



50/34

**WOLF  
COUNT  
DELAYED**  
REGION/3A



**CROSSLEY  
COMPETES  
IN AMERICAN  
SEMI-FINALS** 1B



**Puzder withdraws  
nomination to be  
labor secretary**  
NATION/7A

# EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

## Oregonians could see bottle deposit windfall under bill

Would refund 10 cents even if purchasers paid 5-cent deposit

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Under a bill proposed in the House, Oregonians who redeem bottle and cans could get an unexpected windfall when the deposit jumps from 5 cents to a dime April 1. The House Committee on Energy and Environment voted unanimously

Wednesday to advance a bill that would, starting April 1, refund 10 cents on all containers covered by Oregon's bottle bill — even if purchasers paid only the 5-cent deposit.

Oregon has had a 5-cent deposit on certain beverage containers since 1972, first introduced to deal with the state's litter problem.

Retailers pay distributors the deposit when they purchase beverages; that deposit is passed to customers at the cash register.

Customers in turn then can return bottles and cans for a full deposit refund.

In 2011, the Legislature passed a law requiring the deposit increase to 10 cents should the rate of return dip below 80 percent for two consecutive years. Unredeemed deposits are kept by distributors.

In both 2014 and 2015, the return rate was below 80 percent, and so the deposit will double April 1.

See DEPOSIT/10A



Courtesy of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission

**Bottle deposits in Oregon will double to 10 cents on April 1. Under a bill proposed in the Legislature, even cans for which only a 5-cent deposit was paid can be redeemed for the full 10 cents until Sept. 1, 2018.**



## SEEING GREEN

Hermiston watermelons are one of the many agriculture products that would be featured in one of two new farm loops in Umatilla and Morrow counties. The loops are being developed by the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association in an effort to boost agritourism in the region.

## New farm loops aim to lure 'agritourism' dollars

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
East Oregonian

Two new farm loops are in the works for Umatilla and Morrow counties, featuring everything from local wine and cheese to handmade saddles and antique tractors.

Designed as self-guided driving tours, one loop will run between Pendleton and Milton-Freewater while the other will encompass Hermiston, Boardman, Irrigon, Echo and Heppner.

Janet Dodson, project leader and consultant with the Eastern

**"Obviously, agriculture is a huge part of our economy and lifestyle. (Agritourism) fits well within Eastern Oregon."**

— **Janet Dodson**, project leader, consultant with the Eastern Oregon Visitors Association

Oregon Visitors Association, said a full list of businesses should be finalized before the summer

See AGRITOURISM/10A



The Echo Ridge Cellars vineyard grows a variety of grapes used to make wine.

## PENDLETON

## Police looking for answers in shooting

The East Oregonian

Pendleton police are trying to piece together who shot a man in the leg Wednesday, but the victim is not helping.

Police Chief Stuart Roberts in an email said he had all available resource working on the investigation.

"I know people will want assurances about safety and/or the identity of the suspect(s)," Roberts wrote. "But I just cannot give either right now, because we are still not sure what happened."

A Pendleton officer at 10:31 a.m. Wednesday saw a man lying near a driveway on the 500 block of Southwest 19th Street, according to Roberts.

"Upon contact, the aforementioned male asserted he merely fell down, was okay and not in need of assistance," Roberts reported. However, the officer asked Pendleton emergency medical services to respond to evaluate the male.

The crew arrived and loaded the man into an ambulance, then told police at the scene the male had what appeared to be a small caliber bullet wound just above his left knee.

Roberts said detectives tried to interview the man at St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton, but he was not cooperative. The hospital stabilized the victim before sending him to a hospital in the Tri-Cities, Washington.

Roberts said detectives were able to gather sufficient information to obtain a search warrant for a residence where police think the male was shot by an acquaintance, but no one was found.

"The investigation is in the early stages," Roberts stated.

## HERMISTON

## School district refines pitch for \$104M bond

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**  
East Oregonian

The Hermiston School District anticipates major growth in the next few years. In preparation, it is refining its pitch for a \$104 million bond question that will be brought to voters May 16.

If passed, the bond will allow for major upgrades and construction projects at some of the district's schools. The school board reviewed an economic impact study and watched a district-created video about the merits of passing the bond at Monday's meeting.

The district anticipates a growth

of 800 students by the year 2023. According to the video, if the district doesn't make adjustments and expansions, they may see up to 56 portable classrooms housing about 1,100 students. With the funds from the bond, the district would construct a new elementary school on property on Theater Lane. They would also expand Hermiston High School, replace Rocky Heights and Highland Hills elementary schools on their current sites, make repairs to Sandstone Middle School, and develop the fairgrounds property, which the district recently purchased.

See BOND/10A

## Climate change panel urges delay in Oregon forest policy decisions

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Activists often urge a speedier government response to climate change, but the Oregon Global Warming Commission doesn't want to rush any decisions involving forest policy.

Angus Duncan, the commission's chair, recently told Oregon lawmakers it's better to wait until it's better understood how forest management can offset carbon emissions, which are blamed for climate change.

Up until now, the OFWC has focused on quantifying the amount of carbon absorbed by forests across different regions in the state.

Altogether, Oregon's forest store the equivalent of about 9.7 billion tons of carbon dioxide — roughly 150 times as much as the state emits per year, according to the commission.

Before making forest management recommendations, the commission plans to determine the historical carbon fluctuations

See FOREST/10A



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