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**CALEDONIAN
GAMES COMING
TO ATHENA**
REGION/3A



**ASTROS
WIN BY
ONE RUN**
MLB/1B



EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, JULY 7, 2016

140th Year, No. 189

WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

HERMISTON

Lifeways to open psychiatric facility

Expected to be operational in spring 2017

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Eastern Oregon residents experiencing a psychiatric crisis will no longer be sent across the state to receive help after construction is finished on an acute psychiatric care facility in Hermiston.

Lifeways, which provides mental health and addiction services to the region, broke ground on the new 16-bed Aspen Springs facility on Wednesday. It is expected to become operational in spring 2017.

"This is a great day for us," Lifeways CEO Judy Cordeniz told

the crowd.

Good Shepherd Medical Center CEO Dennis Burke applauded Lifeways for taking the "bold step" of upgrading their original plans from a residential treatment facility to a regional acute psychiatric facility.

That type of secure facility can take care a step beyond residential treatment facilities such as McNary Place in Hermiston, providing

the most intensive level of mental health care, including hospital-level crisis care for a per-bed cost cheaper than the Oregon State Hospital.

"Having a facility like this is an investment, a significant investment, and I very much expect to see a return on it," Burke said.

The need for such facilities is great. According to the American College of Emergency Physicians, Oregon's number of psychiatric

beds per 100,000 people dropped from 28.8 in 2009 to 8.7 in 2014 — the fourth fewest in the country. The result is that local residents in need of in-patient treatment after a severe mental health crisis are often sent to the other side of the state because there are no beds available closer to home.

Cordeniz said Lifeways is

See **LIFEWAYS/8A**

Fresh delivery

RIGHT: An adult osprey flies up with a fish in its talons to feed its mate and two juveniles in their nest overlooking the Umatilla River on Wednesday in Pendleton. **BELOW:** Juvenile osprey, with the checkered feather pattern, get up to eat as their parents look on from their nest.

Staff photos by E.J. Harris



PENDLETON

From dropout to master's student

Olivera to lead BMCC student success program

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

Roman Olivera doesn't look like a guy who is ever scared of anything. He laughs a lot and wears an easygoing smile. His relaxed demeanor puts others at ease.

About 14 years ago, however, something frightened him to the core — the thought of going back to school. He had dropped out of his "gang-infested" California high school decades earlier. In the years following, he had worked as a driver, plasterer and meat cutter. The father of five had carved out a good blue collar life.

Then liver failure in 2001



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Roman Olivera has been named as the director of the TRIO Student Success Service at BMCC in Pendleton.

changed everything. The idea of possibly dying without graduating from high school niggled at him.

"I didn't want my kids to say their dad didn't have a high school diploma," Olivera remembers thinking.

A liver transplant saved his life, but the idea of finishing school lingered. He enrolled in the GED program at

"I invite students to let me walk through their fears with them. I work with students who are just like I was."

— **Roman Olivera**, director of TRIO Student Success Service at BMCC

Blue Mountain Community College and forced himself to hit the books. The college environment intimidated him at first. The culture was foreign. The idea of taking tests terrified him.

Olivera, now 56, credits tutoring, cajoling and encouragement from success coaches in BMCC's TRIO program. They dragged him along, he said, until a latent love of education kicked in. Eventually, he earned not only his GED, but undergraduate and master's degrees.

Things have come full circle. Olivera is now the director of TRIO Student Success Services — the

program that jumpstarted his affection for the academic life. The TRIO program, fueled by federal grant money, focuses on first-generation, low-income and disabled students who are transitioning to college, and supports them along the way. The name is not an acronym, despite the capitalization, but rather a package of three programs that boost student success.

The father of five won't have to move his office too far, only down the hall. He worked as a success coach in the program for the two previous years. On Tuesday,

See **OLIVERA/8A**

BOARDMAN

First firing successful at gas-fired plant

Planned to be in service by July 31

By **GEORGE PLAIVEN**
East Oregonian

It might be more than \$100 million over budget, but Portland General Electric hopes to have the Carty Generating Station in commercial service before the end of the month.

PGE fired up the turbines at its 440-megawatt natural gas power plant near Boardman for the first time June 21, and is aiming to complete the startup phase by July 31. That was the deadline set by the Oregon Public Utility Commission in its 2016 General Rate Case order for Carty.

But in a recent filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, PGE cautions the service date could be delayed due to continued uncertainty over shoddy work by former contractor Abeinsa, which was terminated from the project last December. Abeinsa is a subsidiary of Abengoa, a Spanish multinational corporation that filed for chapter 15 bankruptcy in the U.S. earlier this year.

After firing Abeinsa, PGE claims it found serious and potentially deadly defects at the plant that could pose severe safety hazards if they weren't fixed. Morrow County records also show 52 liens have been placed on the project by local subcontractors who claim they weren't paid for their work.

All that has caused the total estimated cost for Carty to rise between \$635 and \$670 million, which is well above the \$514 million previously approved by the Oregon PUC. Abengoa has since claimed it was wrongfully terminated by PGE, and the insurance companies that backed a \$145.6 million bond on the project denied liability. PGE is suing those companies — Liberty Mutual Surety and Zurich North America — for upwards of \$180 million in damages.

Unless the bond is recovered, PGE intends to ask for a rate increase to recoup the additional costs for Carty. The PUC already approved an overall rate increase of less than 1 percent for 2016 in anticipation of Carty's completion this year. Most PGE customers live in and around the Portland metro area.

Carty was identified in PGE's long-range

See **CARTY/8A**



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