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PENDLETON ROUND-UP

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EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, AUGUST 12, 2016

140th Year, No. 215

WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Your Weekend



- Creedence Clearwater Revisited at the fair
- Pendleton Rock & Roll Camp concert Friday
- First Foods Festival Saturday in Mission

For times and places see Coming Events, 6A

Catch a movie



"Pete's Dragon"

For showtime, Page 5A

Weekend Weather

Fri	Sat	Sun
95/62	99/65	96/61

Two airlines vie to serve Pendleton airport

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

SeaPort Airlines is trying to weather a possible sea change at Pendleton's Eastern Oregon Regional Airport.

With SeaPort's Essential Air Service contract with the federal government expiring at the end of the year, SeaPort and a competitor gave bid presentations to the Airport Commission and other local officials Wednesday.

The city needs to recommend a bid to the U.S. Department of Transportation by Aug. 24, which will determine whether the city will continue with the beleaguered SeaPort or the upstart Boutique Air.

Both airlines offer similar packages to the airport — 21 round trips per week from Pendleton to Portland with options to trade some or all of the trips for direct flights to Seattle.

But the two bidders covered different themes when discussing what they

See AIRPORT/12A

'Safety comes first'



Carnival workers assemble the Ferris wheel on Thursday at the Umatilla County Fair in Hermiston.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Fair rides rigorously inspected and insured

By ALEXA LOUGEE
East Oregonian

Operating a carnival is not all fun and games.

Davis Amusement Cascadia has been bringing amusement rides to the Umatilla County Fair for over 35 years as one of its many stops in the West.

Kathy Davis, booking agent with the company, has been coming with the carnival for most of those years. She said they are happy to provide fun opportunities for the community, but for her company "safety comes first."

The company and its rides must meet annual requirements to be issued a state operating permit. Those requirements include an application with an attached inspection report and proof of insurance. That inspection is done by representatives of the insurance companies that provide coverage to the amusement ride company. Inspections must be current, having been done within 90 days of the permit application.

Minimum insurance requirements in Oregon require at least \$1 million in loss or injury coverage for every person who rides or comes in contact with the ride.

Aside from state requirements, Davis Amusement has its own safety protocols employees are expected to follow. The manufacturer of each ride includes a checklist of things to check daily, weekly and monthly. Each morning the carnival's mobile office sends out a clipboard to each ride operator with its attached inspection checklist. An hour before rides open to the public, the ride operator is supposed to run the ride, check it, inspect seat belts

See CARNIVAL/12A

Growing pains at fairgrounds could be eased by EOTEC

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The popularity of the Umatilla County Fair has the fairgrounds bursting at the seams each August, but some see a light at the end of the tunnel with the construction of the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center.

The project on Airport Road promises 55 acres of new buildings and infrastructure, parking galore and 39 acres to grow on. For this year, however, the fair is still experiencing growing pains at its location in the center of Hermiston.

"All the plumbing and sewer and electrical is so old, it's been band-aided together," fair manager Don Slone said.

He said he is looking forward to infrastructure that doesn't require constant intervention and creative solutions. Another piece he said everyone is looking forward to is on-site parking. Currently most fairgoers and volunteers have to fight for parking on Orchard Avenue, Highland Avenue and side streets for blocks in



The Umatilla County Fair Court maneuvers through one of the overnight camping areas on their golf cart Thursday at the Umatilla County Fairgrounds in Hermiston.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

every direction.

"It's a little awkward for a lot of the homeowners," he said.

Jillian and Corbet Weimer know about that. They live on Orchard

across from the fairgrounds. They said while they support the fair and wouldn't presume to have it shut

See EOTEC/12A

INSIDER SPEAKS OUT

Culture, mismanagement doomed Cover Oregon

By NICK BUDNICK
Capital Bureau

Take a week off, wade through thousands of pages of court filings in Oregon's long-running court battle with software giant Oracle, and you still won't have the real story of how Cover Oregon failed and wasted more than \$300 million, according to Tom Walsh, a longtime technology specialist and veteran of the project.

Hundreds of thousands if not millions of words have been written about Cover Oregon in the two years since the state project to enroll Oregonians in ObamaCare imploded. However, an insider's account has never been published until now. Other top consultants and former managers have routinely declined to comment, often citing the pending litigation.



Jamie Valdez/Pamplin Media Group

Tom Walsh, a veteran IT troubleshooter who worked on the inside of the Cover Oregon project, says the full story of the debacle has never been told.

But Walsh is ready to speak out because of continued public confusion around Cover Oregon.

"I think people should understand why it failed," Walsh says matter of factly, given how many people

worked so hard on the ambitious project, and how much was spent.

He'd also like to prevent another debacle when the state launches its next big-ticket, taxpayer-funded IT projects.

"I don't think Oregon knows that it (has) a problem."

— Tom Walsh
Cover Oregon IT contractor

"I don't think Oregon knows that it (has) a problem," Walsh says. Hint: it has to do with management.

Both sides in the ongoing litigation have struggled to explain the massive scope of the Cover Oregon failure, which came despite a lengthy head start and extra funding from the federal government.

The reality, according to Walsh? Compared to other large projects, "It should have been easy."

One of the roving breed

of professional consultants who bounce from state to state for months or years at a time, Walsh is typically the top-dog "systems analyst" who either leads or troubleshoots large IT project design or is paid to watchdog those who do, says Shari Benkiel, a longtime IT consultant who has worked with Walsh on seven large projects in five states. "He is usually the first person I call" to fill that role, she says. "I call him 'The Borderline Genius,'" she adds, because of his insights into complex health care technology projects.

With a Ph.D. in economics, and a resume that includes IT expertise as well as a stint as head of Medicaid for the state of Illinois, Walsh brings a level of technical, financial and management

See COVER/10A



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