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WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

EASTERN OREGON TRADE AND EVENT CENTER

Manager wanted, salary still in question

Fair, rodeo leases signed and competing event dates blacked out

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center's partners agree the project needs a manager, but they are still working out the details on who that will be and how much they will be paid.

"It's got to be boots on the ground on a day-to-day basis," Umatilla County commissioner Larry Givens said. "It can't be someone who just knows marketing or just knows fair and rodeo."

During a joint work session Monday the Hermiston City

Council and the Umatilla County commissioners discussed the operations plan proposed by the EOTEC board.

The plan calls for a general manager to oversee an administrative assistant and contracted janitorial/maintenance services, while also managing the budget,

overseeing day-to-day operations, booking events and creating and implementing a marketing plan. The manager would report to the EOTEC board, which would adopt the budget and general policies, while the city council and county commissioners would appoint board members and approve funds.

City councilors said they agreed with the overall structure but wanted to see some dollar figures attached.

City manager Byron Smith, who also chairs the EOTEC board, said after some early calculations he believes that budget can support a \$60,000 to \$75,000 salary for the general manager.

The position will only oversee one or two employees, but mayor David Drotzmann and councilor John Kirwan questioned whether

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Congressman Greg Walden looks at medical supplies while on a tour of the new St. Anthony Hospital with project manager Joe Kunkel in Pendleton in Nov. 2013.

PENDLETON

City council buys in for bridge move

Enhancement group aims to gather \$102,000 for project

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The Pendleton City Council was won over by the PEP squad.

At a meeting Tuesday, the council unanimously agreed to support the Pendleton Enhancement Project in its efforts to re-use parts of the Eighth Street Bridge as a decorative feature of the 500 block of South Main Street. Acting as the Pendleton Development Commission, council members also unanimously approved a \$20,000 request from the group to help fund moving the bridge.

Chuck Wood, a former city councilor, commission chair and a current leader with the Pendleton Enhancement Project, said the community organization is on its way toward raising the estimated \$102,000 needed for the move.

The Pendleton Enhancement Project, a group of local government officials and nonprofits, has secured \$20,000 from Umatilla County and a \$50,000 matching grant from private donors.

Wood said the group is still negotiating with Union Pacific Railroad Co., which owns much of the land in the area, on where to place the bridge trusses. Plans have included placing some of the trusses by the railroad tracks and pairing them with a fence to prevent pedestrians from crossing the tracks outside of the sidewalk.

If the Pendleton Enhancement Project can't raise all the money for relocation costs or Union Pacific nixes the idea, public works director Bob Patterson said the historic bridge would be placed in storage.

Patterson said the Federal Highway Administration requires some sort of re-use or mitigation plan so the city can proceed with a long-planned replacement project.

The council also unanimously approved a \$14.9 million loan from the state to improve and replace the city's

See PENDLETON/8A

Walden uses clout to tout Obamacare replacement

Congressman's district expands Medicare more than other Republican districts

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

For Rep. Greg Walden, these are heady times.

The new chairman of the powerful House Energy and Commerce Committee helped unveil a federal health care plan to the nation at a news conference earlier this month. The Oregon lawmaker addressed a

crowd of reporters about the proposed unraveling of former President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act. Walden didn't mince words in describing the GOP mission.

"Facts are, we've arrived at the scene of a pretty big wreck and we're trying to clean up the mess," he said. "If we

See WALDEN/8A



Participants in a Hood River rally in favor of the Affordable Care Act stood for an hour Sunday, January 15 and listened to testimonials.

Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea, Hood River News

Joseph Creek restoration to use logging, burning

First major project by Blue Mountains Restoration team

By GEORGE PLAVERN
East Oregonian

Accelerated restoration is coming to the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, including an increase in logging and burning.

The U.S. Forest Service has approved a massive proposal to treat more than 100,000 acres on the Wallowa Valley Ranger District north of Enterprise, part of a broader regional effort to increase the

pace and scale of forest restoration across Eastern Oregon and Washington.

Tom Montoya, supervisor for the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, signed a record of decision for the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project on Friday. Activities will include more than 16,500 acres of commercial logging and fuels reduction, and up to 90,000 acres of prescribed burning over the next decade.

It is the first major project to be completed by the Blue Mountains Restoration

See CREEK/8A



Photo contributed by U.S. Forest Service

Swamp Creek, a tributary of Joseph Creek, flows through Wallowa County and will be subject to the Lower Joseph Creek Restoration Project.

