



EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2015 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

The Zac Brown Band performs at the Pendleton Whisky Music Fest on Saturday at the Round-Up Grounds.

Fans flock to fest

Zac Brown Band performs at first Pendleton Whisky Music Fest

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

Doug Corey and Andy McAnally looked simultaneously wired and tired.

The men sat in the Pendleton Round-Up's South Grandstand Friday afternoon watching their brainchild come to life — the first-ever Pendleton Whisky Music Fest, which would kick off the next day. As they looked on, a guy in cargo shorts unloaded fencing from a Penske truck and a couple dozen other workers erected the stage, a semi-truck that unfolded Transform-er-style. Five generators sat on trailers

ready to unleash their power.

Corey and McAnally hatched the idea of a major music festival about two years ago and planned the event for months. Now it was coming to life and they seemed cautiously optimistic about the turnout. Ticket sales were going well. The weather forecast looked good.

After party

Organizers tally what went right, wrong to consider next year.
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“We’re expecting a large crowd,” Corey said.

Festival-goers would hear openers Jackson Michelson and Drake White late Saturday afternoon before the Zac Brown Band took the stage that evening.

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Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Zac Brown performs at the first-ever Pendleton Whisky Music Fest on Saturday at the Round-Up Grounds.

Insurers pull out, premiums to go up

Umatilla County residents face more limited choices for health insurance

By **ALEXA LOUGEE**
East Oregonian

Umatilla County citizens will have fewer health insurance carriers to choose from in 2017, and premiums will increase.

Four of the seven companies that offered individual coverage to Umatilla County citizens this year announced they are pulling out of the county next year, citing insufficient payments by the federal government to cover losses from high-risk customers.

Bridgespan and Moda will continue to offer individual coverage plans within the health insurance marketplace. People who get coverage through the marketplace may be eligible for tax credits to offset their premium costs.

HealthNet also will continue to offer individual coverage in Umatilla County, but tax credits will not be available to those subscribers.

In addition to fewer choices, Umatilla County faces significant rate increases for their premiums. In general, Oregon classifies insurance plans in three categories — bronze, silver and gold — depending on what percentage of medical costs the plan covers. A bronze plan covers approximately 60 percent of medical costs, silver covers 70 percent and gold covers about 80 percent.

For a single, 40-year-old, non-tobacco user in Umatilla County on a silver plan, Bridgespan premiums will go up 23 percent in 2017. Moda Health premiums will rise 32 percent. HealthNet’s individual premium rates will increase one percent, though HealthNet traditionally has very few subscribers in Umatilla County.

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Corporate sales tax wouldn't boost high school graduation measure

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — A proposed corporate sales tax that would raise \$3 billion a year in new revenue would have little to no effect on the amount of funding earmarked to high school graduation programs under Initiative Petition 65.

IP 65, sponsored by the Oregonians for High School

Success campaign, dedicates an average of \$800 in new state revenue per year to each high school pupil for dropout prevention, career technical education and college readiness programs.

The measure includes a safety valve that allows for a smaller prorated allocation when new state funding falls below \$1.5 billion in a particular year, but there is no mechanism for increasing the per-student allocation above an average of \$800, said Ted Nesbitt, an adviser for the campaign and former chief of staff for Gov. Ted Kulongoski, who was a chief petitioner for the graduation measure.

Revenue from the corporate sales tax measure, Initiative Petition 28, could help keep revenue above that \$1.5 billion threshold, but it would not bring additional revenue for the high school graduation programs, said Peter Zuckerman, a spokesman for the IP 65 campaign.

If passed, IP 65 would allocate an estimated \$147 million in

Boost for districts under IP 65

District	ADMw	Estimate
Hermiston	1,818	\$1,227,926
Pendleton	1,160	\$783,481
Morrow	896	\$605,439
Milton-Freewater	672	\$454,178
Umatilla	532	\$359,633

* High school weighted average daily membership, as calculated by the Oregon Department of Education. SOURCE: ECONorthwest

2017-18 for programs aimed at boosting high school graduation.

A study by economic consulting firm ECONorthwest has parsed out how much money each of the state’s 88 school districts would receive of that amount.

Hermiston School District would receive \$1.23 million next year, under the measure, Pendleton School District would bring in \$783,481 and Morrow County School District would add \$605,439. Portland Public Schools, the largest district in the state, would receive about \$10.2 million.

High schools would be

required to submit a plan to the Oregon Department of Education for how to use the money to build programs for dropout prevention and career and college-readiness programs.

Only about 74 percent of students in Oregon graduate from high school in four years, one of the lowest rates in the nation.

Andrew Dyke, a researcher at ECONorthwest, said it’s unclear how the measure would directly impact the state’s graduation rate. Researchers from the firm plan to examine how the measure would affect six Oregon school districts by looking at how the schools plan to use the money, what programs already are in place and the existing graduation rate, Dyke said.

The Oregon Education Association is not supporting IP 65 but has not organized an opposition campaign against it. Instead, OEA is campaigning for passage of IP 28 as an avenue for boosting funding for schools.

ARLINGTON

Ex-con gets 22 years in kidnapping

East Oregonian

A Tennessee man was sentenced Friday to 22 years and four months in prison for a kidnapping and sexual assault near Arlington last summer.

William Cooter, 46, from Greenville, Tennessee, pleaded guilty in the Gilliam County Circuit Court to the crimes of kidnapping in the first degree, attempted rape, sodomy in the first degree, unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, assault in the fourth degree, menacing and giving false information to a peace officer.



Cooter

According to a news release from the Gilliam County District Attorney’s office, Cooter used a large rock to smash through the rear window of a car where a woman was sleeping after she parked at the Arlington Mall to rest during a trip from Portland to Montana. He entered the car, bound and

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