

PENDLETON

Chrisman adds convention center to duties

East Oregonian

Steve Chrisman, Pendleton's economic development director and airport manager, will soon take on the added responsibility of managing the Pendleton Convention Center.

Chrisman will retain the title of airport manager, but shift his day-to-day operation focus from the airport to the

convention center, according to City Manager Robb Corbett.

Wayne Green will take on airfield operations duties at the Eastern Oregon Regional Airport beginning July 1, Corbett said, while the city will hire an unmanned aerial systems manager using a grant from SOAR Oregon.

Chrisman will replace Pat Kennedy, who has been

managing the convention center under contract. Kennedy had indicated to the city he will retire after 20 years at the convention center.

Corbett said the city picked Chrisman because of his experience with convention centers in prior economic development jobs.

This is the second time the city has considered adding convention center duties to

Chrisman's plate.

Chrisman was hired as an economic development consultant in 2012, having done similar work for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and Chinook Winds Casino Resort in Lincoln City.

In 2013, Kennedy retired after 17 years of directing the convention center full-time, and Corbett then considered

giving Kennedy's responsibilities to Chrisman.

Instead, Corbett gave Chrisman the dual role of economic development director/airport manager following former airport manager Larry Dalrymple's retirement while Kennedy stayed on under contract.

With Chrisman set to oversee the airport, the convention center and the

city's economic development efforts, Corbett said he is aware of concerns that Chrisman will be stretched too thin.

Despite those concerns, Corbett has confidence Chrisman will be able to manage his new responsibilities.

Chrisman did not return multiple requests for comment.

PENDLETON

East meets west

Two courts continue longtime tradition

BY KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Portland Rose Festival Princess Melissa Ibrahim gazed at the bay horse with a touch of trepidation.

Ibrahim and her 14 fellow princesses had just spent most of the day Tuesday as guests of the Pendleton Round-Up and Happy Canyon Courts, touring the Tamastlikt Cultural Institute, the Pendleton Underground and the Round-Up & Happy Canyon Hall of Fame. They rode in a horse-drawn limousine wagon, pulled by two Belgians named Thomas and Casey.

Now Ibrahim would climb on a horse for the first time.

The Parkrose High School senior stood on the dirt floor of the Round-Up Pavilion eying Hero, a 24-year-old gelding belonging to Tamastlikt Director Roberta Conner. Though the quarter horse looked sedate, she was nervous. Ibrahim had petted a horse once as a tiny girl, but had never ridden.

"I'm a little scared," Ibrahim admitted, "but I want to make this connection."

Ibrahim put one cream-colored boot on Conner's bended knee and stuck the toe of her other boot into the stirrup. She swung her leg over the saddle like a pro, then sat stiffly as Hero started walking. Happy Canyon Princess Appollonia Saenz rode alongside on Roanie, giving Ibrahim advice.

Conner, who grew up with horses, barely remembers not knowing how to ride. She watched the pair and gave a running commentary of how Ibrahim was doing.

"She's a little timid, but Hero's taking care of her," she said. Then a little later, "She's getting more comfortable. She's getting the idea she's in charge."

Pairs of princesses rode their horses together around the pavilion. They rode for about an hour, then headed to a steak dinner at the Let'er Buck Room.

This coming together of east and west — this mixer of royalty from different



Rose Festival Princess Melissa Ibrahim from Parkrose High School, right, is all smiles as she gets instructions on how to mount her horse from Happy Canyon Princess Appollonia Saenz on Tuesday during a riding lesson at the Round-Up Pavilion in Pendleton.

corners of the state — is a longtime tradition, almost as old as the Round-Up itself. At one time, the courts came by train. These days, the trek is less of an ordeal, a straight shot up Interstate 84 by bus.

The Round-Up and Happy Canyon Courts spent Monday in Portland as guests of the Rose Festival Court. They were in foodie heaven as they toured the Franz Bakery, ate lunch at the Old Spaghetti Factory and dropped in to the iconic Voodoo Doughnuts to meet the owner and sample the wares. They visited the Oregon Zoo and marveled at the baby elephants. They were hosted by Rotarians and were treated, well, like royalty.

Then it was on to Pendleton.

"They showed us their town and then they got to see ours," said Round-Up Queen Kylie Willis.

Willis said the girls bonded with each other, taking care to pair up with someone from another court. Since the Rose Festival queen and princesses are juniors and seniors in high school and the Round-Up and Happy Canyon courts are older, Willis said it was like hanging out with younger sisters.

"We advised them about college and whatnot," she said.

The trip was another bonding experience for the Round-Up Court. The four women spend almost every weekend together and meet for jumping practice once a week. Unlike the Rose Court which travels together for only five weeks, the Round-Up Court spends a year together.

"We're best friends already," Willis said. "We mesh so well."

The time in the pavilion on horses was yet another bonding experience for all. Willis and the other Eastern Oregon royalty looked horse-savvy and comfortable as they guided their mounts around the pavilion. Their urban sisters gained ground quickly. Ibrahim looked ebullient.

"This is really nice," she said. "My hips were stiff at first, but Apple told me to loosen them. Then I was moving with Hero and that was better."

The two courts will meet again at the Rose Festival Parade in June.

Contact Kathy Aney at kaney@eastoregonian.com or call 541-966-0810.

Keys named BMCC Hermiston director

By JENNIFER COLTON
East Oregonian

After seven years with Eastern Oregon University, Jacelyn Keys will move to Blue Mountain Community College this summer as the director of BMCC Hermiston.

Keys will step into the role full-time on July 1, replacing Harvey Franklin, who will retire at the end of this academic year.

"We are very excited to have Jacelyn join us at BMCC. She brings with her a solid background in instruction, a history of supporting students in reaching their goals, and a tremendous amount of enthusiasm to the job," BMCC president Cam Preus said Tuesday. "She will join a great team committed to serving the Hermiston community and students of BMCC."



Born and raised in Eastern Oregon, Keys attended Central Oregon Community College in Bend, where she fell in love with the community college setting. Two master's degrees later, Keys is finally returning to a community college.

"I'm really excited to take over this role and to start working with the community," Keys said.

The Hermiston center serves the western half of BMCC's district and includes an annual student count of more than 5,000 — about 20 percent of the college's total enrollment.

Keys said she sees that enrollment continuing to grow and position the school to meet the needs of businesses, students and community members.

"I think my focus for the first chunk of time is listening to people and asking what they need from BMCC," Keys said. "I will then take that information back to leadership and see what BMCC can do to meet those needs."

Although Keys will be new to BMCC, she is already familiar with the Eastern Oregon Higher Education Center. Keys is currently the EOU Hermiston Center director as well as an advisor for the La Grande-based college who splits time between Pendleton and Hermiston.

Familiar with ongoing programs, Keys hopes to continue efforts to bring a more collegiate feel to the Hermiston campus and to continue working with EOU to expand offerings at the Eastern Oregon Higher Education Center.

"I think (EOU) is at a good point now with our partnership with BMCC so someone else can step in and continue the work to make sure students have options for the four-year degrees that the west end of the county needs," Keys said, adding that goal includes expansion in face-to-face classes with EOU faculty.

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PILOT ROCK

Budget raises sewer rates for better waste system

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Pilot Rock residents will face higher sewer rates and public safety fees in the 2016-17 budget. Budget officer and city reporter Teri Porter said many citizens understand the need for the higher rates.

The city council met Tuesday night at 7 p.m. and the budget hearing was the main agenda item. About 30 minutes later, the meeting was done.

The 2016-17 budget tops \$1.9 million with a general fund of \$672,679. Almost 56 percent of the general fund goes to the city's three-member police department.

Pilot Rock in 2010 created a \$6 per month surcharge to help fund police, but for the past few years it has been \$3 a month because the department has lacked a full staff.

New Pilot Rock Police Chief Bill Caldera, though,

aims to fully staff the department by July, so the city proposes bumping the surcharge to \$3.50.

Porter said during budget meetings there was talk of a higher increase, and eventually the city will have to charge the full \$6. But the city saved a lot last year due to reduced staffing and carried that over to keep the fee low in the short term.

Pilot Rock and other small communities will also pay more to the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office to provide dispatch services.

The county wants Pilot Rock to pay \$20,000 for services, but Caldera made a deal for the city to pay \$9,000 in the upcoming fiscal year and then \$3,000 more per year until the city reaches \$20,000.

And Pilot Rock's \$5.2 million project to improve its aging wastewater lagoon system is driving up sewer rates. Without the upgrades,

though, the city would face repercussions from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

Funding for the project is coming from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which will provide a \$1.4 million grant and loan the rest of the money at an interest rate of 1.875 percent. That rate requires the city to raise sewer rates to \$39.52 per month.

The city started rate hikes last year, with a \$10-a-month bump. This year it will go up another \$7 to a monthly charge of \$35, and in 2018 it will jump up \$5 more a month to hit the \$40 mark.

Budget documents show the city will allocate \$21 of the \$35 monthly sewer fee toward regular sewer operations and maintenance and \$14 toward the lagoon upgrade. Porter said the city is putting as much money as it can into a reserve fund to pay off the loan as

soon as possible.

The council will vote on adopting the budget when it meets June 21.

Rivoli Theater receives grant

PENDLETON — The Oregon Community Foundation announced Tuesday that the Rivoli Coalition was the recipient of a \$15,000 grant.

The grant will go toward construction drawings and engineering cost estimates for the restoration of the historic Rivoli Theater in Pendleton.

The nonprofit coalition is currently in the planning stages of the restoration, which will turn the former movie theater into a performing arts center.

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Presented by Adrian Cagigas, MA, ATC/L

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