



EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

MILTON-FREEWATER



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Mike Cleveland of Adams plays a round of golf Tuesday at the Milton-Freewater Municipal Golf Course.

Study uses 'eDNA' in water to track fish

Research could extend to northeast Oregon

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

The Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife is launching a pilot study that could lead to a cheaper and more efficient way of monitoring fish populations across the state.

Rather than trapping and physically handling fish — which the agency says is expensive and labor-intensive — researchers are looking into the millions of strands of DNA released naturally into lakes and streams to determine the abundance of certain species.

All living organisms release DNA into their environment, whether by their skin, hair, mucus or feces. This “eDNA” is unique to each species, and Shaun Clements, research scientist with ODFW in Corvallis, said it could be used to answer critical questions about the distribution of fish.

“The concept of being able to capture DNA from the water has been around for a while,” Clements said. “Pretty much everything we’ve done to date is taking samples and seeing what was there. What we’re doing now is figuring out what that all means.”

ODFW has previously used eDNA to detect bull trout in Odell Lake and the John Day Basin, according to Clements. The technique came in handy, he said, since bull trout tend to be nocturnal, more secretive and difficult to find.

But simply finding eDNA for a particular type of fish doesn’t give biologists enough information. Clements said they need to learn more about how the material travels in water to ensure the fish are actually present, and the result isn’t a false positive.

“Because we don’t actually put our hands on the critter, we need to figure out what a positive detection of eDNA really means,” Clements said.

That’s where the pilot project comes in. Essentially, Clements said they are creating custom eDNA,

“I think the potential for cost savings here is very big. We’re a very labor-intensive agency, and a lot of that could be replaced with eDNA sampling.”

— **Shaun Clements**, research scientist with ODFW in Corvallis

See GOLF/10A

See eDNA/10A

Short on the green

Fewer golfers, aging facilities put financial strain on course

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

The Milton-Freewater Municipal Golf Course has landed in the rough and the city council is looking for the right club to get it out.

The Milton-Freewater City Council discussed the 18-hole course at a work session Monday, where course manager George Gillette and Public Works Superintendent Dave Bradshaw explained the problems facing the links.

Originally opened in 1973, the course now has crumbling cart paths, aging equipment and a lack of access for disabled people at the clubhouse, among other issues.

Staff can’t make those repairs or improvements because the course has been operating at a deficit in recent years, costing \$187,587 to operate during the 2015-2016 fiscal year while only taking in \$168,684.

The course hit a peak in 1998 when golfers played 28,000 rounds, but last year golfer’s played only about half that.

Although he was happy to report that he’s seen more players between 20-40 years old this year, Gillette said golfers



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Milton-Freewater Municipal Golf Course has seen a steady decline in use since its peak in 1998.

who play at Milton-Freewater have generally trended older.

“Unfortunately, most of the people that played (in the 1990s) now reside on the east side overlooking the golf course,” he said, referring to the town cemetery.

“Quite honestly, that’s where a lot of those players ended up.”

To help revitalize the golf course, Gillette put together a “wish list” of improvements, including a new informational center, sales software, cart path

realignment, a more frequent grass maintenance schedule and a larger maintenance staff.

Gillette said the course might not recapture the popularity it

PENDLETON

Portland artist revamps skylight

Reception will be held Saturday at Christian Science building

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Pendleton’s Christian Science building may no longer hold religious services, but it still has the ability to inspire.

When Portland artist Jessica Jackson Hutchins was sent pictures of the building as possible exhibit space for the

Disjecta Contemporary Art Center’s Portland Biennium, she was taken by the former church’s ambiance, especially since her own mother was a Christian Scientist.

When she made a site visit ahead of the exhibit’s opening, which ran from July 9 to Sept. 18, she took special interest in the building’s stained glass skylight.

Built in 1926, the Spanish eclectic-style building on the corner of Southwest Byers Avenue and South Main Street is

See SKYLIGHT/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The three new panes of stained glass (left, upper right, right) by artist Jessica Jackson Hutchins at the Christian Science building in Pendleton.

