

EAST OREGONIAN

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A pod of pelicans preen in the middle of the Umatilla River channel on Thursday near Washington Elementary School in Pendleton. American white pelicans are frequent visitors on the Umatilla River in the spring as they migrate north to their summer breeding grounds in Canada.

HERMISTON

‘Where Life is Sweet’ becomes new city tagline

Water tower will get new paint job

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Hermiston residents bothered by the tagline and paint job on the city’s water tower will get a sweet surprise this summer.

The city council voted Monday night to adopt a new city brand, and with that vote came a promise to replace the brown “You Can GROW Here” on the side of the water tower with a colorful new logo and tagline “Where Life is Sweet” sometime this summer.



“Let’s get painting,” councilor Lori Davis said.

The final brand was recommended by the 25-person Hermiston Branding Committee, which narrowed down two logos and two taglines before asking the community to vote for its favorite. More than 1,100 people weighed in.

Freddy Gonzalez, a Hermiston High School student who sat on the committee, said 90 percent of residents surveyed rated the round seal logo “good” or “acceptable,” while 71 percent gave the same rating to the badge-shaped logo.

“When asked to choose between the two, the community had a clear preference for the seal logo,” Gonzalez said.

The logo features a watermelon slice and outline of the Hermiston Butte, using red, green and blue.

Gonzalez reported the community also preferred “Where Life is Sweet” as a tagline, with 53 percent voting in favor of it over “Where Opportunity Shines.”

See **HERMISTON/8A**

“I opened the door and walked into his life — we were instant soulmates.”

— **Susan Plass**, wife of Jack Sanders



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Susan Plass holds a photograph of her husband Jack Sanders in the study of their home in Pendleton. Sanders passed away last January and will be honored with a celebration of life at the University of Oregon where he had worked as a religious studies professor.

Sanders’ spirit lives on

University of Oregon honors beloved professor

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

Jack Sanders and Susan Plass once ended their weekly dates by strolling across the University of Oregon campus

and stopping behind the library to gaze at two sculptures called “Trees of Knowledge.”

Something about their gnarled tree trunks with books as flowers drew the couple and they returned again and

again. Later, after moving to Pendleton, they thought about commissioning a replica for their garden.

Next week, Plass will have reason to continue visiting the spot in Eugene, even though she lost her beloved Jack in January.

See **SANDERS/8A**

Umatilla Co. continues trimming trend

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Umatilla County’s proposed \$72 million budget continues to reflect the board of

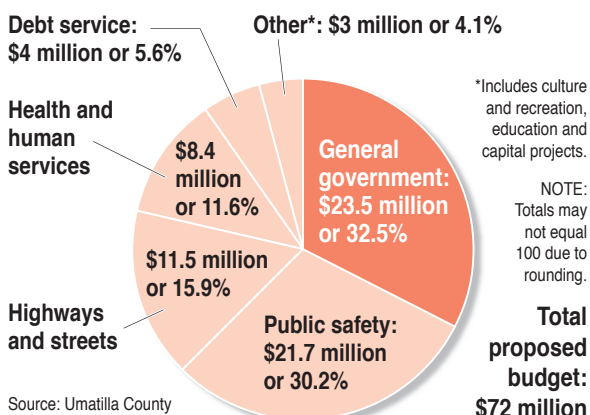
commissioners’ move to keep down administrative costs.

The budget for fiscal year 2016-17 made it through the recent committee hearings and now awaits approval from the commissioners. While this budget is about 4 percent larger than the last one and the sheriff’s office received a boost to hire a new jail technician, overall the county is cutting more than two full-time positions.

“Primarily we have restructured administration,” said board chair George Murdock, “and made more direct ties between the commissioners and the department heads.”

Cutting out management overhead started a couple of years ago, Murdock said, with understanding the budget reality of having to do more work with less revenue. The board of commissioners does not put a lot of time into looking at new programs because revenue is stagnant, he said, and rather than

Proposed 2016-17 budget for Umatilla County



Other budget-related items

- Umatilla County general fund budget: \$27.5 million
- The budget provides for almost 318 full-time equivalent jobs, including a new jail technician for the sheriff’s office. That’s still a net decrease of more than two full-time positions from the previous budget.
- The county receives about \$1 million in the federal Payment in Lieu of Taxes program, and that money goes into a fund to offset the cost of the Oregon Public Employee Retirement System.
- The county in October will make the final payment on the general obligation bond that paid for building the county jail.

See **BUDGET/8A**

Phil Wright and Alan Kenaga/EO Media Group

HERMISTON

Two injured in gunfire exchange

East Oregonian

Gunfire erupted at a Hermiston apartment complex early Sunday morning, sending two men to the hospital.

Both men suffered non-life threatening gunshot wounds and the investigation is ongoing, Hermiston Police Chief Jason Edmiston said in a written statement.

Gunfire was exchanged at the apartment complex at the 600 block of Southeast Fourth Street, but law enforcement — including Hermiston detectives and the Oregon State Police Forensic Division — are still determining exactly what happened.

Police received a report of at least 10 gunshots at 3:16 a.m. and an ambulance was dispatched, but it was canceled when no victims were found at the scene. While en route to the shooting, some police

officers were redirected to the emergency department at Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston, after two people with gunshot wounds arrived separately, according to Edmiston.

Adalberto G. Flores, 20, and a 17-year-old male, both of Hermiston, were taken to Good Shepherd Medical Center but then transported out of the Hermiston area to receive further medical care, according to Edmiston.

During the investigation, Hermiston officers arrested Lalo Murillo, 21, of Hermiston on a Umatilla County parole/probation detainer. Edmiston could not confirm if other people were involved in the shooting or if the incident was gang related.

“We need to allow the investigation to run its course before we are able to categorize this as gang related,” he wrote.

