

**CONDUCTOR
RECUPERATES
AFTER CRASH**
REGION/3A



**BIBLE CAMP
INCLUDES
RODEO SKILLS**
FAITH/8A



**BLAZE
BURNS
BARN**
BOARDMAN/3A



EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, MAY 27, 2016

140th Year, No. 160

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Your Weekend



- Memorial Day ceremony at Olney Cemetery
- Ace Auto Club Car Show in Echo
- Thunder from Down Under at Wildhorse

For times and places see Coming Events, 5A

Catch a movie

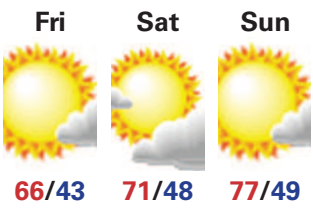


Twentieth Century Fox via AP

"X-Men: Apocalypse"

For showtime, Page 5A

Weekend Weather



Oregon renews wildfire insurance policy

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon officials and forestland owners have renewed the state's wildfire insurance despite failing to reach the policy's \$50 million deductible last year.

The price of the premium declined by \$300,000 to \$3.45 million in 2016, according to the Oregon Department of Forestry. Underwriters gave the discount because the state did not need to use the policy in 2015, said Sen. Alan Bates, D-Ashland.

The \$25 million policy is underwritten by Lloyd's, a London insurance consortium, and AXIS of Bermuda.

Federal and state agencies spent \$94.4 million on wildfire suppression in 2015, according to the See FIRE/12A

MILTON-FREEWATER

Woman killed in stabbing

Two young children seriously injured

By TIM TRAINOR
East Oregonian

A Milton-Freewater woman is dead and two children are injured after a stabbing Thursday in

Milton-Freewater. Maria Villegas, 24, of Milton-Freewater, died at St. Mary's Hospital in Walla Walla from her injuries.

Two children — a 2-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl — were also stabbed and seriously injured. The four-year-old was transferred via air ambulance to Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane while the two-year-old

was taken to St. Mary's.

Oscar Villegas Garcia, 26, of Milton-Freewater, suffered serious cuts and wounds which are believed to be self-inflicted, according to a release from Oregon State Police. After being treated for his injuries in Walla Walla, Villegas Garcia was arrested by the Walla Walla Police Department and is currently lodged at the Walla Walla County Jail.

Villegas and Villegas Garcia were married, according to county records.

The stabbings took place near 362 NE 13th Avenue, Milton-Freewater. Local police were dispatched to the scene at about 10:20 a.m.

No further information was available by press time Thursday. Visit www.eastoregonian.com for updates to this story.



Pendleton Police Cpl. Ryan Lehnert clears the chamber of an assault rifle after dispatching a deer that was hit by a motorist Tuesday on Highway 30 east of Pendleton.

Police safer than ever, but the job continues to demand more

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Fleeing suspects shot at police twice in Umatilla County this year, and in both cases officers returned fire and took them down.

Bryan Alberto Corona, 24, now is serving 15 years in prison after pleading guilty to attempted aggravated murder for shooting at state troopers in January near Pendleton. Robert Gage Sregzinski, 19 of St. John, Washington, is in the Umatilla County Jail, Pendleton, awaiting trial on charges of attempted murder and more for a shootout with Milton-Freewater police in April.

And while Corona and Sregzinski are part of the growing trend of gun violence against police, in-the-line-of-duty deaths continue to decline.

The U.S. does not have a single national database tracking on-duty police deaths, nor is there a national database tracking how many people police kill in the line of duty.

The Officer Down Memorial Page, Inc., a nonprofit that tracks on-duty deaths of law enforcement officers, counts 38 deaths through the first five months of 2016 with one in Oregon, a 38 percent drop through the same period a

See POLICE/12A



Pendleton Police Cpl. Ryan Lehnert checks in with dispatch after assisting motorists with a fender bender Tuesday in Pendleton.

HERMISTON

Thousands of dollars stolen in bank fraud case

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Hermiston Police Department has released photos of a person of interest in the bank account fraud case that has affected a number of Hermiston residents in recent weeks.

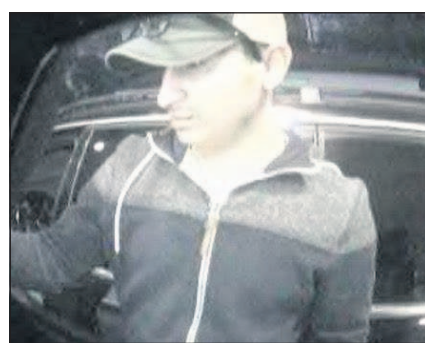
The reports started the week of May 8, as customers of multiple banks began noticing that someone had withdrawn hundreds of dollars from their bank account, usually from an ATM in the Portland area. Hermiston Police

Chief Jason Edmiston said he didn't have an exact tally on hand, but he thought the department had taken close to 100 reports by now, totaling thousands of dollars of theft.

He said he knew there were others who had reported the fraud to their bank but not the police department.

The person in the surveillance photos released Thursday is believed to have affixed a "skimmer" to a local ATM.

See ATM/12A



Contributed photo
Hermiston Police Department posted three photos to Facebook of a person of interest in an investigation into use of a skimmer on ATM machines. This one is the only one where the male is not wearing sunglasses on his face.

CRP acres on the decline

Meeting scheduled to help local guide farmers

By GEORGE PLAVERN
East Oregonian

The competition is getting fierce for a key farm program that pays growers to set aside less productive land for conservation.

Enrollment in the Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Program, or CRP, is down across Umatilla and Morrow counties, which should come as no surprise given the shrinking cap for farms nationwide. When Congress passed the 2014 Farm Bill, it allowed fewer acres in the CRP as a cost-saving measure. By October, the FSA plans to hit its lowered target of 24 million acres, compared to 36.7 million at the program's

See CRP/12A



7 294671 10001 5