

HOW TO MAKE BIG BUCKS DURING ROUND-UP
REGION/3A

MILWAUKEE SHERIFF DAVID CLARKE RESIGNS
NATION/6A

Letter to the editor:
"What is going on with this stupid railroad?"
OPINION/4A

EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

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Your Weekend

Catch a movie

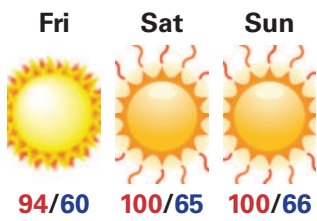


InYo Entertainment

Indian-made indie film "Neither Wolf Nor Dog" shows at Wildhorse.

For review and showtimes see Page 5A

Weekend Weather



Watch a game



La Grande vs. Pendleton
Friday, 7 p.m., at Pendleton

Murder suspect Dayton does not contest bail hearing

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Conor Michael Dayton is staying put in the Umatilla County Jail on charges of murder and more.

The 24-year-old Milton-Freewater man did not contest his bail at a hearing Wednesday in Pendleton.

Dayton appeared in court via video from the Pendleton jail, Herman Bylenga of Intermountain Public Defender Inc. by his side while the firm's director, L. Kent Fisher, was in court.

Dayton confirmed for Circuit Judge Christopher Brauer that he agreed the state did not need to show the strength of its evidence against him.

The district attorney's office charged Dayton with the murder of Marcos Gutierrez Rodriguez, as well



Dayton

See DAYTON/10A

HERMISTON

Welder, mother turns 109

Geneva Eddings celebrated her birthday Thursday

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Geneva Eddings turned 109 on Thursday, but if you want to know the secret to living a long life you'll have to ask someone else.

"I haven't the foggiest idea," she said.

Her children, who are all older than 80, have a few ideas.

"It's the genes, I guess, and good honest living," her son Ralph Eddings said.

He and his sister Muriel Eddings celebrated Geneva's birthday with her at Regency Hermiston Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, along with staff and a few other family members. They said their mother never smoked, rarely drank and placed an emphasis on fruits and vegetables that was ahead of her time.

Parts of Geneva's memory are fading, but one can't blame her for not recalling some details from her childhood or exactly how her husband proposed. She was married before many peoples' grandparents were born.

Still, she always recognizes family and can recall hiking, picnicking, fishing and other activities with her children as they grew up.

"We played games," she said. "I just enjoyed being with them. I love them."

Geneva was born in 1908, just a month before Henry Ford unveiled the Model T automobile. Her father had left Virginia to work on the railroad in the Pacific Northwest, and her mother soon followed in a cross-country train while eight months pregnant. After



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Mitch Eddings, of Snoqualmie, Washington, helps his grandmother, Geneva Eddings, with her birthday cards during her 109th birthday party on Thursday in Pendleton.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Geneva Eddings raised her family in the Tacoma area with her husband Benjamin Ralph Eddings.

Geneva was born in Troy, Idaho, the family moved to Pullman, Washington, and then Colfax, Washington, where she spent most of her childhood.

Geneva's father died of

the Spanish flu when she was 9, forcing her disabled mother to go to work in a laundry to support the family. Muriel said Geneva would come home from school each day with her

More online
For video visit eastoregonian.com

brother to a cold house and they would have to start the fire and dinner while their mother was at work. Geneva eventually dropped out of high school to help support the family.

She met Benjamin Ralph Eddings at a dance hall, and remembers thinking how good-looking he was. They married when she was 20 and the couple had three children.

"I don't know that they expected me," Muriel, the youngest, said. "I was a surprise."

Muriel was born in the midst of the Great Depression, and her father was laid

off from the railroad and traveled the country for a while until he found a job as a longshoreman. When World War II started, Benjamin was too old to be drafted and Ralph, their oldest child, was too young.

"Mother wanted to know from Dad what was the best job for a woman that could make the most money, and he said that was as a welder," Muriel said.

So Geneva learned to weld and began working on Navy ships in Tacoma. She was one of the only female welders around, but it didn't faze her.

"I was so busy that I didn't have time to have it bother me," she said.

See GENEVA/10A

"It's the genes, I guess, and good honest living."

— Ralph Eddings, son of Geneva Eddings, on the secret to living a long life

PENDLETON

Main Street Cowboys decline confederate flag vendor's application

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Round-Up week's most visible purveyor of the Stars and Bars will not be back on Pendleton's Main Street this year.

The Main Street Cowboys, the organization who hosts vendors and entertainment on Main Street during Round-Up, did not accept the vendor application of Liberty Flags & Gifts. Last year the Douglas County-based vendor drew controversy for prominently displaying and selling Confederate flags and the Cowboys drew their own for driving up and down Main Street with Confederate flags affixed to their vehicles.

Johnny Blagg, the vendor director for the Main Street Cowboys, said the current political climate and the media scrutiny were factors in the organization's decision to pass on the vendor's application.

Liberty Flags & Gifts owner Viola Moody said the business has set up a booth on



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The vendor Liberty Flags and Gifts out of Douglas County will not be back selling flags on Main Street during the Pendleton Round-Up. The vendor's application was not approved by the Main Street Cowboys.

Main Street during the past two Round-Ups, but didn't receive negative attention until "liberals" complained about the booth when it was placed on the 400 block of South Main Street in 2016.

Confederate flags were

the vendor's top selling flag, accounting for 75-80 percent of the business' flag sales in Pendleton last year, according to Moody.

Moody thought that she

See FLAG/10A

PERS task force solutions have uncertain future

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
Capital Bureau

SALEM — A task force appointed by Gov. Kate Brown has come up with some early ideas for reducing the state's unfunded pension liability, but it's not yet apparent how far they could go.

Some proposals floated at the task force's most recent meeting Monday involve substantial policy changes, and Oregon's House Republican leader has already criticized certain proposals.

Brown, a Democrat, has asked the task force, which includes representatives from both the private and public sector, to reduce the unfunded actuarial liability of the Public Employees Retirement System by \$5 billion.

The unfunded actuarial liability is the amount by which the pension system's future obligations exceed its ability to pay.

Most of the \$24.2 billion unfunded liability has already been earned by public employees. According to a 2015 Oregon Supreme Court opinion, benefits already earned cannot be modified by the Legislature.

So the state must pay down most of

See PERS/10A



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