

EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Sunny day real estate

Jay Rusher of Pendleton takes advantage of the mild weather to paint the eaves of his rental property at the corner of south Main Street and Isaac Avenue on Tuesday in Pendleton. The clouds and rain are expected to return to the region Wednesday and stay through the weekend, according to the National Weather Service. **For more on weather see Page 2A.**

HERMISTON

Natural gas utility ready to fire up

Council to wait for business interest before investing in lines

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The city of Hermiston has everything it needs to start its own natural gas utility, but will wait to light the pilot until the right opportunity comes along.

The consensus during a work session on Monday night was that the required investment of \$4-6 million to run a gas transmission

line out to the industrial area south of Hermiston would only be worth it if it guaranteed a major employer would set up shop in Hermiston. Unless that happens, the city council agreed with staff, the investment would probably not be worth the risk.

"We're currently sitting in a situation where we're ready to go whenever needed," Hermiston Energy Services Superintendent Nate Rivera

told the council. He said if a large-scale natural gas user approached the city and promised to build on the Cook Industrial Site and invest in the municipal gas utility, it would take about a year for that user to have the natural gas at their disposal. Considering it would probably take that long for the company to construct their facility, "we're as prepared as we can be," Rivera said.

The city first considered the idea of creating its

See **GAS/8A**

NEW VOTERS' CLUB

Oregon voter rolls add 230,707 in year of presidential election

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The 2016 presidential election has hardly felt like business as usual, and for some people that has been enough to push them to vote for the very first time.

An extra 230,707 people have registered to vote in Oregon alone this year, thanks in part to the Motor Voter law that began automatically registering people through the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Other voters were already registered but never exercised that right until now. Jenn Solina of Hermiston, 29, said in 2013 when she went to renew her driver's license they asked her if she wanted to register to vote and she said yes.

"I just didn't feel like I was mature enough before," she said. "...When they asked I said 'Sure, why not?' It's probably time."

Her boyfriend Curtis Bodewig, also 29, hadn't ever sought out voter registration either, but when he ended up at the DMV for a change of address sticker last year he also took staff up on the offer of a registration card.

Afterward, when the ballots came each May and November, Solina said they never quite made it in the mail before Election Day. This time, with the presidency of the United States at stake, things will be different.

"This year we're making sure," Bodewig said. "I think there's an obligation to vote."

Solina said the responsibility of voting in a presidential election is "definitely nerve-wracking."



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Curtis Bodewig and Jenn Solina, both 29, of Hermiston are casting their ballots for the first time this election season.

"We've watched every single debate," she said.

She — like everyone interviewed for the article — declined

to share which presidential candidate she has chosen, merely commenting that this election "has been something else." When clients

at the hair salon where she works ask who she supports, she steers the conversation somewhere else.

"The rule of thumb at a hair

salon is, you don't talk about politics, money or religion," she said.

See **VOTERS/8A**



Contributed photo by the Rebellé Rally

Taylor Pawley of Echo hugs teammate Micaela Windham of Phoenix, Arizona, after crossing the finish line Friday at the Rebellé Rally, a 1,200 mile, off-road race through the desert in the American West. The pair took second, and Pawley and her husband, KP Pawley, are heading to a larger adventure this week — a three-year trek driving around the world.

Fossil woman takes second in first-ever Rebellé Rally

Taylor Pawley and husband to begin three year adventure

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Taylor Pawley of Fossil crossed the finish line Friday after enduring a 1,200-mile off-road rally through the deserts of Nevada and California.

"I hadn't had my phone for eight days, and I really wanted to call my husband," she said. "I gave him a call, and as soon as I heard his voice I just started crying."

The moment burst the bubble of focus, sweat and trials she had been living in, she said, and the accomplishment "felt so much more real."

Pawley, 27, and teammate Micaela Windham, a working mom of two in Phoenix, Arizona, raced against 32 other teams in the 4-wheel drive vehicle category of the Rebellé Rally, the first women's-only off-road navigation race in the United States, meaning competitors had to use a compass and maps to steer the course, not smartphones and GPS units.

They met online, this was their first race, and they named themselves Team Why Not because they had no reason not to give it their all. They came in second place.

"I'm still amazed," Pawley said. "It was definitely a lot of fun and one of the hardest things I've ever done."

See **RACE/8A**



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