

EAST OREGONIAN TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2017

142nd Year, No. 6

WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Construction continues on the new Ranch and Home site on Monday in Hermiston.

HERMISTON Ranch & Home gets new deadline

By JADE MCDOWELL East Oregonian

Hermiston residents hoping to hit up a new Ranch & Home store for Christmas shopping will be out of luck this year after the company told the city it won't open its doors by its original goal of Jan. 1.

The Hermiston city council voted Monday to extend deadlines until June for the outdoor lifestyle retailer after owner George Dress asked for a new deadline of March 1 to fulfill require-

ments needed to be reimbursed for some development costs.

The city had previously approved an agreement with Ranch & Home to reimburse system development charges, building permit fees and some sewer costs — an incentive package worth an estimated \$107,800 — if the store being built on south Highway 395 gained its occupancy permit by Jan. 1, 2018. The agreement also stated that the city would reimburse the company \$185,000 in road development costs

if the company managed to recruit a grocery store to build next door by Oct. 1, 2018.

In the original deal, the company would be reimbursed 10 percent less — about \$11,000 — for each month it missed the deadline, for up to six months.

The company has had difficulty finding electricians, however, causing Dress to request that the full reimbursement be extended to March 1. After

See HERMISTON/8A

PENDLETON City's third marijuana grow applies for permit

East Oregonian

The building at 504 S.E. Fourth Street in Pendleton used to be an auto repair shop, but its owner now has higher aspirations.

Ron Harrison of Notus, Idaho has applied for a conditional use permit to turn his shop, Harrison's Auto Enhancer, into an indoor marijuana grow. Harrison's application will be considered by the Pendleton Planning Commission at a meeting Thursday.

The property is zoned light residential, and as a marijuana grow and not a retailer, the city's 1,000-foot buffer for schools and parks does not apply. The facility is within 1,000 feet of May Park.

Located at the base of South Hill, the proposed grow is in close proximity to residential neighborhoods. Although most marijuana businesses have been approved by the commission with minimal public opposition, the location of a proposed marijuana dispensary on Tutuilla Road was changed after garnering outcry from nearby residents.

Harrison did not return a request for comment, but he did share his thoughts on how the cannabis grow would affect nearby residents in his conditional use application.

"There will be no negative impact on the neighbors of the property, as there won't be a higher traffic rate," he wrote. "No 'new' people in the area as it's not a retail business. Neighbors are already acquainted with me."

If the planning commission approves Harrison's application, it would be third one the commission has approved since marijuana businesses became legal in Pendleton at the beginning of the year.

The commission already approved Burnswell Family Farms at 2612 N.E. Nursery Lane and GhostTown Organix at 2515 N.E. Riverside Place.

The marijuana growers would also join the three operating dispensaries — Kind Leaf Pendleton, Pendleton Cannabis and High Desert Cannabis.

UMATILLA



Fourth-grader Jose Perez runs with his teammates during practice for the McNary USA running team on Monday in Umatilla.

McNary gets kids running for fun

Elementary students learn about the team aspect of cross country

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN East Oregonian

The kids of the McNary USA running team are becoming a force to be reckoned with.

The elementary school cross country program meets every day after school as part of Umatilla School District's after school STEM program. The 26 students, ranging from second to fifth graders at McNary Heights Elementary School, spend the next few hours training, and

learning about the different ways to stay healthy. The students will run anywhere from two to three miles during practice, and races are between one and three miles.

"They've blossomed," said Emily Potts, one of the coaches of the McNary USA team. "Their fitness levels have increased. They're becoming friends."

After school on Monday, the students gather in Francisco Garcia's fifth grade classroom,

See RUN/8A



Students runs sprints while warming up before practice for the McNary USA running team on Monday in Umatilla.

State senator: Sexual harassment common in Capitol

By ANDREW SELSKY Associated Press

SALEM — A female state senator who accused a male colleague of inappropriate touching said Monday she's heard accounts from other women in the Oregon State Capitol of such behavior by men and insisted "the culture needs to change."

Democratic Sen. Sara Gelser said the accounts were relayed to her over the weekend, after a senator who was accused of making unwelcome moves on Gelser was punished on Friday.

Gelser told Oregon Public Radio's "Think Out Loud" program that the women told her about various offensive behavior.

"It can be anything from being touched too long, having a hand on your thigh either above or below your skirt, and what someone believes is



Gelser



Kruse

just a friendly way, that hand around the shoulder and the fingers beneath your shirt ... or someone that is talking to you so close that your ear is wet when you step away," she said.

Women have been touched "under the dais at a committee hearing, and, you know, it's happened on the floor of our chambers, and that is not appropriate," Gelser added.

The complaints in Oregon were

"I think as an elected leader in the Legislature, I have a responsibility to the many, many young women that work in the building, and older women too, as staffers and as lobbyists who are encountering these problems on a regular basis."

— Sen. Sara Gelser

brought to light after Senate Republican spokesman Jonathan Lockwood said a week ago on Twitter that Gov. Kate Brown and Gelser had received cash linked to Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, who recently was accused of sexually harassing and abusing many women over decades. Lockwood asked if Brown and Gelser returned the money.

Weinstein donated \$5,000 to the Democratic Party of Oregon during

the 1995-1996 election cycle, a decade before Gelser was elected to the Legislature.

Gelser, who is from the university town of Corvallis, shot back on Twitter, denying receiving any Weinstein money and asking if Lockwood would ensure that no Senate Republican "inappropriately touches or gropes" female lawmakers and staffers.

See CAPITOL/8A

