

UMATILLA

Grad students gather feedback from residents on downtown revitalization

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Walking trails along the river, a marina and a nationally recognized robotics team were all strengths listed by Umatilla residents at an open house Friday night.

The event, held at Umatilla High School, encouraged residents to draw pictures, write on posters, put stickers on maps and add to a photo album to show what are their favorite things about Umatilla. The information is being gathered by Portland State University graduate students who are writing a downtown revitalization plan for Umatilla as a final project.

"We're working really hard to create a document by the community, for the community," PSU student Laura Voss said. "We have our own ideas, but we want to hear from people who live here."

Voss said the plan might focus on the Sixth Street area, but the group wants to tie the best parts of Umatilla to downtown and help the community be more cohesive. They plan to follow the open house up with focus groups and interviews that reach out to various demographics in the community.

Amber Ayers, project manager, said the students have been working with city staff to look at what work has already been done, and they got an extensive tour of the city.

"I spent my morning walking around Umatilla, taking photos," she said. "What a beautiful site."

One of the stations that people were encouraged to stop at on Friday was a large map of the city, where stickers were available to place on favorite locations.

"Definitely the marina



Matt Tsui makes a collage about his favorite parts of Umatilla during an open house event Friday.



Sam Roberts, left, shows Umatilla residents a map where they can place stickers to indicate their favorite place in the community.

park is a popular choice," technical lead Sam Roberts said, pointing to the map. "We have Java Junkies, and we've got a lot of runners marking the trail."

Umatilla resident Tina Ridings said she attended Friday's event because she is "highly vested in the community." She said some people have a negative perception of Umatilla.

"We are so much more,"

she said. "Robotics has put us on the map. Our after-school programs are used as a model for the nation."

City councilor Mark Ribich was one of several city officials who attended. He said he was pleased with the event's turnout and hoped the Portland State students were able to get "mass involvement" as they work on their revitalization plan over the next few

months. "This is going to happen," he said. "We are going to make changes to downtown one way or another, so we want it to be something the community wants."

At Tuesday's city council meeting, the council approved a contract with the students, all pursuing a master's degree in urban and regional planning, making the relationship official. City manager Russ Pelleberg said the group, under the name Confluentis Planning, is the only group of students that chose a city in Eastern Oregon to focus on. He said their work will dovetail with downtown revitalization work that he and Ribich have been doing, and with a future community development department.

"We're pretty excited about it," he said.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

Pendleton man arrested for rape, child abuse

East Oregonian

A 49-year-old Pendleton man was arrested Friday by Pendleton police for rape in the first degree and several other charges related to rape and assault.

The case against John Harmon Calvert began March 3, according to Pendleton police chief Stuart Roberts, when a third party contacted the Department of Human Services concerned about the potential physical abuse of five children, all in Calvert's custody.

Roberts said DHS went to the home where the alleged abuse was occurring and determined the children should be put in guardian care.

The children were brought before a grand jury on Friday and a warrant was issued for Calvert, who was arrested on charges of assault, criminal mistreatment and menacing of the children, as well as rape, unlawful sexual penetration and assault of his significant other. Calvert also was found to have a .22 rifle in his possession, and was arrested as a felon in possession of a firearm.

The children range in age from five to 12, Roberts said.

"They have allegedly been

subjected to physical abuse for the last 10 years," Roberts said.

Roberts said it's difficult to estimate how many cases of abuse have occurred as the family has moved around Oregon and to other states.

Roberts said Calvert physically abused all the children, but directed more at one of them.

"Striking the kids with hands and feet, throwing objects to inflict physical injuries," Roberts said.

"He went so far as to allegedly threaten to kill them."

Roberts said the Pendleton Police Department has had a history with Calvert since 2010, but did not have prior records of this type of abuse from him.

"He had a restraining order in place, but the person who had the restraining order, his wife, never reported that he was in violation," Roberts said. He said children also don't always know to report abuse. "As egregious as (these acts) may seem, for young kids, this is their 'normal' — they're not always (aware) it's not right."

Roberts said the report of suspected abuse came from one of the local schools.

Calvert is currently lodged in the Umatilla County Jail.



Calvert

BRIEFLY

Agape House hosts parking lot sale

HERMISTON — A parking lot sale is planned at Agape House.

The event is Saturday from 8:30-11:30 a.m. at 500 Harper Road, Hermiston.

Clothing, offered inside, is three items for a dollar, though the first five items of children's clothing are free. Outside, weather permitting, a selection of furniture, bicycles, office furniture and books will be priced as marked. Knick-knacks, also outside, are you-name-the-price.

Agape House serves individuals and families in need. For more information or to volunteer or make donations to Agape House, contact Dave or Jodene Hughes at 541-567-8774.

BMCC choir presents concert, seeks members

PENDLETON — A free concert featuring a series of pieces evoking the idea of home or returning home from a journey will be performed Friday by the Blue Mountain Community College Concert Choir.

"Homeward Bound" will be presented at 7 p.m. in the college's Bob Clapp Theatre, located in Pioneer Hall on the BMCC campus, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave. Featured soloists include Alanna Ellis and Hillary Edwards. Audience members are encouraged to wear green in celebration of St. Patrick's Day.

If you like what you hear during the concert, consider joining the choir, which is looking for new members. The concert choir meets

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at noon in room 122 in the McCrae Activity Center. While choir experience is preferred, it is not required.

For more information, email choir director Jami Moore at jmoore@bluucc.edu.

Website features Sherman County history

A former Sherman County commissioner and volunteer for the Sherman County Historical Society wants to get the word out about a new website that highlights history of the area.

Sherman County, Oregon: A Historical Collection — www.shermancountyoregon.com — recently introduced by Sherry Kaseberg, shares her 1965 cemetery survey and stories, time lines, photographs and information about businesses, churches, government, military service, places and towns. The website honors the people who lived in Sherman County, kept the records, preserved the stories and encouraged Kaseberg's interest in the county she grew up in.

Kaseberg said the information presented is "truly the work of many, and will appeal to history enthusiasts and genealogists."

The result of a lifetime journey with local storytellers and record keepers, Kaseberg said it doesn't include everything. She encourages people to also visit the historical society's museum, which is located in Moro. Open May through October, it features interpretive exhibits, publications and collections.

For more information, contact 541-565-3232 or info@shermanmuseum.org.

Steelheaders call for Buckmaster's removal from fish commission

By CLAIRE WITCOMBE
Capital Bureau

SALEM — In the latest development in the feud between sports anglers and commercial fishermen over the use of gillnets in the lower Columbia River, a sports angling group is petitioning the governor to remove a state fish and wildlife commissioner who voted with three others to continue to allow the practice in late January.

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders submitted a petition last week signed by nearly 6,000 people calling on Gov. Kate Brown to remove Commissioner Bruce Buckmaster.

Buckmaster, a Brown appointee, has served on the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission since 2015. Detractors argued at the time he was a lobbyist for the commercial gillnetting industry, a claim which Buckmaster denied.

Buckmaster, who is described as an advocate for "equitable use of natural resources" in his biography on the commission's website, declined to comment on the petition Monday. The Governor's Office also declined comment on the petition.

The petition also calls for Oregon's commission to adopt rules that align with a previous plan to phase out

gillnetting altogether, as Washington's commission voted to do in January.

Bob Rees, executive director of the Association of Northwest Steelheaders, said Monday that his group was "not opposed to the commercial fishing industry" and recognized that the industry played a role in Oregon's economy.

"The Steelheaders want to grow sport-fishing opportunities all across rural Oregon, and Buckmaster has shown he is not committed to that by attempting to derail the reforms," Rees wrote in an email.

A gillnet is a net that traps fish by the gills and capable of drawing in large hauls.

The commission voted in late January to allow commercial gillnetters to continue to capture a certain percentage of the hauls of certain species, with those portions depending on the season.

Sports anglers and environmental groups argue that gillnets can't distinguish between wild and hatchery fish, and that state legislation passed in 2013 called for eventually disallowing commercial gillnetting in accordance with an agreement with Washington.



Buckmaster

Those on the commercial fishermen's side — including the Coastal Caucus, a collection of both Democratic and Republican state lawmakers — say that the legislation also called for optimizing economic benefits to the state and maintaining the economic viability of commercial fishing as well as sports fishing.

Recreational anglers are represented on the commission, but the Steelheaders say that the body is still "unbalanced."

Jim Bittle, who was praised by the Steelheaders in their petition as "an effective voice for recreational anglers throughout Oregon," was appointed to the commission in late December.

Gov. Brown warned the commission in a letter Feb. 9 that she expected the members to adopt rules in line with the bi-state agreement by April 3.

However, it is not explicit what the consequences for the commission are if they vote otherwise — a spokesman for the governor did not respond when asked if the governor would remove Buckmaster from the commission if they did not adopt rules in accordance with the bi-state agreement.



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Request for Qualifications Architectural Design Charrette For Historic Buildings in Pendleton's Downtown

The Pendleton Development Commission is seeking an architectural firm to provide design and consulting services for restoration work on up to 13 historic buildings in downtown Pendleton.

The Commission has funding to support building owners with design and construction services and is assisting owners in finding the services they need.

For a copy of the RFP document please contact the Development Commission at 541-966-0233 and leave your contact information. The RFP will be emailed to you.

Pendleton Development Commission Pendleton, Oregon