



**CLEANING UP  
HERMISTON**  
REGION/3A

**SANCHEZ EARNS  
DISTRICT TITLE**  
SPORTS/1B



# EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2017

142nd Year, No. 9

WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

## Your Weekend



- Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch
- Friends of Weston Library Book Sale
- Haunted House at White Eagle Grange

For times and places see Coming Events, 5A

### Weekend Weather

Fri	Sat	Sun
60/39	63/41	61/39

### Watch a game



Pendleton vs. Hermiston  
Friday, 7 p.m.,  
at the Round-Up Arena

## Coalition to gather support for 'cap and invest' bill

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
East Oregonian

Supporters of a proposed carbon cap and reinvestment program in Oregon are planning to kick off their statewide campaign Nov. 4 in Pendleton, pushing for lawmakers to pass the bill during the 2018 short legislative session.

The so-called "cap and invest" bill would place a limit on greenhouse gas emissions, charge companies and utilities for exceeding the limit and reinvest the money in clean energy projects such as wind and solar power, electric vehicles and public transit.

Renew Oregon, the coalition backing the bill, estimates it would raise \$700 million annually while promoting new clean energy jobs. Gov. Kate Brown is also on board, announcing her support at a screening of the Al Gore climate change documentary, "An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power."

On Wednesday, Renew

See **ENERGY/8A**



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton building inspector Ty Woolsey fills out paperwork at a job site on Terrace Drive on Wednesday in Pendleton.

# BUILDING COMMUNICATION

New building official takes unconventional path to job

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
East Oregonian

Ty Woolsey has spent only the past few years pursuing a career in building inspection, having already exhausted attempts at being a rodeo cowboy, diesel mechanic and construction worker. But those years have been good to Woolsey, who has risen to become the city of Pendleton's top building official.

It's Woolsey's job to interpret the thousands of pages of building codes and laws and explain them to the contractors and citizens who are trying to produce something on schedule and on budget. Every new structure

built has to go through him before it is finished and occupied.

A unique set of circumstances put Woolsey in an important role in the city's community development department, but the city is having trouble adding to his ranks.

Woolsey grew up on a farm in Tumalo, a small town seven miles north of Bend. His family had deep roots in the construction industry, his grandfather a contractor and his father, Chuck Woolsey, an assistant building official for Deschutes County.

The younger Woolsey spent his breaks from school helping his grandfather with construction projects, but one of his first loves was rodeo.

He competed at the amateur level

See **WOOLSEY/8A**



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pendleton building inspector Ty Woolsey, right, listens to journeyman plumber Ryan Driscoll talk about a project off Tutuilla Creek Road on Wednesday in Pendleton.

## HERMISTON

# Gas plant devaluation knocks \$934K off county tax rolls

By **PHIL WRIGHT**  
East Oregonian

The Oregon Department of Revenue knocked \$54 million off the assessed value of the Hermiston Generating Company.

The devaluation means a drop in local property tax revenue of \$934,672 for 2017-18, with education taking the brunt of the loss.

Linda Blacklock with the revenue department's valuation section said strict confidentiality laws prohibit revealing what led to the downgrade at the natural gas plant. The Hermiston Generating Co., 78145 Westland Road, Hermiston, had a real market value of \$180 million and an assessed value of nearly \$155 million for 2016-17. Blacklock said the plant's real and assessed values for 2017-18 are each \$100 million.

Umatilla County mailed tax bills this week. The power company's new values show up on its latest tax statement. Paul Chalmers, director of county assessment and taxation, said the devaluation amounts to about 1 percent of the county's total assessed



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Hermiston Generating Co. power plant on Westland Road had its assessed value lowered by \$54 million by the Oregon Department of Revenue.

value.

And the state would not tell him why Hermiston Generating's value fell, he added.

County tax records show Hermiston Generating paid more than \$2.43 million in property taxes for 2016-17, with \$900,000 of that for education: \$89,877 for the InterMountain Education Service District; \$96,520 for

Blue Mountain Community College; and \$713,602 for the Hermiston School District.

The decrease in the company's assessed value dropped the portion for the school district to almost \$400,000, BMCC's to about \$54,000 and the service district's to roughly \$50,000.

Tricia Mooney, Hermiston schools interim superintendent, said the district

planned for growth at about 3 percent, but that's now down to around 1.9 percent. She said the district will have to address the situation going forward, and it's too early to say what might result from the revenue decline.

The tax revenue for the Hermiston School District's bond fell from \$626,000 to \$411,000, according to tax statements, and other

programs and entities took similar hits.

Mosquito control for west Umatilla County stands to lose about \$16,000, the Port of Umatilla about \$8,400, and county general fund about \$155,000.

Bradley Knight, the general manager of the Hermiston Generating Plant, did not return a phone call or email seeking comment for the story.

Chalmers said the latest tax statements will also reflect the following additions:

- Umatilla School District new bond requesting \$890,000;
- the bond for Pendleton's new fire station;
- Hermiston School District's bond adjustment increase;
- And the first year for the new area of coverage for East Umatilla Health District or Medic 400. Chalmers said the health district now includes Helix, Adams, Athena and Weston and has a rate of \$1 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Contact Phil Wright at [pwright@eastoregonian.com](mailto:pwright@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0833.



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