

Pendleton schools begin testing for lead

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

The Pendleton School District is trying to get a lead on lead testing. Michelle Jones, the district's director of business services, discussed the district's testing efforts at a school board meeting Tuesday. Since Kirby Nagelhout Construction Co. was already running tests on the plumbing systems for Washington and Sherwood Heights elementary schools while completing construction on two new buildings, Jones said the company agreed to test for lead at those two sites.

"We're doing a sampling based on the plumbing throughout the district so we're not sampling every faucet at this point," she said. "We'll determine, based on the results, if we need to test further or if we're good at that point." Jones said she's waiting for results to return from the tests and will eventually release them to the public on the district's website. Lead testing became a hot topic across the state when Portland Public Schools discovered large amounts of lead in its water supply. A recent survey conducted by the *East Oregonian* found that most schools

in Umatilla and Morrow counties did not test for lead. "It's a statewide issue because all the labs are just being bombarded by requests now after the Portland fiasco," board member Dave Krumbain said. "It's a huge issue statewide because everyone wants it done now." According to the Environmental Protection Agency, ingesting lead through drinking water can have adverse health effects, especially for young children. "In children, low levels of exposure have been linked to damage to the central and peripheral nervous

system, learning disabilities, shorter stature, impaired hearing, and impaired formation and function of blood cells," the EPA website states. The district's lead tests are being done even though there is no state requirement. "It's the responsible thing to do," Chairwoman Debbie McBee said. The district does have a mandate to start testing for radon gas, the result of a bill passed by the Legislature in 2015. Jones said the district has to submit a radon testing plan to the state by Sept. 1 with the expectation to start regular testing in 2021.

With the district still needing to select a laboratory to run the tests, which take two to seven days to complete, Jones said the earliest the district could test for radon is winter break. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 20,000 lung cancer deaths per year are attributed to radon gas. Jones said the district will also make the results of the radon testing available to the public. Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

ATHENA Caledonian Games weaves in Scottish traditions

East Oregonian

Marjorie Warren, a native of Scotland, tartan expert, teacher, lecturer and award winning tartan designer, will share about the craft during the 2016 Athena Caledonian Games.

In addition to the athletic competitions, the event highlights Scottish traditions and culture with Highland dancing, Celtic harp, bagpipe bands, clan tents, storytelling and good food. It begins Friday with the Ceilidh Dinner and candle-lighting ceremony and continues through Sunday. Activities take place in and around Athena City Park.

The Athena Caledonia Games is creating a focus on fiber arts and weaving during this year's event. Weavers and fiber artists will enjoy the Caledonian Quilt Show called a Quilt Turning. Saturday viewings are at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and Sunday (TBA) in the cafeteria at Athena Elementary School. Of special interest is a small quilt from Athena made of Pendleton wool during World War II.

Warren, who resides in North Carolina, researches ancient tartans. She has been commissioned to produce new tartans for the Governor's Mansion in North Carolina, the ambassador to Great Britain and for the Rev. Billy Graham. She will demonstrate



EO file photo

Mike Moore of Hood River competes in the caber toss at the 2016 Caledonian Games in Athena. This year's event begins Friday and runs through the weekend.

tartan-weaving techniques. In addition, Warren will have her 18th century Scottish costumes on hand to share about.

Beginners, masters and professionals will compete in Saturday's athletic competitions, which begin with registration at 11:30 a.m. at the Big Green Tent. Featuring events of Scottish origin, the games include the sheaf toss, the weight toss, Scottish hammer, stone put and the caber toss. Instructions are given and the competitor has three tries on most events.

Athena native Alan Wernsing has worked with

the event for years to build a super-mega Scottish athletic competition. Up to 50 athletes will come from around the Pacific Northwest to compete. Everyone is invited to try a hand at the games.

Bagpipe bands are a highlight of Athena Caledonian Games, said Sue Friese, president of the event. Bands are featured during the day in the park and the vendor's area, but they are beautiful on the field for the annual Caledonian Tattoo, which is Saturday at 6:30 p.m. A tattoo in the English tradition is a military review. They are colorful and

totally in step with precision drill, Friese said. Featured bagpipe bands are Weston McEwen Pipes and Drums from Athena, Boise Highlanders from Boise and Columbia Regional Pipe Band from the Tri-Cities.

"The rendition of 'Amazing Grace' on the field is guaranteed a teardrop from the eye," Friese said. "These bands are something to see."

For more information, including a full schedule, visit www.athenacaledoniangames.org. For questions, contact Sue Friese at 541-566-3880 or athenacaledoniangames@gmail.com.

Pendleton hires new UAS range manager

Has 29 years of experience with aerospace company

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Pendleton has a new man at the helm of its unmanned aerial systems range.

Steve Chrisman, airport manager and economic development director, introduced Darryl Abling as the airport's new range manager at a city council meeting Tuesday.

The Pendleton UAS Range has been without a full-time manager since John Stevens left to become the chief operating officer of SOAR Oregon, a lobbying group that supports the state's three test ranges.

Abling comes to Pendleton from Southern California, where he worked for Northrup Grumman, a defense contractor and aerospace company.

During his 29 years with Northrup Grumman, Abling helped test manned and unmanned aircraft for the U.S. Navy, including the X47, a 40,000-pound drone that runs operations on aircraft carriers.

Abling decided to retire and move to Pendleton when the Navy made the decision to move its operations with Northrup Grumman to Maryland.

"I'm bringing a pretty good amount of experience to the team," he said.

Chrisman continued to plug some of the advances the Pendleton UAS Range, including the Oregon UAS Future Farm, which specifically tests agricultural operations.

Chrisman said the Future Farm is currently running four operations over eight crops and will hold a series of demonstrations Aug. 18 and 19.

Chrisman also reported that the UAS range just

received authorization from the Federal Aviation Administration to hold operations up to 9,999 feet in the air over 14,000 square miles in northeastern Oregon.

Other actions taken by the council include:

- The council unanimously approved an expansion of the Wood Stove Replacement Loan Program, which will now serve people who live up to three miles outside city limits.

The program offers people a no-interest loan of up to \$3,500 to replace wood stoves with a heating system compliant with the Environmental Protection Agency.

- The council voted 6-1 to incorporate a transportation systems plan update into the unified development code, with Councilor Tom Young voting against and Councilor Becky Marks absent.

The plan update provides suggestions for possible sidewalk, bike path and pedestrian path improvements and is a requirement for state grants.

Young said some aspects of the plan would be overly restrictive to business owners.

- The council approved a resolution 6-0 that will allow the city to acquire an "E-commerce" designation from Business Oregon.

The designation acts as an expansion of the city's enterprise zone tax abatements for industrial businesses to include companies that do much of their business online, like data centers and distribution centers.

Councilor Paul Chalmers abstained from the vote, saying he had enterprise zone responsibilities related to his job as the Umatilla County assessment and taxation director.

Contact Antonio Sierra at asierra@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0836.

Program provides small grants for watershed projects

PENDLETON — Funding is available for Umatilla County landowners looking to prevent erosion along stream banks, increase irrigation efficiency or help fish passage.

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Small Grant Program provides up to \$10,000 in state lottery funds for individual projects that help restore watersheds to healthy conditions.

Applications will be accepted July 18-29 through the Umatilla Soil and Water Conservation District.

The grants require a 25 percent match from the landowner, which can be cash or in-kind. OWEB also has a Large Grant Program that covers projects with higher costs.

For more information or applications, contact the Umatilla SWCD at 541-278-8049 ext. 138.

Family, friends invited to Krebs' 90th birthday

IONE — A 90th birthday open house is planned for Henry Krebs.

Family and friends are invited to come and celebrate with Krebs. The event is Sunday from 1-5 p.m. at the American Legion Hall, 325 W. Second St., Ione.

Those unable to attend can send cards to Henry Krebs, P.O. Box 336, Ione, OR 97843. For more information, call 541-422-7108.

Rhythmic Mode sets car wash fundraiser

PENDLETON — The Rhythmic Mode dance team

is eager to help get your car sparkling clean.

A fundraising car wash is planned Saturday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Dave's Chevron, 220 S.W. 12th St., Pendleton. Money will help support the team.

For more information, call Joni Sirovatka at 541-377-1333.

Library sponsors book walk

PENDLETON — Book lovers are invited to Walk a Mile with Books.

Sponsored by the Pendleton Public Library, the event is Monday from 8:15-9:15, beginning in the library parking lot, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave. The public is

invited to stroll along the River Parkway with others and talk about books. Water will be provided.

For more information, call 541-966-0380.

Youth trip features carousel rides, Chuck E. Cheese

PENDLETON — Youths ages 8-13 are invited to take a trip to the Carousel of Dreams and Chuck E. Cheese.

Participants will enjoy carousel rides, pizza and games during the Friday Trip sponsored by Pendleton Parks & Recreation. Those attending will depart Friday, July 15 at 9:30 a.m. from the Pendleton Recreation

Center. The anticipated time of return is 3:45 p.m. The registration fee of \$20, which includes carousel rides, two slices of pizza, soda and 26 game tokens, is due by Tuesday.

To register, visit www.pendletonparksandrec.com or stop by the parks office, 865 Tutuilla Road. For more information, call 541-276-8100.

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.