

PENDLETON

Muscle added to code enforcement

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

The Pendleton City Council expanded the city's code enforcement staff by 50 percent in response to a 59 percent increase in code enforcement incidents.

The council unanimously agreed to hire a half-time code enforcement officer to complement the full-time code enforcement officer the city already has on staff.

Andrea Denton, the city human resources director and a member of the housing committee that made the recommendation, pointed to internal statistics that showed code enforcement incidents have risen from 1,148 in 2014 to 1,831 in 2016.

In an email Wednesday, police chief Stuart Roberts defined a code enforcement incident as a "call for service

or officer initiated activity." Denton admitted that it was more difficult to find a part-time employee versus a full-time employee, before adding that some city departments like the Pendleton Public Library were able to staff themselves mostly with part-timers.

A couple members of the city council suggested Pendleton partner with another government like Hermiston, Umatilla County or the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to split the cost of a full-time salary to make recruiting an officer easier.

The other recommendations the council adopted are continued support of controlled burns by the fire department to control weeds and fire hazards, better coordination of code enforcement efforts between

departments, expanded use of community corrections work crews to clean up properties and prompt action against property owners in violation of the nuisance ordinance.

If history is any indicator, a step-up in code enforcement could lead to some backlash.

After the city council amended the nuisance ordinance in 2014, which included new rules on livestock, yard sale signs and other code violations, a Facebook group called "Pendleton Citizens against selective Code Enforcement" attracted 24 members, although it hasn't been active since August 2014.

The council also took other action, including:

- The council approved raising the Pendleton Convention Center parking lot rental rates for recreational vehicles from \$12 per night to

\$25 for dry camping and \$30 for electrical hook-ups.

The move was spurred by complaints from RV park owners that the city's rates were undercutting the market rate.

- The council approved a \$49,994 bid from Soft-Step Interiors for new carpeting at the Pendleton Public Library and a \$100,000 bid from Pioneer Asphalt for road patching after the city conducts utility cuts.

The carpeting project will close the library for two weeks during May.

- After meeting behind closed doors to evaluate city manager Robb Corbett, the council reopened the public meeting and offered him another one-year contract.

The offer includes a 1.8 percent cost-of-living increase, which will raise Corbett's salary to \$123,356.

BRIEFLY



Photo contributed by Glenn Graham
Mayor John Turner presents the award for youth volunteer of the year to the Pendleton High School National Honor Society, represented by president Abby Rinehart and officers of the club.

Local volunteers recognized for their service

PENDLETON — Ahead of National Volunteer Week, the city of Pendleton honored its top volunteers with an awards ceremony at the Pendleton City Council meeting Tuesday.

According to a press release from Pendleton volunteer coordinator Tiffany Hegarty, 386 people volunteered their time for the city in 2016 — 266 of whom performed a combined 3,554 hours of service.

The city honored several community members:

- David King was named Volunteer of the Year for his assistance to the Parks and Recreation Department in controlling noxious weeds growing along the Pendleton River Parkway.

- The Pendleton High School National Honor Society won the Youth Volunteer of the Year Award for providing 154 hours of support for city events and programs.

- Graham's Digital Photography received the Volunteer Group of the Year for providing its "special skills" to events throughout the year.

- The Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 922 was bestowed the Mayor's Leadership Award for its "longstanding record of service to the community."

- Tikhon Gilson, Linda Senter and Linda Wagner were all presented with the President's Service Award, a national award that recognizes citizens who have volunteered a certain number of hours over a 12-month period.

Law Enforcement Appreciation Week in May

HERMISTON — The week of May 14-20 is National Law Enforcement Appreciation Week, marking a time many like to set aside to thank and remember police officers.

Initially started in 1962 by President John F. Kennedy as "National Peace Officers Day," the honor now spans a whole week, in which businesses and individuals are asked to display blue ribbons to show their appreciation for law enforcement.

Terry Cummings, the Hermiston police chaplain, said the ribbons idea was started by a group called "COPS" — Concerns of Police Survivors. "It's made up of people who've lost loved ones in law enforcement on the job," Cummings said. "They formed the organization and came up with the blue ribbons as a memorial idea."

Cummings suggested people tie the blue ribbons on a car antenna or rearview mirror, or roll them up in the back window to display them.

"It's simply a way to say 'thanks' to law enforcement. When a law enforcement person sees the blue ribbon, they know exactly what it stands for, and it means so much to them," he said.

Cummings said those interested in picking up a blue ribbon can do so at several churches around town, as well as local businesses ACE Hardware, Banner Bank, Bi-Mart, the Chamber of Commerce, Hermiston Drug and the Hermiston

Police Department. Contact Cummings at tcummings@hermiston.or.us for more informations.

Building cleared after gun report at BMCC Hermiston

HERMISTON — Police officers from three agencies responded Wednesday afternoon to Blue Mountain Community College's Hermiston campus after receiving reports of a student with a firearm. The student turned out to be a former police officer with a carry permit, and no one was injured or in danger at any time.

BMCC's vice president of public relations Casey White-Zollman said Hermiston's BMCC staff received a report that a student saw another student with a handgun that was partially showing, and the staff contacted the Hermiston Police Department, who cleared the building as a precaution.

"We are going over the policy with (the student)," White-Zollman said.

"We still have to do an investigation to determine what happened and to determine if there will be consequences."

White-Zollman said guns are not allowed on campus, and if a student sees a gun, they are asked to report it.

"In a situation like that, police are called," she said. "Whether to clear the building is up to them."

Members of the Hermiston Police Department, Umatilla County Sheriff's Office, Oregon State Police and Umatilla County Fire District 1 responded.

Curvy fashion show includes Hermiston women

PORTLAND — A mother and daughter from Hermiston are featured during a fashion show at a plus-size clothing event.

Described as the largest plus-size consignment event in North America, Curvy Chic Closet offers women an opportunity to expand their wardrobe without taking a major hit on their wallets.

Jennifer Wall and Lillie Wall will take the runway during the event's fashion show Saturday, April 29 from 7-8 p.m. at 12505 N.W. Cornell Road, Portland. There is no admission charge.

People can purchase or trade gently used clothing while selecting from a massive collection of outfits and accessories. The Curvy Chic Closet kicks off with a special pre-sale Thursday, April 27 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Pre-sale admission is three non-food donations (such as toilet paper, menstrual hygiene products, shampoo and soap) or \$5. Donations will benefit PERIOD, a nonprofit organization that distributes hygiene product care packages to women in need.

The regular hours are Thursday, April 27 from 2-8 p.m.; Friday, April 28 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Saturday, April 29 from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, April 30 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is no admission charge for regular hours.

For more information, contact 503-848-9191, becky@curvychiccloset.com or visit www.curvychiccloset.com.

Man loses pickup, trailer to fire

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Fire ruined a pickup and damaged a fifth-wheel trailer Wednesday morning near Pendleton.

Norman Dumont was eastbound on Trail Road, a few miles east of Pendleton, around 9:45 a.m. and hauling his Cameo trailer when he said he heard a "pop" under the hood of his 2008 Dodge pickup. Dumont said he saw what he thought was steam coming from the engine and pulled over to check it out.

"I opened the hood and the fire was just a-flaming," he said.

He said he walked away and called 9-1-1.

Mike Tester said he was eastbound on Interstate 84 and saw the fire. He crossed the median to the westbound side, stopped on the shoulder and called for emergency services. He ran to the barbed wire fence and saw Dumont was out of harm's way. Tester added he wished he had a fire extinguisher, but was not sure it would have been enough.

Flames covered the cab within moments and spread



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Norman Dumont watches as Tribal firefighters extinguish the fire that engulfed his Dodge three-quarter ton pickup and fifth-wheel trailer on Wednesday on Trail Road east of Pendleton.

to the trailer, sending off plumes of black smoke. Dumont said the Cameo was top-of-the-line when he bought it in 2001, with "all the bells and whistles." He even stocked it with canned food, he said, and just took it out of the shop to get it ready for summer travel.

Dumont lit a cigarette and watched from the roadside as his pickup and trailer burned. He said he has owned property in the area for 50 years and called himself a "gentleman farmer." He said he takes care of his vehicles and had no idea what caused the blaze.

"Good thing I got a car," he quipped.

The Umatilla Tribal Fire Department arrived with an engine and knocked down the fire. Dumont also called his insurance agent, who showed up a few minutes later and reassured his client he would take care of him.

ARLINGTON

Condon teen reigns over 70th annual Jackpot Rodeo

East Oregonian

The Arlington Saddle Club is excited to have Annika Rietmann reigning as queen during the 70th annual Arlington Jackpot Rodeo.

The 16-year-old Condon teen is the daughter of Ajax ranchers Tom Rietmann and Katie Cook. She is a junior at Condon High School, where she is active in varsity volleyball and basketball. She was named to the first team all-league for two years in volleyball and was awarded first team all-league honors in basketball last year and second team all-league this year.

Rietmann is an emergency medical responder for the South Gilliam County Ambulance. After high school, she plans to study at a university to pursue a career in the medical field as either a nurse or physician's assistant.



Rietmann

In her spare time Rietmann enjoys helping her dad on the ranch, working with children and spending time with her friends.

During the rodeo, Rietmann will be riding Cash, her 6-year-old registered quarter horse, for official appearances representing the Arlington Saddle Club. She

invites the public to join her for an action-packed weekend during the Arlington Jackpot Rodeo.

The rodeo activities kick off Saturday, April 30 at 10 a.m. with a parade through downtown Arlington. The queen's luncheon follows at the United Methodist Church, 150 Hemlock St., Arlington.

Rodeo action begins at 12:30 p.m., which features traditional rodeo events, including bull riding and ranch bronc riding. Money will be added each day — the rodeo continues Sunday, April 30 at 12:30 p.m. — except for specialty events. The specialty events are junior and pee wee barrel racing, steer riding, mutton bustin' and a calf scramble. The 15th annual Kevin Johnson Memorial buckle will be awarded to the all-around cowboy or cowgirl. Rodeo tickets are \$6 for

ages 13 and up or \$4 for those 12 and under. The two-day pass prices are \$9 and \$6. The cook shack will serve food both days.

Also, be sure to bring a hearty appetite for the cowboy breakfast Sunday, April 30 from 7-10 a.m. at the Arlington Masonic Lodge, 50 Shane Drive. And the Arlington Saddle Club is hosting past rodeo royalty for a reunion in honor of the 70th year.

The Arlington Saddle Club officers include Ron Wilson, president; Jim Rucker, vice president; Jodie Gentry, secretary; Sarah Rucker, treasurer; and Eileen Potter, queen advisor.

For more information about the Arlington Jackpot Rodeo, call 541-980-1593 or 541-980-7108. For royalty-related questions, call 541-384-6251.

Unlicensed home inspector worked in Eastern Oregon

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

A fake home inspector who did work in Eastern Oregon was fined \$80,000 by the state Construction Contractors Board.

Gregory Mason Miller fraudulently used the license number of a legitimate construction contractor with the same first and last name, along with the name of a Bend business he was not actually affiliated with, to falsely claim he was licensed, bonded and insured, according to a news release from the CCB.

Enforcement manager Stan Jessup said Miller did

"significant business" over a period of several months without being certified or licensed. The board is still trying to locate everywhere he did inspections, but Jessup said they have found cases as far east as Malheur County and as far north as the Columbia Gorge.

"We've pegged him literally all over Eastern Oregon," Jessup said. "He traveled quite a distance."

Home inspectors must pass a national exam to be certified by the CCB and must hold a contractor license through the state where they are working. Jessup said the exam to become a home inspector is

more thorough than that of a regular contractor and covers "everything from the foundation to the roof."

The Construction Contractors Board has a website where consumers can look up a contractor's name or license number to verify their credentials. In Miller's case, Jessup said the fraud was difficult to detect because he was using the license number of a legitimate contractor in another part of the state with the same first and last name.

Jessup said Miller was caught because a customer tried to look up his phone number online and reached the legitimate contractor instead, who had no idea what they were talking about. Since then the office has fielded a number of complaints from real estate agents who had

paid Miller to conduct what they thought was a legitimate home inspection.

"There is no recourse there," Jessup said.

Miller has been added to the board's Buyer Beware list that warns consumers of people who have engaged in predatory and phony contracting work in the past.

Jessup said the case is a good reminder that people lie — convincingly — about their credentials and it is important to thoroughly vet a contractor before hiring them.

To verify a contractor's license, enter their license number or name at www.oregon.gov/ccb or call 503-378-4621. To report unlicensed contractors and other illegal activity, visit the website or call 503-934-2246.



Miller