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7A



EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

PENDLETON



Principal Curt Thompson talks to Hawthorne students about a cooking classroom Monday while on a tour of the Pendleton Tech and Trade Center.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

HERMISTON

\$104M bond headed to May ballot

Money would fund replacing, renovating district schools

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The power to build new schools will officially be in Hermiston voters' hands during the May 2017 election.

On Monday the Hermiston School District board unanimously adopted a resolution placing a \$104 million capital construction bond on the May ballot.

The bond money would go toward a new elementary school off Theater Lane, replacement of Rocky Heights Elementary, replacement of Highland Hills Elementary, renovations at Sandstone Middle School and an expansion of Hermiston High School that would bring its capacity from 1,600 students to 2,000.

It would add 90 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value to local property taxes, which are currently \$4.09 per \$1,000 for education.

Board members acknowledged the financial impact on Hermiston residents, but also spoke of students spending their days in portable classrooms and in schools with floor plans where children have to cross an unsecured outdoor campus to get from room to room.

"The bottom line is always the kids," board chair Karen Sherman said. "Rocky

See **BOND/8A**

Trade's new tricks

West Hills revamped into technology, trade education center

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

The Pendleton Tech and Trade Center is a work in progress, and will probably remain that way even after it opens in January.

As a few dozen Hawthorne Alternative High School students were led through the former West Hills Intermediate School on Monday, they ran into contractors and employees from the InterMountain Education Service District working on the building.

Curt Thompson, the district's career technical education coordinator and Hawthorne principal, fielded questions from the curious group of teens about the repurposed school, which will house Hawthorne's alternative education program as well as several CTE classes.

Would the school bus drop them off down the hill by Pendleton High School or in the center parking lot? (The center parking lot)

What school would it say on their diploma? (It would still read Hawthorne)

Could they paint one of the walls with chalkboard paint and then write on it? (Thompson wasn't sure, but he did like the idea of a mural)

While Thompson couldn't answer all of their questions definitively, he said he was committed to gathering student input.



Principal Curt Thompson talks about a new milling machine in one of the classrooms of the Pendleton Tech and Trade Center on Monday in Pendleton.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Chris Bettineski, a Pendleton High School assistant principal and the former lead teacher for Hawthorne, echoed Thompson's sentiments.

"There's always growing pains," he said. "There's always adjustments that need to be made. Nothing stays the same."

Thompson said the district will begin moving furniture from Hawthorne's current building over winter break and start alternative

school classes Jan. 3.

The center will also be open to Pendleton High School students, who will trek up the hill to take some of the more advanced CTE courses when their next semester starts in February.

Hawthorne has been without a permanent home since 2014, when the school was moved

See **TRADE/8A**

Prosecutors push ahead with trial for last occupiers

By **GILLIAN FLACCUS**
Associated Press

PORTLAND — The U.S. government will push forward with conspiracy charges against the remaining seven people who helped take over a national wildlife refuge in Oregon, just months after the stunning acquittal of the first group of defendants.

Prosecutors, who faced a Monday deadline to indicate their next move, said they also would proceed with firearms charges against six of the defendants and planned to add lesser counts that could include trespassing or destruction of property.

That would give jurors the option of a less serious conviction that wasn't available in the earlier case.

See **TRIAL/8A**

Congress passes Columbia River Restoration Act

Bill allows return of Kennewick Man to tribes

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

Congress has passed a bill authorizing the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a competitive, voluntary grant program for environmental cleanup work in the Columbia River.

The Columbia River Restoration Act was included

as part of the federal Water Resources Development Act of 2016, which lawmakers approved Dec. 9.

Grants could help pay for projects that improve water quality in the basin, reduce pollution or clean up contaminated sites. Oregon Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, both Democrats, cheered the legislation,

which was supported by a diverse group of environmental, tribal and industry groups.

"Nobody wants to worry that the water they are drinking or fishing in or swimming in is tainted, but 8 million inhabitants of the Columbia River Basin have had their health, safety and environment endangered by

See **RIVER/8A**



EO file photo

Yakama tribal members Mackie Jackson of The Dalles, left, and Anthony George of Hood River, second from left, throw out a gill net during a May 2014 protest of the proposed coal facility on the Columbia River at the Port of Morrow in Boardman.



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