

Measure 97
worries health
care providers
NORTHWEST/2A

BUCKS OFF
TO ROCKY
START
SOCCER/1B



NEW STORE
TO OPEN
ON MAIN
PENDLETON/3A

EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2016

140th Year, No. 230 WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar

Your Weekend



- New Jackson Sundown & Happy Canyon exhibit
- Farmers Markets around the region
- Cello & violin concert at Pendleton arts center

For times and places see Coming Events, 3A

Weekend Weather

Fri	Sat	Sun
72/46	70/46	71/51

Watch a game

Hermiston vs Union (WA)
Friday, 7 p.m., at Hermiston

Pendleton vs. La Grande
Friday, 7 p.m., at La Grande

Hanjin
bankruptcy
causes global
shipping chaos,
retail fears

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The bankruptcy of the Hanjin shipping line has thrown ports and retailers around the world into confusion, with giant container ships marooned and merchants worrying whether tons of goods will reach their shelves.

The South Korean giant filed for bankruptcy protection on Wednesday and stopped accepting new cargo. With its assets being frozen, ships from China to Canada found themselves refused permission to offload or take aboard containers because there were no guarantees that tugboat pilots or stevedores would be paid.

“Hanjin called us and said: ‘We’re going bankrupt and we can’t pay any bills — so don’t bother asking,’” said J. Kip Louttit, executive director of the Marine Exchange of Southern California, which provides traffic control for

See HANJIN/10A



Veteran Joe DeMarsh traveled to Normandy, France, with his wife, Susan, to see their grandson take part in the 72nd anniversary of the D-Day invasion last June. Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A royal welcome

WWII veteran honored during Normandy trip

By WILL DENNER
East Oregonian

Joe and Susan DeMarsh have traveled all over the world, but their most recent journey — a spur of the moment decision — turned out to be among their most memorable.

In June, they were having coffee at their Poverty Flat home with son-in-law Ross Childs when they heard from their grandson, who is also named Ross. As a paratrooper in the U.S. Army, the younger Ross announced that he would be a lead jumper in the 72nd Anniversary of World War II’s Normandy landings — best known as D-Day — that took place June 6, 1944.

“We just said, ‘Wouldn’t that be something to go see?’” Joe said.

Two days later, Joe and Susan boarded a plane headed for Paris to surprise their grandson. What followed, however, the two couldn’t have expected.

Behind the scenes, Joe and



Joe DeMarsh with his grandson, Ross Childs, a U.S. Army paratrooper, in Normandy, France during the 72nd anniversary of D-Day. Courtesy of Susan DeMarsh

Susan’s daughter, Sam Childs, arranged for two sergeants to meet them in Sainte-Mere-Eglise, a commune in the province of Normandy on France’s northwest coast. The sergeants escorted them

See VETERAN/10A

“We’ve had a very adventuresome life ... but to step into something like that was completely different.” — Joe DeMarsh, WWII veteran

HERMISTON

‘Sweet’ treats a local specialty

Hermiston sweet onions hit stores for Labor Day

By GEORGE PLAVEN
East Oregonian

A candy wrapper might seem like an odd logo for onions, but Stefan Matheny said it does the trick for Hermiston Sweets.

Matheny, director of sales for River Point Farms in Hermiston, said the company has marketed locally grown sweet onions for 20 years. With harvest now in full swing, the farm is scrambling to package and fill orders in time for Labor Day Weekend.

Hermiston is already famous for growing another kind of sweet treat — watermelons — but Matheny said Hermiston Sweets have also become well known among Northwest retailers and customers.

“I think the Hermiston Sweet is pretty versatile,” Matheny said. “It can go on a hamburger, fresh cut, or it also sautés very well.”

It’s that kind of versatility that allows Hermiston Sweets to fetch a premium price on the market. Sweet onions are distinguished by



Several varieties of onions await n bins for processing and packaging at the River Point Farm fresh pack plant near Hermiston. Staff photo by Gary L. West

their mild pungency, as measured by the amount of pyruvic acid in the produce. That’s the chemical that makes people’s eyes sting and water.

While Hermiston Sweets are only a small percentage of business at River Point Farms, Matheny said it’s proven to be a valuable specialty market. Hermiston Sweets can be found at a number of regional and national chains, including Safeway, Costco and Fred Meyer.

“Certainly, the Columbia Basin as a whole is well-known for quality,” Matheny said. “It’s a good area for growing onions.”

River Point Farms is the largest onion producer in the country, farming more than 6,000 acres around the region. Sweet onions

See ONIONS/10A

PENDLETON

Feds reject city’s EAS objection

Can file a waiver petition to try to keep subsidy

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The city of Pendleton has one last option to retain its Essential Air Service subsidy, the federal grant that allows Eastern Oregon Regional Airport to fly commercial flights out of the city.

On Monday, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the agency that oversees the EAS program, shook off Pendleton’s most recent challenge to the government’s decision to cut the subsidy. But Pendleton will have one more chance to hold onto the subsidy by petitioning for a waiver.

In May, the DOT wrote an order tentatively stripping Pendleton and 21 other EAS communities of their subsidy because they failed to stay under the \$200 per passenger cap that the department requires.

By dividing the airport’s number of boardings by its annual subsidy, the DOT determined that the subsidy was covering \$213 per passenger.

In its objection, the city argued that the airport shouldn’t be subject to the cap because Pendleton and Portland are separated by more than 210 miles, a distance that would lift the cap.

The city cited an Oregon Department of Transportation measurement that put the distance between the Pendleton and Portland airports at 211 miles instead of the federal DOT’s 205-mile measurement.

Despite hiring a Washington D.C. law firm through SeaPort Airlines, the company that has been providing Pendleton air service for the past several years, the city couldn’t convince the DOT to budge from its initial ruling.

In the DOT’s order rejecting Pendleton’s objection, the department states that its method of measurement is consistent with the way the Federal Highway Administration displays distances on highway signs.

According to the order, Pendleton has until Sept. 28 to file a waiver petition with the DOT explaining why the airport could not clear the per passenger subsidy cap.

Pendleton Airport Manager Steve Chrisman did not return requests for comment as of press time. But in a previous interview, he said the city could argue in a waiver petition that the extenuating circumstances of a nationwide pilot shortage and SeaPort’s bankruptcy led to canceled flights and fewer boardings.

After the city filed the objection, the Pendleton City Council selected Boutique Air as its new EAS provider for 2017-2018, but the San Francisco airline won’t be able to take over for SeaPort until the DOT issues a contract.

SeaPort’s current contract runs through the end of the year. But if the city files a waiver petition, the DOT order states that SeaPort will continue to provide flights until further notice.

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