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Leona White reacts after receiving a Bronze Star won by her father, World War II veteran Willard Nanegos, from Oregon State Treasurer Tobias Read as her children David Close and Alana Nanegos look on Friday at the CTUIR flag day ceremony in Mission. Willard Nanegos won seven Bronze Star medals for his service in the U.S. Army in the European theater in WWII.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Bronze Star returned to family

Presentation part of Flag Day ceremony

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
East Oregonian

While being treated at Percy Jones Army Hospital in his native Michigan, Pfc. Willard Nanegos shared with a local newspaper his experiences serving overseas in the European Theater during World War II with the famed 3rd Infantry Division.

"It seems as if I was killed 10,000 times," Nanegos was quoted in the article. "I've been in that many tight places and thought I'd never live through them."

Nanegos was not killed in the war, but he was injured twice in combat — once while driving multiple vehicles out of a burning forest to safety. He fought in eight of the 3rd Infantry Division's nine major campaigns, including the harrowing Battle of Anzio that resulted in 43,000 Allied casualties.

For his heroism on the battlefield, Nanegos received seven Bronze Star medals from the Army, one of which was finally returned to his family Friday during the annual Confederated

Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Flag Day ceremony.

Oregon Treasurer Tobias Read was on hand to give the medal back to Nanegos' daughter, Leona White, grandson David Close and granddaughter Alanna Nanegos, who live in Mission and are all enrolled members of the CTUIR.

"Your father's sacrifices to this country will not be forgotten."

— **Tobias Read**, Oregon treasurer, as he handed the medal to Willard Nanegos' daughter, Leona White

"Your father's sacrifices to this country will not be forgotten," Read said as he handed the Bronze Star over to White.

Nanegos, who died in 1967, was a member of the Odawa Indian Tribe hailing from Charlevoix, Michigan. According to Close, his grandfather came to the Pacific Northwest prior to WWII to work on the Grand Coulee Dam in Washington.

Nanegos joined the Army the day after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. After the war ended, he settled back in Oregon, where Close said he had developed a bond with the Umatilla people. It was here he married his wife, Margaret White, daughter of Cayuse

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Bronze Star was recovered from a safe deposit box of a bank and it was transferred to the Oregon Department of State Lands. The department of state lands maintains unclaimed property for the state.

ECHO

Outdoor theatre, hotel proposed

Could seat 10,000 and also include restaurant, RV park, light industrial

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

A project being cooked up by Kent Madison could double the city of Echo's tax base and solve its sewer problems in one fell swoop.

That's what Madison told a standing-room only crowd at Echo's city council meeting Thursday afternoon. He and his wife Laura are looking to create a development along Thielsen Road between Echo and the Interstate 84 interchange near Stanfield that would include an RV park, 10,000-person amphitheater, hotel, restaurant, laundromat, light industrial project and green space.

It would be quite the growth spurt for Echo, population 704.

"It's going to be different," Madison said. "I can't tell you Echo is going to be the same. You may have to wait in line at the H&P Cafe."

Since the development at full build-out would likely double Echo's water and sewer needs, overwhelming its current system, Madison said he would be willing to pay to build a new system and hand it over to the city after it was complete.

Echo has been struggling for about 12 years to get a wastewater treatment project going after the Department of Environmental Quality put the city on notice that the recycled water it has been discharging into the Umatilla River does not meet standards for biological oxygen demand. The city is on its sixth extension of an interim agreement with the agency after running into roadblocks on everything from shifting regulations to a lack of viable funding sources.

The city notified Echo resident Michael Yunker in December that if he did not voluntarily sell 10 acres of his 65-acre ranch north of Echo, the city could use eminent domain to force the sale so that it could build a pond and irrigation field to take in the water currently being released into the Umatilla River. Yunker has voiced strong opposition to selling.

Madison said he would be willing to take that water and process it which, in conjunction with a well he

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Eastern Oregon hoping for dollars from transportation package

\$8.2B funding package to focus on traffic congestion in Portland

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Legislators may be talking about relieving Portland traffic jams as they design an \$8.2 billion transportation funding package, but Eastern Oregon cities are looking forward to what they anticipate will be some extra cash for their communities too.

"We're curious how it will all fall out," said Bob Patterson, Pendleton's public works director.

The plan that is shaping up would raise \$8.2 billion over 10 years via a combination of gas taxes, fee increases and other revenue streams. The money would be used for transportation infrastructure projects across the state ranging from bridge repairs to widening highways.

Patterson said Pendleton currently gets \$32,000 for every penny of the gas tax, and the package lawmakers are considering would raise the gas tax by 14 cents. If the current gas tax

formula holds — 20 percent to cities, 30 percent to counties and 50 percent to the state — Pendleton could get a helpful boost in funds for repairing and preserving its streets.

"(Street maintenance) adds up to \$2.4 million a year we should be spending," Patterson said. "We're currently at \$800,000. We're a third of the way there. So anything will help."

Hermiston Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan said in the past, funding for transportation projects has fluctuated unpredictably from biennium to biennium depending on the whims of the legislature. The result, he said,

is that cities have to go begging for money every two years with no idea of what they might get.

"If we can plan five, six, seven years down the road, we can be a lot more effective," he said.

Morgan said whatever the final formula ends up being, cities hope it will provide some more stability in funding.

Hermiston's top priority for whatever funding comes the city's way is a multi-million dollar project to widen and improve First Place from

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Hermiston Office:
GLENN SCOTT
Veteran's Service Officer • 435 E Newport Ave.
Ph: 541.667.3125 • Cell: 541.848.8120
glenn.scott@umatillacounty.net

Pendleton Office:
JENNIFER OLSON
Veteran's Service Officer • 17 SW Frazer
Ph.541.278.5482
jennifer.olson@umatillacounty.net

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