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One dollar

Commission plans to take another pass at Tutuilla pot shop

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The future of Thur's Smoke Shop could go one of two ways when the Pendleton Planning Commission meets Thursday.

The commission could grant Thur's a conditional use permit, which would make it the fourth recreational marijuana dispensary approved under Pendleton's marijuana zoning rules.

Or the commission could deny Thur's application, marking a first for the city's emerging cannabis industry.

Thur's, a head shop at 34 S.W. Emigrant Ave. that sells smoking accessories but not marijuana itself, is looking to open a dispensary at 1292 S.W. Tutuilla Road. It meets all of the city's zoning criteria — the proposed store is in a commercial zone and is beyond 1,000 feet of a school, park or another marijuana dispensary. The downtown shop does not.

But Thur's Tutuilla site has also drawn strong opposition from nearby property owners and the Pendleton School District, which has argued that the store would be in close proximity to a district bus stop and is inappropriate for a street that receives heavy juvenile traffic to and from Sunridge Middle School.

The opposition has been vocal in trying to block the Thur's application from going forward.

Nine people spoke against Thur's at a Feb. 16 planning commission meeting, including two education officials. Additionally, four letters were sent to the commission in opposition to the store.

Not including the testimony of Thur's owner Bryson Thurman, only two people spoke in favor of the cannabis retailer.

Thur's has since circulated a petition in favor of the Thur's dispensary, gathering 226 signatures.

After hearing testimony at the Feb. 16 meeting, the commission voted to postpone its decision until the next meeting on Thursday.

While Thur's location has proven to be contentious in Pendleton, one pot shop owner in Astoria said his store's proximity to a bus

See MARIJUANA/10A

CLASS 1A OREGON GIRLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Nixyaawii's Kaitlynn Melton takes her turn cutting down the net after her team beat the County Christian Cougars in the 1A OSAA state championship game in Baker City.

SKÁW IISHTHLÁMA



Golden Eagles undefeated champs

A perfect season requires natural talent, precise execution, an endless well of determination and unbreakable unity. There are no shortcuts or lucky breaks that last long enough to achieve it by mistake.

It is rare, with only six 1A girls teams finishing with an unblemished record since the classification was introduced in 1991.

The Nixyaawii Golden Eagles joined that club Saturday. You can read more about the game and title in today's sports section.

The above headline, "skáw iishthláma," translates roughly in the Umatilla language to "skilled athletic winners," a tribute to the work put in by the players and coaches to develop their talent, the training to reach peak physical condition and the drive to finish a grueling season.

It's also a tribute to the cultural celebration of the charter school on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. At halftime of the championship game young dancers performed a powwow, sharing with the crowd a tradition that goes back for the Umatilla tribe even further than basketball.

This team will not soon be forgotten by its Eastern Oregon fans or the teams it played along the way.

Drummers and young powwow dancers accompanied the Nixyaawii girls basketball team to the 1A OSAA state championship tournament in Baker City where they did a halftime dance exhibition.

Staff photo by Kathy Aney

'Repeal, replace' package unveiled

House GOP plan swaps tax credits for subsidies

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — House Republicans on Monday released their long-awaited plan for unraveling former President Barack Obama's health care law, a package that would scale back the government's role in helping people afford coverage and likely leave more Americans uninsured.

House committees planned to begin voting on the 123-page legislation Wednesday, launching what could be the year's defining battle in Congress and capping seven years of Republican vows to repeal the 2010 law. Though GOP leaders expect a boost from the backing of the Trump administration, divisions remain and GOP success is not ensured.

The plan would repeal the statute's unpopular fines on people who don't carry health insurance. It would replace income-based subsidies the law provides to help millions of Americans pay premiums with age-based tax credits that may be skimpier for people with low incomes. Those payments would phase out for higher-earning people.

The bill would continue Obama's expansion of Medicaid to additional low-earning Americans until 2020. Beginning then, states adding Medicaid recipients would no longer receive the additional federal funds the statute has provided.

More significantly, Republicans would overhaul the entire federal-state Medicaid program, changing its open-ended federal financing to a limit based on enrollment and costs in each state, a move likely to cause funding cuts.

In perhaps their riskiest political gamble, the plan is expected to cover fewer than the 20 million people insured under Obama's overhaul, including many residents of states carried by President Donald Trump in November's election.

Republicans said they don't have official coverage

See HEALTH/10A

Sunday fire ruins Hat Rock home

Couple and three dogs survive blaze

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Fire burned a couple out of their home Sunday evening near Hat Rock State Park northeast of Hermiston.

Conni Hull said her parents, Connie and Kelli Maret, ended up at Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Richland, Washington, after experiencing heart trouble in the wake of the fire. Her

father suffered from breathing in smoke, she added, and her mother has breast cancer, but both were stable and in good condition at the hospital.

The blaze happened Sunday around 6:30 p.m. at 82276 Hat Rock Road, space 14. Hull said her father was cooking dinner when a lithium battery in a spare room exploded while charging. Connie Maret grabbed a fire extinguisher, his daughter said, but it was expired. He then ran for a garden hose, but that was

See FIRE/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Fire gutted the home of Connie and Kelli Maret late Sunday evening near Hat Rock sending them both to Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Richland, Washington.



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