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EAST OREGONIAN

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2017

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UMATILLA

Electric co-op asks to push solar into farmland

Board of Commissioners to discuss land use exception

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing Wednesday morning to discuss whether the Umatilla Electric Cooperative should expand its Moyer-Tolles Solar Station over 80 acres of high-value farmland.

UEC unveiled the solar farm, located on the south side of the highway east of Umatilla early last year. At the time, it was permitted for five acres totaling 3,952 panels and 1.3 megawatts of electricity. The facility began generating on Feb. 9, 2016.

Now, the utility wants to finish building out over the remaining

80 acres but requires a land use exception from the county, since the property is classified as high-value farmland within the Columbia Valley American Viticulture Area.

The rule, known as a Goal 3 exception, caps the size of solar facilities on high-value farmland at 12 acres. In its application, UEC

See SOLAR/10A



EO file photo

The Umatilla Electric Cooperative now has the largest consumer-owned solar project in the state with their 1.3 megawatt solar array near Umatilla.

Court weighs Vanessa Logman's mental state on day of attack



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Vanessa Logman stands next to her attorney Michael Breiling during a pre-trial hearing Monday at the Stafford Hansell Government Center in Hermiston.

Case made for return home

Judge will decide whether Logman stays in community or goes to state mental hospital

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

The case of Vanessa Logman is one tiny step closer to a conclusion. At stake is where she will live when it's over.

Nine months after cutting a man's throat near Pilot Rock, the Pendleton mother of four attended another pre-trial hearing

Monday so judge and attorneys could compare notes on the case. Logman has undergone two independent psychological examinations to determine her mental state when she attacked a Hermiston man near Pilot Rock.

Before the assault, the Pendleton woman had a record marred only by a single traffic violation several years earlier.

"Both doctors have argued in essence she was suffering from a mental disease at the time. It would seem an easy thing to say that someone who has never been in trouble before is owed a second chance."

— **Dan Logman**, husband of Vanessa Logman

On June 4, all that changed.

Her husband, Dan, arrived home from work the night before to find dinner prepared and evidence that his boys had

been playing on the Slip 'N Slide in the yard. Unbeknownst to Dan, Vanessa, who has bipolar

See LOGMAN/10A

Bills would ease new dwellings on farms

Critics say the proposals would disrupt agriculture

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Two bills aimed at expanding affordable housing in rural Oregon would make it easier to build dwellings or permanently reside in recreational vehicles on farmland.

Advocates of House bills 2937 and 2938 say the proposals would help mitigate the state's housing shortage without undermining protections for farmland.

However, critics argue the bills would disrupt agricultural operations without having much impact on housing and could be counterproductive by encouraging short-term rentals.

"It's just not the best use of farmland," said Mary Anne Nash, public policy counsel for the Oregon Farm Bureau.

Proponents of the bills said lawmakers need to be creative in finding solutions to Oregon's housing problem.

There are limits to what can be accomplished with legislation focused on landlord-tenant relations, said Julie Parrish, R-West Linn, during a March 14 legislative hearing.

"It doesn't put new units in the mix," she said.

Oregon's land use system was intended to preserve farmland but not to create insufficient housing and perpetuate homelessness, Parrish said.

Meanwhile, HB 2937 and 2938 have restrictions that limit new dwellings and won't "upset the land use apple cart in any significant way," she said.

Under HB 2937, a single "accessory dwelling" can be sited within 100 feet of an existing home in a rural residential zone, or in a "exclusive farm use" zone with a

See FARM/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A Pendleton firefighter on Tuesday works to extinguish a house fire at 45542 Mission Road east of Pendleton.

MISSION

Fire takes down another local home

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Another house fire drove out another local family.

The blaze erupted Tuesday around 9:55 a.m. in the one-story manufactured home of Michael and Jackie Whitesell at 45542 Mission Road, a few miles east of Pendleton.

According to Cricket Nicholson, Jackie's mother, the fire was ignited when a heat lamp warming chicks fell into the sawdust in a closet area and spread to clothes.

Jackie went for a fire extinguisher, saw the flames were too big and turned her attention to getting the five children, ages 2-13, out of the home.

The Whitesells have three children of their own and are taking care of two children of a neighbor who is in the hospital. All five children are home schooled.

The Umatilla Tribal Fire Department arrived minutes after the fire started and were the first on the scene, then

See FIRE/10A



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