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In Harney County, residents ready to move on

By ERIC MORTENSON
EO Media Group

Harney County Judge Steven Grasty watched as a news crew from a Portland TV station cornered people in Burns a couple weeks back, asking for reaction to the confounding news that the Malheur Wildlife Refuge occupiers had been acquitted. He half expected his constituents to complain about the jury because the case had seemed so obvious to many county residents, who endured a 41-day occupation by armed men who came from elsewhere and disrupted their lives.

But he said county residents told the TV news crew, “Look, we’re sick of this stuff. We’re moving on.”

Grasty liked that response. The verdict, he said, was not worth more argument. “It is what it is,” he said. “It’s a system that works whether you like it or dislike it. Were they the right charges? There’s lots of Monday morning quarterbacking about that.”

But in the criminal justice system, he said, “You don’t get a re-do.”

Grasty is moving on, too. He’d said earlier this year that this would be his last go-round as county judge, and he didn’t stand for re-election after three six-year terms. He leaves office at the end of the year, and Commissioner Pete

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Enjoy a free coffee at Obie’s Express in Hermiston



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Hermiston High School graduate Laura Dewey is nearly done with her first term of college, studying at BMCC in Hermiston.

First months of freshman year bring challenges, growth



Photo courtesy of Laura Zepeda

Laura Zepeda of Hermiston stands on the Oregon State University campus.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Lacey

Ryan Lacey, left, of Pendleton, sits with friends Andrew Henderson and Sophie Jorgensen on the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University campus in Daytona Beach, Florida.

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

College is rarely a straight line to a lifelong career, as several Eastern Oregon high school graduates have found out in the first few months of enrollment.

Legally blind, Hermiston High School graduate Kodie Arnold is attending the Oregon Commission for the Blind, Portland, to learn how to live independently. She planned to move back to begin work on a degree at Blue Mountain Community College.

The first part of the plan is going well — she’s learning life skills like cooking and using technology, and was recently given a positive evaluation by her teachers midway through her first term. But the next step is now less certain.

Although she’s less than enthused about the Portland traffic, nearby Clark College, a community college in Vancouver, Washington, already has a significant blind student community and resources to support them.

Arnold isn’t the only area student who the *East Oregonian* is following through their college career who has considered a change in plans.

Laura Zepeda, a Hermiston High alum and Oregon

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Photo courtesy of Patrick Collins

Patrick Collins of Heppner sits in the Eastern Oregon University locker room.



Photo courtesy of Cece Hoffman

Cece Hoffman of Pendleton stands on the University of Washington campus

PENDLETON

Community garden abuzz about bees

Group applies for grant to secure hive for spring

By GEORGE PLAVEN
East Oregonian

The Pendleton River Walk Garden could have its own colony of bees in time for next spring, pending a grant application submitted Monday to the Honeybee Conservancy.

Colleen Sanders, coordinator for the Umatilla County Master Gardener Program, said the grant would provide startup materials for a beehive at the garden — including the bees themselves. Rather than honeybees, Sanders said they applied for “solitary bees” that

would help pollinate fruits and vegetables, but wouldn’t produce honey.

“These solitary bees are a really good way of encouraging pollinators in your own backyard,” Sanders said.

If approved, the bees would be delivered by April. Jan Lohman, with Vazza Farms in Hermiston, has signed on to help maintain the hive and support the gardeners. Lohman is a past president of the Oregon State Beekeeper Association and teaches a class through Oregon State University’s Master Beekeeper Program.

While Vazza Farms does produce honey — 150 barrels this year — Lohman said 80 percent of their

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Honey bees gather at the entrance to a Warré hive at beekeeper Jan Lohman’s residence outside of Hermiston.



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