employees.

The case was brought by a Klamath Falls couple who sued OHSU after a botched surgery in 2009 nearly killed their 9-month-old son. A Portland jury awarded the child more than \$12 million, but Thursday’s ruling means he’ll only get \$3 million.

Family attorney David Miller tells *The Oregonian/Oregonlive.com* that the boy’s mother is devastated by the ruling.

The Portland jury found the boy’s past and future medical expenses would hit \$6 million, and he deserved the rest for pain and suffering.

The cap established by the Legislature is intended to protect cities, school districts and other taxpayer-supported organizations from massive payouts.



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