

BRIEFLY

Bid approved to repave downtown parking lots

PENDLETON — Streets aren't the only paving project the city is paying for this summer.

The Pendleton Development Commission and Pendleton City Council, two governing bodies that share the same members, approved a budget amendment and a bid package for repaving the J.C. Penney parking lot at the corner of Southeast Byers Avenue and Southeast First Street and the Crabby's Underground Saloon & Dance Hall lot between Court and Dorion avenues on Southwest First Street.

The city owns the entirety of the J.C. Penney lot but only about two-thirds of the Crabby's lot, said city engineer Tim Simons.

Since the city plans to pave only the portion it owns, Simons said staff asked the owner of the other third, Ted Betz, if he wanted to pave his part of the parking lot, which he declined.

Although the commission agreed to allocate \$67,686 toward the parking lots in April, Simons said the lowest bid from Pioneer Construction came in at \$91,915.

Because of the significant difference between the budgeted amount and the actual price, the members of the commission agreed to put the \$67,686 toward the parking lots before reconvening as the city council and paying off the rest of the balance from the city's street fund.

Having critiqued the staff for underestimating the cost, councilor Tom Young was the only vote against the amendment and the bid.

Open house asks for ideas on \$1.25M festival street

HERMISTON — Residents who want input on a new festival street in downtown Hermiston are invited to an open house on Oct. 10.

The event will kick off the planning and design of the \$1.25 million project, which will run along Northeast Second Street in front of city hall from Main Street to the planned Harkenrider Center. Cities use "festival streets" as event spaces that are open to vehicle traffic during normal hours, but can easily be blocked off and converted into a public gathering space for events such as the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival.

The Hermiston Urban Renewal Agency and a citizen advisory committee chosen by the city plan to work over the next 10 to 12 months designing the project, with construction beginning in the fall of 2017.

The open house on Oct. 10 at 6 p.m. at city hall, 180 N.E. Second St., will feature refreshments and entertainment as well as presentations by HURA, Greenworks and Anderson Perry & Associates. Attendees will be encouraged to provide ideas for the new event space.

Restrictions lifted on national forests

PENDLETON — Public use restrictions pertaining to chainsaws, smoking and off-road vehicle travel were lifted Wednesday on the Umatilla and Wallowa-Whitman national forests.

Seasonal campfire restrictions will remain in place through Oct. 31. These limit campfires to fire pits surrounded by dirt, rock or commercial rings, with all flammable material cleared within 3 feet. Fires must be tended at all times and completely extinguished prior to leaving.

Campfire restrictions may not apply in designated wilderness areas and recreation sites. However, the potential for wildfires still exists despite cooler weather.

The Blue Mountain Interagency Dispatch Center has recorded 123 total fires in 2016, 68 of which were human-caused, burning 29,870 acres.

Woman killed in Edwards Road crash

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Running a stop sign turned fatal Tuesday night near Stanfield when a two-vehicle crash killed a Umatilla woman and injured her male passenger.

Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan said Bori Sandoval, 55, and Raul Frias Enriquez, 58, both of Umatilla, were in a 2005 blue Chevrolet Impala heading south on

South Edwards Road about 7:45 p.m. Tuesday. Sandoval was the driver, Rowan said, and did not stop for the stop sign at the intersection of East Feedville Road.

That was when Dustin Scott, 45, of Stanfield, was going west on Feedville in a 2009 Ford pickup, Rowan said, and "essentially T-boned" the Impala.

Rowan said the first 9-1-1 call came in soon after and Umatilla County Fire District 1 responded.

Enriquez was able to get out of the car, Rowan said, and an ambulance took him to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston. From there, an air ambulance flew him to Legacy Emanuel Medical Center, Portland.

Sandoval died at the scene, Rowan said.

Scott had a broken knee and cuts and bruises, according to the sheriff's department.

The crash shut down both roads for about 15-20 minutes, Rowan

said, then responders opened one lane on each road. Emergency workers remained at the scene until 12:30 a.m. Wednesday.

The intersection has stop signs on South Edwards Road but not Feedville and has been the site of other bad wrecks and deadly crashes. Rowan said the sheriff's office will review the intersection to consider adding more signs or other features to make the intersection safer.

PENDLETON



Mary Duncan, who starred in the silent film "City Girl," was an honorary queen of the 1928 Pendleton Round-Up. The Oregon East Symphony season-opener features the film with a live soundtrack performance Oct. 1 at the Vert Auditorium in Pendleton.

Symphony season opens with live soundtrack to silent film

'City Girl' features 1928 honorary Round-Up queen

East Oregonian

A live soundtrack set to a silent film shot in Umatilla County is featured during the 2016-17 season-opener of the Oregon East Symphony.

In 1928, German film director F.W. Murnau, best known for his expressionist horror masterpiece "Nosferatu," began filming "City Girl" in Umatilla County. One of the lead stars was silent film actress Mary Duncan, who was named an honorary queen of the 1928 Pendleton Round-Up.

The symphony, in collaboration with the La Grande-based Eastern Oregon Film Festival, will perform a live soundtrack to a screening of the film Saturday, Oct. 1 at 7:30 p.m. at the Vert Auditorium, 480 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Tickets are

\$20 for adults, \$15 for students and seniors or \$45 for a family.

Murnau and his film crew, along with Duncan and fellow lead actor Charles Farrell, were housed in a bungalow on Byers Avenue in Pendleton while filming external shots around Athena. The film was released in 1930 after being heavily edited by the film's distributor, Fox Film Corporation. A version close to Murnau's final cut was discovered in 1970, according to a press release from J.D. Kindle, OES executive director.

"City Girl" follows an innocent farmer's son Lem who, during a brief stay in Chicago, falls for and weds Kate, a tough but lonely waitress.

Upon bringing her home at the start of harvest time, the honeymoon soon turns into a claustrophobic struggle as they contend with the bitter scorn of his father and the invasive, leering jealousy of the farm's laboring community.

In 2009, Pacific Northwest composer John Paul, music department chairman and associate professor at Pacific Lutheran University, received a Career Opportunity Grant from the Oregon Arts Commission to compose an original score to "City Girl." It is arranged for a small ensemble comprised of violin, viola, cello and clarinet, and uses composers Alban Berg, Kurt Weill, Bela Bartok and Aaron Copland as sources of inspiration. "City Girl," set to John Paul's score, received its debut screening at Marylhurst University as part of the Oregon Sesquicentennial Film Festival.

For more information or to purchase individual or season tickets, call 541-276-0320, stop by the symphony office, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton, or visit www.oregoneastsymphony.org. In addition, individual tickets are available at Pendleton Art + Frame, 28 S.W. Court Ave.

Oregon lawmakers discuss groundwater problems

Groundwater depletion likely to spark proposals

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Groundwater depletion problems in Oregon discussed during a recent legislative hearing in Salem potentially foreshadow policy proposals during the upcoming 2017 legislative session.

While participants in the "legislative days" informational session did not address the recent newspaper series by name, the Oregonian's "Draining Oregon" package obviously loomed over the hearing.

Printed stacks of the series, which was printed last month, sat on a table near the entrance during the Sept. 21 hearing.

The newspaper's allegations that state regulators are allowing farmers to over-pump groundwater were also clearly on the minds of lawmakers on the House Interim Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use and Water — as well as those of Oregon Water Resources



An irrigation pivot in Eastern Oregon. Legislators will likely look at groundwater pumping issues in the next session in January.

Department staff called to testify.

Committee chair Brian Clem, D-Salem, said the topic will likely be a source of conversations during the next series of "legislative days" in November and during next year's legislative session.

To avoid "brutal neighbor-on-neighbor warfare," lawmakers should try to find a collaborative approach for water conservation, he said.

With the caveat that he didn't want to attack journalists who "buy ink by the barrel," Clem said he was concerned about loaded terms that imply farmers are

greedy and wasteful.

"Farmers don't become farmers to become rich," he said. "There are much easier ways of getting rich."

The basic thesis of "Draining Oregon" was that OWRD had insufficient information about groundwater levels across much of the state but nonetheless freely allowed well drilling, depleting aquifers.

Tom Byler, OWRD's director, conceded that over-pumping in past decades had led to several critical groundwater areas across the state, which led the agency to restrict uses.

"We haven't done as

good a job as we should on that item," he said.

Byler said groundwater is tough to manage given the complex geology of underground aquifers and because farmers have become more reliant on this irrigation source when surface waters dwindle during the dry months.

Since 1955, when legislators passed a law requiring groundwater regulations, the number of wells across the state has increased from 4,660 to 256,800, said Justin Iverson, groundwater section manager for OWRD.

Agricultural wells — which require permitting — make up roughly 10 percent of the total number, but they represent about 90 percent of total groundwater usage in Oregon, Iverson said.

While domestic users must only report the location of new wells, drillers of agricultural wells must also provide information about water levels and irrigators must report their usage, he said.

OWRD also monitors groundwater with more than 1,200 observation wells, Iverson said.

Rep. Ken Helm, questioned whether water

regulators were "driving in the dark" in regard to well-drilling and the effects of climate change on water availability.

"Does that change the paradigm under which we should be operating?" Helm said.

He also asked if the OWRD is simply short of funding to robustly study groundwater, or if policy changes are also needed.

Byler replied that the agency already has many regulatory tools but is always open to looking at new ones.

UMATILLA

Health and wellness town hall on its way

East Oregonian

Agencies across Umatilla and Morrow counties are getting together to host a town hall they hope will spark efforts to increase health and wellness.

The Umatilla Learning Connection Town Hall will be Oct. 14 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Umatilla High School.

According to a news release from Umatilla School District, the gathering will be based on the premise that healthy students are better learners and "will focus on strengthening local networks, stimulating action and engaging the community in supporting the link between health and education."

"I think every one of us wants to help improve our schools and neighborhoods, our families and ourselves," Umatilla superintendent Heidi Sipe said in a statement, "but we aren't quite sure where to start. This is an opportunity to actually step up and make a positive difference collectively, for our community and by our community."

A similar event was held in Tillamook by the Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council and prompted the Tillamook County Commission to declare 2016 a "Year of Wellness." Umatilla's town hall will feature presentations and discussion on research, success stories and local needs. Participants will be asked to commit to school wellness with time and resources during the next school year.

Participants will include local educators, farmers, city officials, the Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council, Umatilla School District, Umatilla County, OSU Extension SNAP-Ed, InterMountain Education Service District, Good Shepherd Health Care System, Umatilla-Morrow Head Start and Oregon Department of Education.

The event is free but space is limited and participants must RSVP to Angie Treadwell by Oct. 7 at angie.treadwell@oregonstate.edu or 541-567-8321. Lunch will be provided. For more information contact Rikkilyn Larsen at larsenr@umatillasd.

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