



THANKSGIVING EDITION

TWO SPECIAL SECTIONS INSIDE:
Your guides to the 44th Hermiston Farm Fair and holiday events around the region



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WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

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PENDLETON O'Neill wins vote for board president

Stockholders nearly buck board nomination

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

A stockholder rebellion nearly toppled the Pendleton Round-Up Board of Directors pick for president.

The Round-Up's annual stockholder meeting is usually a sedate gathering where the board of directors picks a president and board members and update investors on the current state and future of the rodeo — while many sip on Pendleton whiskey.

But Tuesday's event was a dramatic departure from the standard meeting, as a large minority of stockholders tried to elect former Director Carl Culham over the board's pick, former Director Dave O'Neill.

According to Round-Up Publicity Director Randy Thomas, there are approximately 444 shareholders, and at times it seemed like almost all of them were represented in the Let'er Buck Room. A line snaked out the door as staff checked IDs

The tussle started almost immediately when a stockholder moved to close nominations after O'Neill was nominated. After a voice vote proved too close to call, a clear show of hands turned down the motion.

Another stockholder nominated Carl Culham to run against O'Neill and subsequent a motion was approved to vote through a paper ballot rather than the usual voice vote.

Indians Director Rob Collins tried to get supporters and the candidates to make speeches before voters submitted their ballots, but he was able to garner only two testimonials before almost every stockholder voted.

Round-Up volunteer Connie Caplinger said she appreciated Culham's attention to volunteers while Tim Hawkins, a former Round-Up president, said the voters should put trust in their board.

"If we trust them to run our rodeo, how the hell do

See **ROUND-UP/16A**

WALMART vs. AMAZON IN EASTERN OREGON

RETAIL BATTLEFIELD



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A semi-truck enters the Wal-Mart distribution center on Tuesday outside of Hermiston.

Big businesses compete for consumers in stores and online

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
and **GEORGE PLAVER**
East Oregonian

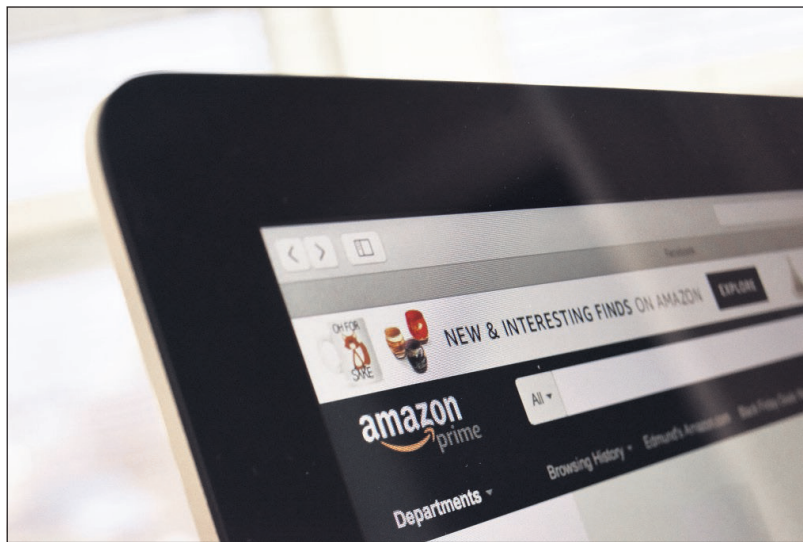
Two of the biggest names in retail are investing serious money in Umatilla and Morrow counties as they wage a multi-billion dollar battle for the hearts and wallets of consumers across the globe.

Walmart, which has stores in Pendleton and Hermiston as well as a massive distribution center just south of Hermiston, disperses an annual payroll of \$63 million in Umatilla County. Amazon, meanwhile, has grown into the world's largest online retailer, and has spent more than \$2 billion building new data centers in Morrow County alone.

Both corporate giants have established a major presence in the area, and neither appear to be letting up as they duel for shopping supremacy. That has added local jobs and grown the local tax base.

Brick and mortar

Tom Heidegger, who is based in Pasco, is the market manager for 12 Walmart stores in Eastern Oregon, eastern Washington and parts of



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

To keep up with their online demand Amazon has 16 data centers built or under construction in Umatilla and Morrow counties.

Idaho. He was at the recent reopening of the Pendleton store following weeks of major upgrades and told the crowd of associates — Walmart's term for employees — a hard truth: Walmart did not always have a good connection to the community and customers of Pendleton.

Tuesday during a phone interview, Heidegger said that situation had to change. He has been market manager for 10 years, he said, and recognized Pendleton is a tight-knit community. Previous managers of the Pendleton store did not even live in town.

More to come

Local businesses fight to capture a share of sales.
In Saturday's Edition

"They weren't doing anything, really, as far as the community goes," he said.

Shawna Nulf, going on four years as the Pendleton store manager, does live in town, as did her predecessor. Heidegger said their personal presence makes a difference. Nulf, for example, is involved with charities, including Relay for Life, and is a new Pendleton Chamber of Commerce ambassador.

That's the kind of connection the corporation can't just buy.

"Shawna has really made it her home," Heidegger said. "She's a perfect fit for the community."

Nulf said she has grown to see the Pendleton crew as an extended family. She oversees 230 employees at the Pendleton Walmart, 70 percent of whom work full time. Heidegger

See **RETAIL/16A**

Memories of Celilo

Ed Edmo recalls fishing on lost falls

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

Ed Edmo remembers the day Celilo Falls vanished.

As the waters rose on that day in 1957, the roar of the falls fell silent. Fishing platforms and the village of Celilo disappeared under a hungry Columbia River. An iconic Indian fishing area just vanished as if it had never existed.

But it had.

For Edmo and other Indians, the memory still brings pain.

"It hurt my heart to see that," he said.

Edmo was 11 that day. His father let him skip school to watch the water rise.

The Shoshone-Bannock Indian grew up near the falls, which served as a prime fishing area and trading



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Ed Edmo, who grew up near Celilo Falls, tells a story Tuesday at Blue Mountain Community College.

center, known as the "Wall Street of the West." Edmo's family moved to Celilo Falls from the Duck Valley Indian Reservation in Nevada when

he was six months old. The family lived in a house built from railroad ties. They had

See **EDMO/16A**

Keep the empty seat warm

Last Thanksgiving afternoon we arrived at the La Quinta Inn in Caldwell, Idaho, road weary in the way all parents of small children understand.

Hauling as many bags, stuffed animals and miscellaneous snack packages as my arms and shoulders could bear, I stepped up to the check-in counter.

"I have a reservation for Wattenburger," I said, "W-A-T-T..."

A smile crossed the clerk's face.

"You're Bill's son-in-law?" she asked.

She had met Bill Tatum.

It didn't come as a surprise anymore. Every employee and patron of every establishment Bill frequented got to know Bill, and vice versa. Given two minutes he would learn their hometown, parents' hometown, name and number of siblings and weekend plans — and he'd share in kind.

Bill, faithfully married to the same woman since the Carter administration, could have taught a course in speed dating.



DANIEL WATTENBURGER
Comment

See **THANKSGIVING/16A**



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