



# EAST OREGONIAN

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141st Year, No. 119

WINNER OF THE 2016 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

## Your Weekend



- **Taylor and the Train**
- **Robbers live at 40 Taps**
- **Arbor Day tree giveaway at Smitty's Ace Hardware**
- **Itts Cuzzen live at the Pheasant, Hermiston**

For times and places see **Coming Events, 6A**

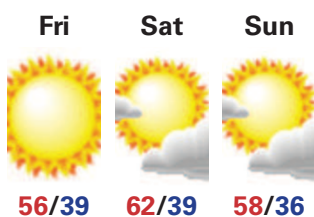
## Catch a movie



Scarlett Johansson stars in the live-action adaptation of the popular manga and anime, "Ghost in the Shell."

For showtime, **Page 5A**

## Weekend Weather



## Fired DEQ commissioners defend hiring of director

By **PARIS ACHEN**  
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Three former state environmental quality commissioners say they were fired Wednesday by Gov. Kate Brown because they defied the governor in selecting a director for the Department of Environmental Quality.

Commissioners kept the Governor's Office informed every step of the way in their search for a new director, but Gov. Brown did not make her wishes known until the "11th hour," former commission chairwoman Colleen Johnson wrote in a statement.

"She went so far as to suggest that any decision contrary to her wishes could have negative consequences," Johnson wrote.

The three commissioners — Johnson, Morgan Rider and Melinda Eden — received a phone call early Wednesday informing them of Brown's decision. The governor's

See **DEQ/10A**

## Umatilla airman Austin Bieren dies in Syria

East Oregonian

Staff Sgt. Austin Bieren, 25, of Umatilla died Tuesday while serving as an Air Force security forces airman in northern Syria.

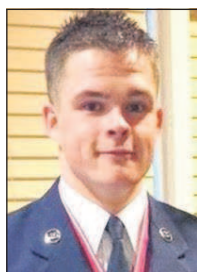
The Department of Defense released Bieren's name Thursday and stated that he appeared to have died from natural causes in a non-combat situation.

His mother Tracy Finck

said joining the military had been her son's plan from a young age.

"He was amazing, kind, smart, always wanted to join the service," she wrote in a brief message to the *East Oregonian*.

She said he leaves behind an "amazing" wife of six



Austin Bieren

years, Rachel, sister Brianne Bieren and a nephew Jaren, "who he adored," as well as parents Tracy and Jody Finck and John and Amber Bieren. His identical twin brother, Thomas, died at age 14.

Finck said Bieren played basketball and football as a Umatilla High

School student.

According to AirForce Times, Bieren is the second American serviceman known to have died in Syria. There are currently about 900 U.S. troops there providing support to Operation Inherent Resolve in the fight against ISIS.

Bieren was assigned to the 21st Space Wing at Colorado's Peterson Air Force Base.

A post by the Peterson Air Force Base's Facebook page said Bieren "was a valuable and beloved member of our team and will be sorely missed. His dedication to his country was evident in his actions — he was a superb Airman."

Rep. Greg Smith (R-Hepner) led the Oregon House of Representatives in a moment of silence Thursday in honor of Bieren.

## BOARDMAN



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Ordinance Brewing out of Boardman began canning the first of its products on Thursday starting with their EOD Double IPA.

## CAN-DO BREWERY

Ordinance begins canning, distilling to reach new markets

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
East Oregonian

A row of empty 12-ounce cans rattled down the mobile conveyor Thursday inside Ordinance Brewing, where they were washed, date-stamped and filled with a hoppy West Coast IPA.

Craig Coleman, one of the managing partners for the Boardman craft brewery, stood by as thousands of cans were sealed and snapped into orange plastic six-pack holders. For the first time, Ordinance has started canning some of its signature beers, which Coleman said will open new markets to the young business.

"We're doing what we can to get our beer in front of people," Coleman said. "It's a real crowded and loud marketplace out there."

In addition to EOD double IPA, Ordinance will be canning its Bloops blueberry wheat, made with locally grown blueberries. By the end of Friday, Coleman expects to finish canning 14 pallets, each containing about 9,000 individual cans.

Six-packs should start hitting shelves across Oregon and Washington in early April.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A crew cans IPA on the floor of Ordinance Brewing on Thursday in Boardman. This is the first run of canned product from Ordinance.

"It's a package that works," Coleman said. "Not everybody does bottles."

In fact, aluminum cans have some distinct advantages over glass bottles, Coleman said. First, cans do not allow light to penetrate into the beer, as overexposure to light can break down the alpha acids in hops and leave the beer

tasting skunky.

Cans are also easier to take on the go, which is especially useful for beer drinkers who enjoy an active lifestyle.

"There are a lot of places you can't take a bottle," Coleman said.

Ordinance hired Craft Canning

See **ORDNANCE/10A**

## HERMISTON

## Cattle from neglect case sold in auction

Hockensmith barred from owning livestock for 5 years

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**  
East Oregonian

Months after being found neglected and starving on a Hermiston ranch, more than 100 cattle were sold at the Hermiston Livestock Commission on Tuesday. A few are left on the property

and scheduled to be sold next week.

According to George Murdock, a Umatilla county commissioner, Tuesday's sale brought in \$141,656 before expenses including yardage and feed were deducted.

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Department has taken the lead in caring for the animals since they were seized from owner Michael Hockensmith in January, and has spent more than \$50,000 in feed, water and

care of the animals.

Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan said his department will be reimbursed with the funds from the sale, and any remaining money will be returned to Hockensmith.

Rowan said as part of the agreement, Hockensmith cannot participate in the purchase of livestock, nor can he ask a third party to purchase livestock

See **CATTLE/10A**

## Health problems plague UmCo

Public health director sees glimmers of hope

By **KATHY ANEY**  
East Oregonian

Umatilla County ranked near the bottom of Oregon counties in a new national report that scrutinizes health behaviors.

In the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's annual County Health Rankings report, Umatilla County was 31st of the state's 36 counties. Researchers considered smoking, binge drinking, lack of physical activity, sexually transmitted diseases, teen births and other behaviors to reveal which counties are healthy and which are lagging behind.

For Umatilla County, the news was mostly grim, but the report included at least one glimmer of hope. Smoking fell from 23 percent of the adult population in 2012 to 17 percent, which has held steady over the past two years. Seventeen percent is average among Oregon counties, but higher than the nation's 14 percent.

Obesity, poverty, inactivity, sexually transmitted infections and poor access to health care continue to plague the county, though it made incremental improvements in lowering alcohol use and number of alcohol-impaired driving deaths.

A third of residents struggle with obesity, up from 26 percent in 2012. Teen births numbered 51 per 1,000 females aged 15-19, up from the state average of 27 and the national average of 17.

Twenty-six percent of Umatilla County children live in poverty, compared with the state's 20 percent and a national rate of 12 percent. At 6.5 percent, the county unemployment rate tops the state (5.7) and the nation (3.3).

Meanwhile, Morrow County fared a little better than its eastern neighbor, ranking 20th among 36 counties. Fifteen percent of adults smoke. The county boasts fewer sexually transmitted diseases, better rates of mammography screening and less violent crime than the state average.

Both counties have a shortage of primary care physicians, dentists and mental health providers. The ratio of primary care doctors to residents are 3,730-to-one in Morrow County and 1,970-to-one in Umatilla County.

See **HEALTH/10A**



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