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**WINTER SPORTS PREVIEW** SPECIAL SECTION INSIDE

# EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Jesse Reynen, second from left, and his wife, Alicia Reynen, lift a large snowball while making a snowman with their children, Breelynn, 4, and Dean, 2, on Tuesday at Pioneer Park in Pendleton. The Reynens moved to Pendleton from Florence this year and this is Alicia's and the children's first snow.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

## First snow falls, more to come

East Oregonian

Snow fell across Eastern Oregon on Tuesday, closing the interstate and delaying school start times. And there's more in the forecast.

The overnight snowfall and accumulated ice caused Pendleton School District and several schools in Morrow County to delay their start by two hours.

Snow continued to fall, mixing with rain and fog to make for dangerous passage on Cabbage Hill east of Pendleton. Interstate 84 was closed much of the day as the Oregon Department of Transportation was concerned about vehicles trekking down the hill. Trucks were stopped as far east as Ontario as a precaution.

The National Weather Service has issued a winter storm watch for northeastern Oregon, including much of Umatilla and Morrow counties. Snow is expected to begin falling Thursday morning and turn into sleet in the evening, and the warning is in effect through Friday.

The *East Oregonian* will publish updated weather and traffic information at [www.eastoregonian.com](http://www.eastoregonian.com). Check road conditions at [www.tripcheck.com](http://www.tripcheck.com).

**A layer of snow collects on the "Let'er Buck" statue as snow falls on Tuesday in Pendleton. More snow is in the forecast for the Columbia Basin for Thursday with below-freezing temperatures lingering through the weekend, according to the National Weather Service.**

Staff photo by E.J. Harris



## PENDLETON

### New airline to take off Dec. 19

East Oregonian

Pendleton is officially in the Boutique business.

Boutique Air announced Tuesday that it would start offering flights between Pendleton and Portland Dec. 19, closing a gap in commercial air service that began in September.

"We are excited to bring Boutique Air service to the community of Pendleton," Boutique CEO Shawn Simpson said in a statement. "Our focus on customer service and reliability has resulted in strong demand for our service in a variety of communities and we look forward to creating the same success story here."

#### Flight schedule

**Pendleton to Portland**  
6:30 a.m., 9:40 a.m., 4:55 p.m.

**Portland to Pendleton**  
8:05 a.m., 2:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m.

Boutique will offer three daily round-trips and a \$49 introductory ticket rate, according to a Boutique press release. Boutique's arrival allows Pendleton's commercial air service to end on a positive note after a very rough 2016.

See AIRLINE/8A

### Audit: Agency shortcomings put affordable housing inventory at risk

By PARIS ACHEN  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon Housing and Community Services has failed to provide adequate leadership in addressing the state's housing crisis, according to an audit released Tuesday by the Secretary of State's Office.

OHCS's role is to preserve affordable housing by administering an IRS tax credit program that provides one of the largest sources of funding for affordable housing in the state. The agency also provides loans and grants to private and nonprofit housing developers who can use the money to maintain affordable housing.

The audit found that the agency has placed existing affordable housing inventory at risk as a result of inadequate data tracking, poor communication with employees and housing partners and a lack of strategic planning.

"We can't help address Oregon's housing crisis if we lose existing affordable housing,"

See HOUSING/8A

## Slopes ready to open as snow hammers mountains

### Opening day announced at Ski Bluewood, Anthony Lakes

By GEORGE PLAVERN  
East Oregonian

The wait is almost over for skiers and snowboarders antsy to hit the slopes.

Several local ski areas are just days away from opening for the 2016-17 season, as snowstorms continue to batter the Blue Mountains.

Ski Bluewood, located 21 miles outside of Dayton, Washington, is first in line for opening day on Friday — the earliest the resort has been able to open in five years. First chair is 9 a.m., and both the Skyline Express and Platter Pull lifts should be running all day.

"It's been wetter than normal and colder than normal," said Kim Clark, Ski Bluewood general manager. "We're expecting a really big turnout this weekend."

As of Tuesday, Ski Bluewood had 26 inches of snow at base and 38 inches on summit. Base elevation is 4,545 feet, which makes it the second-highest in Washington.

Clark said the winter forecast is calling for above-average precipitation, which bodes well for the season. In addition, he said the resort recently invested \$100,000 to replace all of its rental equipment.

"It's all brand new gear. We're really excited about it," Clark said.

Anthony Lakes Mountain Resort, 19 miles west of North Powder, is also slated to open

See SKI/8A



EO file photo

Tyler Knight of Pilot Rock rides the Echo chair with ski instructor Kyle McFarley of Weston at the Spout Springs Ski Area in Tollgate in December 2015.



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