

FARM: Facility cost \$6.3 million, including \$2.1 million from state

Continued from 1A

special day," Brown said. "Today, we really unveil a facility that matches the caliber of our program."

Preston Winn, chairman of the BMCC agriculture department, choked up as he talked about how the building will help instructors better educate the next generation of farmers, ranchers and agriculture professionals.

"I'm overwhelmed because of thanksgiving," Winn said. "Community college means just that: community."

FARM cost \$6.3 million to build, including \$2.1 million of state match and lottery funds. State Sen. Bill Hansell (R-Athena) was unable to attend Thursday's event, but sent a letter praising BMCC as a leader in innovative programs.

While FARM is less than a week old, BMCC is already thinking expansion. The school has partnered with the Pendleton Round-Up Association and city of Pendleton on FARM Phase II, which would expand animal science and veterinary classes and provide a new arena for

the BMCC rodeo team. Together, they are working to raise money for the \$10 million proposal.

In addition, BMCC timed the grand opening of FARM to coincide with the opening reception for the annual "Art About Agriculture" exhibit, organized by the Oregon State University College of Agricultural Sciences and hosted this year by the Betty Feves Memorial Gallery.

Nine Northwest artists are featured in the exhibit, with pieces inspired by this year's theme, "Places to Thrive." Lori Sams, gallery director, said the timing between the two events was intentional.

"I definitely wanted the gallery to have a show related to agriculture," Sams said. "I think it is interesting to draw that connection between art and agriculture."

The exhibit runs through Oct. 26. The gallery is open Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., or by appointment.

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Guests mingle in a shop area of the Facility for Agricultural Resource Management building during an open house Thursday on the BMCC campus in Pendleton.

SCAM: Developer said plant would add 600 jobs

Continued from 1A

he plans to appeal the fine.

"I will be doing battle with the state," he said.

Whether Doughty intends on building the plant or not, the DCBS says he does not have the required securities license to solicit or sell investments and has not registered shares in accordance with state securities law. The official order to fine Doughty also describes two investors who told the state they invested in 2007 and have never seen any return on their investment. They said Doughty had misled them on a number of points, including providing a project summary claiming the project was "poised for construction" despite the fact that Doughty did not own any land in Stanfield on which to build the project, had not applied for any of the necessary permits and no investors had committed the hundreds of millions of dollars in funding he claimed had been committed to the project.

After investigation of the two investors' experience, the department issued the fine and followed up with a news release warning the public that the project was a "communitywide investment scam."

"This is another reminder of how important it is to check out proposed investments and the person promoting them," Jean Straight, acting DCBS director, said in a statement. "Renewable energy, gold, silver, oil, gas, new tech ventures, and legal marijuana are all buzzworthy industries that scammers like to use to take your money. We urge anyone considering an investment to contact us to verify the information."

The Inland Pacific Energy Center project is known to longtime residents of Stanfield. The *East Oregonian* wrote articles in 2006 and 2007 detailing Doughty's presentations to Stanfield

city leaders. In March 2006 the newspaper reported that he told the city council odds of the plant being built were "98 to 2" and construction would likely begin within six to seven months. In a March 2007 interview, Doughty told the *East Oregonian* he had a \$504 million deal for debt financing for the project but couldn't disclose the name of the firm because negotiations of some details were still underway.

The articles describe a proposed biorefinery located on 400 acres on Canal Road that could produce up to 120 million gallons of ethanol and 96 million gallons of biodiesel per year, creating as many as 600 jobs in the area by 2010. A 2009 article said Doughty had added plans for a large co-generation plant burning solid waste. It described some Stanfield residents, including Mayor Thomas McCann, as skeptical the project would actually happen.

Blair Larsen, who became the city manager in 2013, said he spoke with Doughty once or twice since then. Although Doughty had various meetings and phone calls with city officials over the years about his plans, Larsen said the city was never put in a position to actually make a decision about granting a permit, zoning change or other approval.

"It was all just theoretical stuff," he said.

Doughty insists that he still plans to create the Inland Pacific Energy Center and that his companies have recently been restructured and "revived."

"We're ready to go," he said.

The Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services urges anyone considering an investment with Doughty to call them first at 866-814-9710.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

TAX: Referendum likely

Continued from 1A

Since Ontario is situated on the Idaho-Oregon border, the community sees a lot of shoppers who come across state lines to avoid Idaho's 6 percent sales tax.

City staff estimate about 11,000 people live in Ontario, but around 20,000 come to town to shop everyday. Those visitors cost the city for road maintenance, policing and other infrastructure.

Ontario Mayor Ron Verini believes the tax is small enough it won't make a huge difference for shoppers.

"What we're talking about here is 1 cent — 1 percent," Verini said. "You know, a person would have to spend

\$10,000 to pay approximately \$100 in taxes."

The tax is slated to take effect next year, but could be overturned through a voter referendum. Some residents plan to start a petition to refer the tax to voters in next May's election.

"I'm anticipating that this will end up on a ballot," said Scott Marlin, an Ontario resident who opposes the sales tax. "Personally, I hope the City Council isn't all in on this. I hope they have a backup plan."

Ontario voters have rejected a sales tax in all nine statewide ballot initiatives over the past three decades.



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