

# Gilliam County picks new commissioner

By **GEORGE PLAVEN**  
East Oregonian

A new commissioner has been appointed to the Gilliam County Court.

Leslie Wetherell, of Arlington, was chosen Wednesday to fill the seat of Dennis Gronquist, who died Jan. 23 after suffering a stroke six months prior.

Wetherell was one of three candidates nominated by the newly restructured Democratic Central Committee of Gilliam County. Her first court meeting will be Wednesday, March 1.

"I was just excited and happy," Wetherell said. "This is something that I've always thought I wanted to do."

Wetherell, 47, works as the operations and finance manager for the Maryhill Museum of Art in Goldendale, Washington, though she continues to live in Arlington. She previously spent six years as city recorder and said she will bring a fresh perspective to the county court.

"I didn't come in with an agenda," she said. "I just want to see what things are

going on and help as best I can."

Wetherell described Gronquist as a father figure to her, and talked about growing up friends with Gronquist's daughter, Megan. Later in life, Wetherell said she continued to lean on Gronquist for advice and really respected his opinions.

"When commissioner Gronquist passed away, I just kept thinking I wanted to help," Wetherell said. "I thought if I could fill his term, I would be very proud and honored to do so."

Gronquist, a Democrat, was re-elected last November, before his death. Gilliam County Democrats formed a new central committee to come up with candidates for Gronquist's replacement, and the court chose Wetherell during a special session Wednesday afternoon.

Commissioners typically serve four-year terms, though in this case the seat will be up for election in 2018 and again in 2020.

Contact George Plaven at [gplaven@eastoregonian.com](mailto:gplaven@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0825.



Wetherell

## BRIEFLY

### Brief lockdown at Pendleton schools

PENDLETON — A false alarm triggered a lockdown for nearly an hour at Pendleton High School Thursday morning.

A Pendleton School District press release states that the lockdown was inadvertently triggered from inside the building, causing the school to start a lockdown around 9:40 a.m.

After police swept the high school and determined that there was no threat, the school lifted the lockdown at 10:30 a.m.

In accordance with the district's safety protocol, the district's other schools were put on lockdown as a precaution. Unlike the high school's lockdown, where students and staff are confined to classrooms as authorities deal with the potential threat, a "lockout" seals the outside entryways while school activities go uninterrupted.

Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts said law enforcement officers had their firearms out when securing the campus, in accordance with police protocol for lockdown situations.

According to the press release, law enforcement and district staff are reviewing the incident to see if the best procedures were used.

### Pendleton woman struck by pickup

PENDLETON — A Pendleton woman is in a Washington hospital after she was hit by a pickup Wednesday.

Pendleton police and emergency services at about 2:30 p.m. responded to the front of the U.S. Post Office, 104 S.W. Dorion Ave., on a report of a vehicle striking a pedestrian. Pendleton Fire Chief Mike Ciraulo said an ambulance transported one woman with head trauma to St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton.

Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts identified the woman as Haley Flemmer, 32, of Pendleton. Hospital spokesman Larry Blanc said medical staff stabilized her and sent her to Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Richland, Washington. The *East Oregonian* has been unable to confirm her condition.

Roberts said Jonathan Quinlin, 21, of Pendleton, drove a 2015 Nissan Frontier pickup that hit Flemmer, and police cited Quinlin for failing to yield to a pedestrian.

### Agriculture and Energy Job Fair coming March 1

BOARDMAN — The fourth annual Agriculture and Energy Job Fair is coming Wednesday, March 1 to the SAGE Center.

Students and job seekers are invited to visit and network with local food processors, utilities, data centers, farms and colleges to learn more about career opportunities.

"This event gives people the opportunity to connect with the region's leading agriculture and energy industries to discover rewarding careers," said Kalie Davis, SAGE Center manager. Blue Mountain Community College, Walla Walla Community College, Perry Technical Institute, Oregon State University and Eastern Oregon University will also be on hand to provide information about educational programs for students. The SAGE Center is located at 101 Olson Road in Boardman. For more information, call 541-481-7243.

### Goal setting workshop set for March 4

BOARDMAN — Boardman city officials will discuss setting goals and direction for the coming year during an annual workshop scheduled for Saturday, March 4.

City councilors and department heads will meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Boardman Senior Center for a community breakfast, then move over to city hall at 8:15 a.m. to begin their meeting. The public is invited to attend, however, there may not be opportunity for public comment.

No specific deliberations or decisions will be made during the session. For more information, call 541-481-9252.

# HERMISTON Semi truck falls 120 feet into canal

Driver safe after jumping out of passenger door

East Oregonian

A semi-truck loaded with empty propane tanks crashed over an embankment and slid 120 feet down into South Cold Springs Creek Wednesday morning on Highway 37 northeast of Hermiston.

The wreck happened at milepost 10 at about 8 a.m., according to Umatilla County Fire District 1 chief Scott Stanton, though it wasn't reported until 9:15 and responders didn't know about a potential hazardous material leak until 9:45.

No one was hurt, though Oregon State Police reported the truck driver jumped out of the passenger door just before the tractor slid down the steep embankment.

Mike Renz, on-scene spills coordinator for the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, said an estimated 10 gallons of motor oil leaked from the truck into the creek.

A hazmat team from Hermiston responded and began setting up booms of absorbent pads downstream to collect any spillage.

"They saw no sheen more than a quarter mile downstream," Renz said.



Photo contributed by Umatilla County Fire District 1

A hazardous materials crew from Umatilla County Fire District 1 responds to a semi truck crash Wednesday morning on Highway 37 northeast of Hermiston.

The team also began pumping diesel from the truck's fuel tank into drums, removing about 125 gallons from the lower tank. The upper fuel tank was empty, Renz said.

Stanton said his department did not make contact with the driver, who was in Pasco by the time they arrived. The

truck remained at the site as of Thursday morning and will be difficult to remove, Stanton said.

The crash was caused by icy road surfaces Wednesday morning. The fire department has since turned the incident over to the Oregon Department of Transportation.

# PENDLETON Boutique boasts strong numbers out of the gate

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
East Oregonian

The skies haven't always been clear for take off, but that hasn't stopped Boutique Air from taking off with Pendleton customers.

In January, the first full month Boutique has operated direct flights to Portland, the San Francisco-based company boarded 469 people even though there were 13 weather-related flight cancellations.

That's the most in a month since 2008, which has excited officials from the city and Boutique.

"It's certainly been a warm welcome," said Michelle McNulty, Boutique's marketing and community manager.

One significant reason Pendletonians are flocking to Boutique so early in its tenure is its ticket prices.

With an introductory price of \$49 for some one-way tickets, the cost of airfare isn't that much more expensive than the

gas it would take to drive to Portland. In new markets, McNulty said Boutique typically keeps the \$49 fare in place for the first few months before raising the price.

According to its bid presentation, Boutique eventually expects the average ticket price will be \$99.

McNulty said Boutique expects to maintain momentum after ticket prices rise by focusing on customer service and stepping up its marketing efforts in Pendleton, Portland and surrounding communities like Walla Walla.

Boarding numbers are important to Pendleton in multiple ways.

If Pendleton's air service has too few boardings, the U.S. Department of Transportation can strip the airport of its subsidy, something the DOT threatened to do last year when the now-defunct SeaPort Airlines was in charge of service.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, if the Pendleton airport can exceed 10,000 boardings, it would automati-

cally receive a \$1 million grant from the DOT.

If Boutique maintains its current pace, Pendleton would finish the year with 5,628 boardings, which would be better than any full year in SeaPort's seven-year tenure, according to the Federal Aviation Administration.

But Boutique still has a ways to go if it wants to beat the 2008 mark, when SeaPort and Horizon combined to transport 7,217 passengers.

Getting to 10,000 boardings would be an even steeper climb still — Pendleton hasn't hit that threshold since 2002.

While reaching 10,000 boardings with an eight-seat plane that goes to Portland three times a day might be a tall task, Boutique officials have said that a sustained level of high demand could bring more flights or larger airplanes to Pendleton.

Contact Antonio Sierra at [asierra@eastoregonian.com](mailto:asierra@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0836.

## COMING EVENTS

### FRIDAY, FEB. 17

**ADULT OPEN GYM**, 6 a.m., Pendleton Recreation Center, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Half-court basketball. Adults only.

**WALKING FOR WELLNESS**, 8:30-9:30 a.m., Pendleton Recreation Center, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. (541-276-8100)

**HEALTHY FRIDAYS**, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Good Shepherd Medical Center conference room 7, 610 N.W. 11th St., Hermiston. Free health screenings including cholesterol, blood sugar, BMI, blood pressure checks, weigh-ins and health information. For cholesterol and glucose tests, fast 10-12 hours prior to blood draw. Open to all community members. (541-667-3509)

**STORY TIME**, 10:15 a.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. (541-567-2882)

**TODDLER STORY TIME**, 10:15-11 a.m., Pendleton Public Library, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. (541-966-0380)

**TILLAMOOK CHEESE DAYS**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. Enjoy a hearty plate of lasagne with Caesar salad, bread, cookie and drink. Squeaky cheese curds and specialty cheeses will be available for purchase. \$5 per person includes center admission. (541-481-7243)

**WILLOW CREEK VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP ANNUAL LUNCHEON**, 12-1 p.m., St. Patrick's Senior Center dining room, 190 N. Main St., Heppner. Annual luncheon features guest speaker Rep. Greg Smith, who will give a legislative update. Catered lunch is free, but RSVP is requested. (Sheryl Bates 541-676-5536)

**STORY AND CRAFT TIME**, 2 p.m., Echo Public Library, 20 S. Bonanza, Echo. (541-376-8411)

**NIGHT AT THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM**, 5-8:30 p.m., Children's Museum of Eastern Oregon, 400 S. Main St., Pendleton. Includes dinner, games, crafts and a movie. Costs \$20 members/\$25 non-members, \$10 for each additional child. Preregistration required. (541-276-1066)

**VFW BINGO**, 6 p.m., Hermiston VFW, 45 W. Cherry St., Hermiston. Doors open at 6 p.m., games

begin at 7 p.m. Everyone welcome. (541-567-6219)

**SAGE CENTER MOVIE EVENT**, 7:15 p.m., SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. Enjoy a family-friendly movie and a bag of popcorn. \$5 admission. Bottled water and concessions available for cash purchase. (541-481-7243)

**SATURDAY, FEB. 18**  
**INDOOR YARD SALE**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., 215 W. Orchard Ave., 215 W. Orchard Ave., Hermiston. Stay out of the winter weather and find treasures. Tables are \$10 each. Free admission. (ARC office or Jan 541-567-7615 or 541-567-6172)

**FREE FOR ALL**, 9:30-10:15 a.m., Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. Free art classes for children up to age 12. Children under 8 should be accompanied by an adult. (Roberta Lavador 541-278-9201)

**SATURDAY CRAFT TIME**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. Free craft projects for children in 5th grade and younger. (541-567-2882)

**HIP & HANDMADE**, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St., Pendleton. Free drop-in project class for adults. (Roberta Lavador 541-278-9201)

**TILLAMOOK CHEESE DAYS**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., SAGE Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman. Enjoy a hearty plate of lasagne with Caesar salad, bread, cookie and drink. Squeaky cheese curds and specialty cheeses will be available for purchase. \$5 per person includes center admission. (541-481-7243)

**ARTWORKZ 2017 ARTISTS RECEPTION**, 1 p.m., Tamastlikt Cultural Institute, 47106 Wildhorse Blvd., Pendleton. The winners of the annual young artist competition will be honored, including grand prizes, awards of excellence and merit, honorable mentions and Best Emerging Artist. Public welcome. (Randall Melton 541-429-7720)

**STRAIGHT TALK WITH BECKY MARKS**, 2-4 p.m., The Saddle Restaurant, 2220 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton. Share thoughts with Ward I councilwoman. (541-276-9147)

**SAGE CENTER MOVIE EVENT**, 2:15 p.m., SAGE Center,

101 Olson Road, Boardman. Enjoy a family-friendly movie and a bag of popcorn. \$5 admission. Bottled water and concessions available for cash purchase. (541-481-7243)

**SUNDAY, FEB. 19**  
**PAUL GORHAM MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP BREAKFAST**, 8 a.m.-12 p.m., Pendleton Masonic Lodge, 1350 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. Cost is \$6 for adults and \$4 for ages 6-12. Call-in orders welcome. (541-276-3760)

**FAMILY BREAKFAST**, 8:30-9:15 a.m., First Christian Church, 516 S. Main St., Milton-Freewater.

Cost is by donation. Everyone welcome. (541-938-3854)

**SPECIAL NEEDS OPEN GYM**, 12-1:30 p.m., Pendleton Recreation Center, 510 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Free for special needs children and families. (541-276-8100)

**"TIL DEATH DO US PART... AND WE PART TONIGHT"**, 2 p.m., Agape House, 500 Harper Road, Hermiston. A Valentine's Day theme murder mystery fundraiser for Agape House. Enjoy several desserts and try to figure out whodunnit. (Dave Hughes 541-567-8774)

**PENDLETON CENTER for the ARTS** | **LIVE MUSIC**

**Tue., Feb. 21 . 7 pm . \$12 . 541-278-9201**

### PART-TIME DRIVER

Part-time driver needed to deliver East Oregonian publications throughout Eastern Oregon. Must be able to lift up to 50 pounds, have a valid driver's license and a good driving record. Shifts vary but will regularly include Tuesday nights. Duties may include non-driving work if extra hours are desired. Drug test, driving record and criminal background checks will be completed before hire.

Pick up an application at 211 SE Byers, Pendleton or e-mail resume and cover letter to [hr@eomediagroup.com](mailto:hr@eomediagroup.com)

## CONCEALED CARRY PERMIT CLASS

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Best Western: 2255 Highway 395 South  
February 21<sup>st</sup> • 1:00 pm & 6:00 pm

**Walk-Ins Welcome!**

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