



Barrel racers warm up their horses on the grass infield before the start of slack on Monday at the Pendleton Round-Up. The rodeo begins Wednesday. Staff photo by E.J. Harris

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WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Economists tackle pot, struggle to get handle on young industry

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon state economists are crunching numbers on a product that in many other states remains illegal — marijuana.

Under House Bill 3470, passed this legislative session, state economists have been asked to project future tax revenues from pot. Meanwhile, the state's employment department is trying to get a better sense of how many people are employed in the burgeoning legal cannabis industry.

In Oregon, sales of recreational marijuana are taxed at 17 percent of the retail sale price. Cities and counties can tack on a "local option" tax of up to 3 percent.

Late last month, state economists projected that the state will bring in net marijuana revenues of about \$142 million in the next two years, but the very short history of legal marijuana and other factors complicate forecasting.

"Currently the outlook for recreational marijuana sales and tax collections remains highly uncertain," state economists wrote in a quarterly report issued in

See MARIJUANA/9A

Ready for the crowds

Vendors bank on fans making trek, even as I-84 closed

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

The closure of Interstate 84's eastbound lanes in the Columbia River Gorge due to wildfire seems to be having little effect on the Pendleton Round-Up.

Horse trailers and recreational vehicles are filling camping areas, and street parking Monday afternoon near the Round-Up Grounds was scarce. But vendor Alvin Johnson said the crowds Saturday were smaller than in previous years, and he had no doubt air quality was to blame.

"We book these spots a year in advance, so we kind of have to be here to sell our stuff," Johnson said. "We're really dependent on customers getting here from the bigger areas."

Johnson sells American Indian jewelry and pottery at the corner of Southwest Court Avenue and 10th Street. He said he traveled from Ashland through Bend and came into town Friday, and the wildfire smoke filled air the whole way. The Oregon Department of Transportation's website shows 45 miles of I-84 remain closed from Troutdale to Hood River. According to *Oregon Public Broadcasting*, the eastbound lanes will remain closed for at least a week

See CROWDS/10A



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Alvin Johnson, a third-generation Navajo silversmith from Ashland, didn't have any trouble getting to Pendleton with his jewelry, but he worries that Portland travelers will decide not to make the trip because of smoke and detours.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Diane Bishop, of Cheyenne, Wyoming, waits patiently for customers at her hat booth near the Pendleton Round-Up rodeo grounds. Bishop isn't too worried about smoke keeping customers away, but her first view of Pendleton from Cabbage Hill last week — a lake of smoke — gave her pause. The smoke has since cleared.

HERMISTON Board hears opposition to graduation move, stalls on decision

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
East Oregonian

Hermiston will have to wait at least another month to find out where its high school's 2018 graduation will be, after a surprise motion at Monday night's school board meeting led the board to postpone the decision until October.

The board voted 5-2 to revisit discussion of a new graduation venue at their October meeting, using the next few weeks to gather more input and look at other options. Mark Gomolski and Karen Sherman voted against postponing the decision.

The board released an agenda last week, stating that Interim Superintendent Tricia Mooney would recommend the board approve a motion to hold Hermiston High School's June 2018 graduation at the Toyota Center in Kennewick, then revisit local venues for graduation in 2019. Board members had discussed the possibility at two previous meetings and issued a community survey. Several local options had also been discussed, including using the high school's Kennison Field or the new EOTEC rodeo arena.

But as the motion was introduced at Monday night's meeting, board member Jason Middleton introduced another.

"I'd like to allow the district more time to look at different options in regard to keeping it local, and revisit this in October," he said.

The motion was seconded by Dave

See GRADUATION/10A

PENDLETON

Cross country team taps into goofy side at Kyle Burnside Dress-Up Parade Fun Run

Annual event raises scholarship funds in memory of late runner

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Jedi knights and Sith lords. Ghosts and Ghostbusters. The *Tyrannosaurus rex* and whoever believed they could control the beast.

They were natural adversaries, so of course they ran together Saturday morning through a mile-and-a-half of Pendleton streets, part of the annual Kyle Burnside Dress-Up Parade Fun Run.

This year's event came close to shutting down. Smoke from regional forest fires dropped air quality most of the week and prompted schools to cut or reschedule outside activities.

More inside

Photos from Saturday's Dress-Up Parade, the unofficial kick-off for Round-Up week. **Page 3A**

Nicole Stewart, the track and cross country coach for Pendleton High School, said readings Saturday morning showed the air quality improved enough to hold the run.

Some 60 of the high school's cross country and track team participated, she said, along with several students from the Sunridge Middle School and the Nixyaawii Community School, Pendleton. Groups came as

Disney princesses and patriotic Americans, while individuals dressed as a hurricane, a Viking, even a rooster. Few came as superheroes.

Stewart admitted she was a bit concerned the teen in the *T. rex* get-up representing the Jurassic Park franchise might have difficulty breathing and probably would not run so much as shuffle.

A handful of adults also entered, including Fred Robinson Jr., animal doctor at Riverside Veterinary Clinic. He dressed as a surgeon.

Students sold \$10 tickets all week, Stewart said, for a raffle of an \$80 package at Wildhorse

See FUN RUN/10A



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Ben Bradley, a track coach at Pendleton High School, slows down a moment from running the Kyle Burnside Dress-Up Parade Fun Run to play a few licks on his guitar.

