

EAST OREGONIAN

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2016

140th Year, No. 152

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Fox in the den house

Staff photo by E.J. Harris
A red fox looks out of the brush near its den Monday afternoon on a hillside in southeast Pendleton.

PENDLETON

Bixler back to district as HR director

East Oregonian

The Pendleton School District will bring back Brad Bixler, the principal of Highland Hills Elementary School in Hermiston, as its human resources director.

Pending school board approval at a special meeting May 19, Bixler will start working for the district July 1, according to a press release from the school district.

Although he's being hired away from the Hermiston School District, Bixler spent more than 20 years of his career in Pendleton, including stints as an elementary teacher, high school computer/math teacher, assistant principal at Pendleton High School and technology coordinator.



Bixler

Additionally, Bixler worked at the InterMountain Education Service District from 2000-2001 and has been the Highland Hills principal since 2013.

"With Brad's experience in Pendleton, his connection to the community and his good reputation as an educator, we are excited that he is returning to the district," Pendleton School District Jon Peterson said in a statement.

According to Peterson, Bixler's impending hire also got a thumbs-up from incoming Superintendent Andy Kovach, who liked his familiarity with the community and the schools.

The district's administration will undergo a slight restructuring over the summer following Bixler's hire and the departure of Assistant Superintendent Tricia Mooney, who was recently named the assistant superintendent of human resources for the Hermiston School District.

In an interview, Peterson said that rather than hire an assistant superintendent to replace Mooney, Kovach will oversee a group of directors who will be in charge of human resources, business services, special programs and curriculum.

The district's central office will resemble the set-up it had in 2008, when Mooney was hired as human resources director before being promoted to assistant superintendent the following year.

Peterson said Kovach and the school board will have the discretion to revive the assistant superintendent position in the future.

"Some of our best solutions have come from that mix of people that don't usually talk to each other."

— Suzanne Asha Stone, senior Northwest representative for Defenders of Wildlife

Determined deterrence, but lethal action in the chamber

Even with deadly force at its disposal, wolf plan favors non-lethal methods

By GEORGE PLAVEN
East Oregonian

Despite killing four wolves from the Imnaha Pack earlier this year for repeatedly attacking livestock, the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife reiterated the value of non-lethal deterrents during a workshop Friday in Pendleton.

Eastern Oregon ranchers and county officials gathered at Blue Mountain Community College to hear presentations on the science and economics of dealing with wolves. The workshop featured speakers from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services. ODFW

also provided an update on the state's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan, which is now up for review.

Roblyn Brown, the department's acting wolf program coordinator, said the wolf population is growing rapidly in Oregon — there were at least 110 wolves counted by the end of last year, compared to just 14 in 2009. Yet the number of confirmed attacks on livestock has stayed relatively flat, which Brown said is due in part to the use and effectiveness of non-lethal tools.

"We're figuring things out," Brown said. "Non-lethals can absolutely work in certain situations."

The most important thing, Brown

said, is for ranchers to make sure they clean up their bone piles to avoid attracting wolves onto their property in the first place. Things like fladry fencing, range riders, guard dogs and alarm boxes can be effective deterrents, at least temporarily, if they're used correctly.

Ranchers are doing a much better job now than they were when the plan was first implemented, Brown said. The number of confirmed wolf depredations was even down slightly in 2015, compared to 2014. But non-lethals don't work every time, which is why Phase II of the wolf

See WOLVES/8A

BOARDMAN

Teen stabs woman at rest stop restroom

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

A 17-year-old Idaho boy stabbed a woman Saturday in a woman's restroom at a rest stop near Boardman.

Oregon State Police Sgt. Tom Spicknall said the woman's injuries were not

life-threatening and police arrested the teen and booked him into the juvenile facility at the Northern Oregon Regional Correctional Facilities, The Dalles.

The case is an active investigation, Spicknall said, so he could not release many details. Court records identify the suspect as Talon James Davis of Clarkston, Idaho, and he turns 18 in June.

The Morrow County Sheriff's Office confirmed a 9-1-1 call at 3:44 p.m. reported the attack in the restroom at the state rest stop off the westbound side of Interstate 84 near milepost 161, just outside Boardman. Spicknall said the teen used a knife, and an ambulance took the victim, Sandra Byers, 51, to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston.

Spicknall would not say if the teen was already in the restroom or followed the woman inside.

Good Shepherd spokesman Nick Bejarano said the hospital released Byers on Monday morning. The East Oregonian was not able to contact Byers.

Spicknall, who heads up the state police criminal division out of Pendleton, said most assault victims know their assailant or they at least have some association. But that does not seem to be the case here, he said, as Davis and Byers had no interaction prior to the stabbing. He also said he could not comment on motive or if the teen suffered from mental illness or was under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson charged Davis on Monday with first-degree assault and unlawful use of a weapon. Circuit Judge Eva Temple set Davis' bail at \$100,000.

First-degree assault falls under Measure 11, Oregon's mandatory minimum sentencing law for serious crimes. Nelson said that means he is charging Davis as an adult. He said he would present evidence to a grand jury Wednesday and arraign the teen Thursday based on that indictment.

Contact Phil Wright at pwright@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0833.

Bernie banking on Oregon to keep campaign alive

By KRISTENA HANSEN
Associated Press

With the final hours of Oregon's Tuesday presidential primary approaching, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders says he is banking on his strong base of progressive Oregonian supporters to help him beat the odds and take his campaign all the way to the Democratic National Convention.

Speaking from a car in Puerto Rico, where the Democratic primary is early next month, Sanders told The Associated Press on Monday he'll win big in Oregon — self-proclaimed Sanders country — if there's strong voter turnout.

Sanders emphasized the role the state plays in his long-shot attempt at claiming the Democratic nomination through a brokered convention in July. He's held three Oregon rallies since last month. Front-runner Hillary Clinton — who suffered a big primary loss



AP Photo/Ryan Kang, File

In this April 28 photo, Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., pauses while audience members cheer during a rally in Springfield, Ore.

in Oregon against President Barack Obama in 2008 — sent Bill Clinton twice but has not visited herself. She spent Monday campaigning in Kentucky, which also has a Tuesday primary.

"We have an uphill fight to victory, but it remains a possibility," Sanders said. "Right now we've got about 45.5 percent of the pledged delegates. My hope is that if we can do well in Oregon tomorrow, do well in Kentucky, and especially

California coming up, which has more delegates than any other state, I hope that at the process we will have got 50 percent of the delegates and then can go into the convention with the majority."

Among the nine Democratic primaries and caucuses still remaining, Oregon's 61-delegate count is relatively small and its primary is closed, meaning

See BERNIE/8A

