



Staff photo by Kathy Aney  
A team of seniors called the Gender Benders engages in a slimy tug of war Wednesday during Pendleton High School's Mud Wars at the Happy Canyon Arena. The girls won the event.

# EAST OREGONIAN

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One dollar



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Senior Zachary Ferguson gets a hug from senior Felix Aparicio after Ferguson spoke about how much their friendship meant to him during a "Breaking Down the Walls" session Wednesday at Riverside High School in Boardman.

## SMASHING WALLS

Riverside High School program helps students relate, solve problems

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

Though Rochelle Whellams had just met the teenagers at Riverside High School, she had them riveted.

"How many of you have had a time where someone judged you and it hurt?" she asked the Boardman students, to an almost unanimous affirmative response.

Whellams is a speaker from "Breaking Down the Walls," a program that aims to help students relate to one another and better deal with issues that cause them trouble in school.

The session, which was founded in 1984 as part of the "Learning for Living" program, attempts to engage students in several ways: get them comfortable with each other through games and basic conversations, break them into smaller groups to get to know each other, and have them discuss and think about their own experiences.

"The idea is that kids will start to recognize other people within our school



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Rochelle Whellams, center, leads a group of Riverside High School students in an exercise meant to show the students how much they have in common with each other during a "Breaking Down the Walls" session Wednesday at Riverside High School in Boardman.

that they don't normally associate with," said Riverside principal David Norton. "And second, to recognize that we all have baggage. Just because I may be coming to school upset, there may be a reason for that."

Norton said his staff decided to host the event because they're trying to help students who have adverse child experiences, as well as learn more about how those events affect students' success

See WALLS/6A

## HERMISTON

### Local investor in biodiesel project warns against getting 'suckered'

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Everyone hopes to get in on the ground floor of the next Microsoft or Pepsi, but investing in a start-up company is always a gamble.

Glenn Bradley, of Hermiston, can attest to that. After investing \$30,000 in the Inland Pacific Energy Center in 2006, he has yet to see a dime of profit. Last week the state called the operation — in which developer Bob Doughty sold shares in a proposed biodiesel plant in Stanfield — a "community-

"There are so many scams, I usually can see them, but this one I got suckered."

— Glenn Bradley, Hermiston investor

wide investment scam" and fined Doughty for violating Oregon securities law.

"There are so many scams, I usually can see them, but this one I got suckered," Bradley said.

Doughty maintains that the plan is not a scam and he still fully intends to build the plant. He says the project was merely delayed by the 2008 financial crisis but

his company has come into more money recently and is "ready to go." Last week he called the state's investigation "one-sided" and said he plans to fight it in court. Eleven years after putting in money, however, Bradley has his doubts he will ever see a return on his investment, and he said he knows other

See SCAM/6A

## PENDLETON

### City plan could slash \$1 million in airport debt

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

The Eastern Oregon Regional Airport is carrying \$2.5 million in debt, but action by the Pendleton City Council could provide immediate relief and a path to total repayment.

The city's auditor, Rob Tremper, and Finance Director Linda Carter explained to the city council Tuesday how the city could write off a significant amount of the loan's interest and gave a general primer on the airport's debt.

Here's how it would work:

**What is the airport debt?**

Decades ago, the city began taking loans from other city funds to subsidize airport operations. Since 1995, the airport's debt on those loans has grown to more than \$2.5 million.

The city borrows from a multitude of internal sources, but the lion's share comes from the general fund, the city's only discretionary fund that pays for services like police, fire and parks.

In accordance with a state law, Carter said the airport fund pays back the balance of the loans at the end of each fiscal year. But at the beginning of the new year, the airport takes out the loans again and re-establishes the debt.

The city is paying back the interest on the loans each year, but in name only.

According to a spreadsheet presented to the council, the city has paid more than \$1.2 million in interest since 1995. Although that money repaid to the various funds is represented in the budget, it isn't backed up by actual cash.

"What you're forgiving is an IOU," said City Manager Robb Corbett.

**How does interest write-off affect the debt?**

The loans' interest rate has long been tied to the Oregon Local Government Investment Pool and has fluctuated between 1 and 7 percent over the past two decades.

But as an alternative, state statute also allows the city

See AIRPORT/6A

### By the numbers

- \$2.5 million — Total airport debt to other city funds
- \$1.2 million — Total interest "repaid" on those loans since 1995
- \$1 million — Amount of debt taken off the books if city retroactively reduces interest rate to 0.5%

## Hurtado charged with crimes after being shot by officer

East Oregonian

Morrow County District Attorney Justin Nelson will bring charges against a man who allegedly pointed a gun at a deputy and was shot in late September.

A Morrow County grand jury recommended bringing the charges based on evidence presented by the DA.

Efren Hurtado, 26, will be charged with unlawful use of a weapon, menacing and carrying a concealed weapon. He is currently lodged in the Umatilla County Jail.

Hurtado was shot in the early hours of Sept. 22 in a parked Chevy Tahoe on the westbound side of Interstate 84 near the Boardman exit.

Nelson said the grand jury heard testimony and video indicating that Hurtado leaned out of the

vehicle and pointed his gun at Morrow County Sheriff's Deputy Aaron Haak, although he did not fire the gun.

According to Nelson, Haak did not expect anyone to be inside the vehicle, which he was tagging to be towed. But as he approached, Hurtado opened the rear passenger door, looked out, and pointed a gun at



Hurtado

Haak. Haak quickly fired two rounds, one of which struck Hurtado in the side of the head, dropping him but not penetrating his skull.

According to Nelson, Haak rushed back to his car for cover, called dispatch, and waited for other police officers to arrive. Officers arrived to find Hurtado unconscious with a revolver near his hand. Hurtado had been recovering at a Portland hospital.

