

PENDLETON

Happy Canyon introduces 2018 princesses

East Oregonian

The Happy Canyon Board of Directors recently announced that Tayler Craig and Sequoia Conner have been chosen as the 2018 princesses.

The two Pendleton women will serve as ambassadors for the 2018 Happy Canyon Night Show. Celebrating its centennial anniversary in 2016, Happy Canyon is Oregon's official outdoor night pageant.

"We are excited to have these two well-rounded, talented young women represent Happy Canyon this next year," said Corey Neistadt, Happy Canyon president. "Their family roots run deep in Happy Canyon, so we're honored to have them serve as our representatives throughout the region."

The daughter of Fermore Craig Jr. and Rachel Hoptowitz, Craig is an enrolled member of the



Contributed by Shana Bailey Photography
Sequoia Conner



Contributed by Shana Bailey Photography
Tayler Craig

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. She graduated from Pendleton High School, where she played basketball, softball and volleyball. Craig walked away with top honors at the American Indian Beauty Pageant during the 2017 Pendleton Round-Up.

Craig currently works at the Yellowhawk Tribal Health Clinic and attends Blue Mountain Community

College. She plans to further her education, including completing a medical school program to become a physician's assistant.

Many of Craig's family members have served as past Happy Canyon princesses.

Conner is the daughter of Marcus Conner and Terri Carnes. Her dad and brother are enrolled members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation,

and Conner and her mother are enrolled members of the San Carlos Apache Tribe in San Carlos, Arizona.

Conner graduated from Pendleton High School, where she participated in basketball and softball. In addition, she served two years on the school's Native American board of representatives as a member at large and as secretary.

She currently attends Blue Mountain Community College and plans to transfer to the University of Oregon to obtain a bachelor's degree in business management with a minor in art.

The 2018 Happy Canyon Indian Pageant and Wild West Show is presented nightly Sept. 12-15 during Pendleton Round-Up. Advance tickets, which are available year-round, are \$15-\$24. They can be purchased by calling 800-457-6336 or via a link at www.happycanyon.com.

County to defer sending juveniles to NORCOR

East Oregonian

After a report of inhumane treatment at the juvenile jail at the Northern Oregon Regional Correctional Facility, Umatilla County has decided to stop sending youth detainees to The Dalles facility.

According to a Friday email sent by Umatilla County Community Justice Director Dale Primmer, youth in county custody will be directed to other facilities "until the complaints are evaluated and, if necessary, remedied."

During this period, juveniles will be sent to either the Walla Walla County Juvenile Justice Center or a facility in Deschutes County.

"The most common placement is Walla Walla," Primmer said in an interview.

Primmer said the county would continue to send many of its detainees to Walla Walla while juveniles charged with more serious crimes or in need of a long-term treatment program would be sent to Deschutes County or another facility. He said the county has no current detainees from Umatilla County at either NORCOR or Walla Walla.

The Oregon Youth Authority also announced Friday it would stop sending children to facility.

"Some of the allegations

in the report are certainly concerning because they suggest that the approach is far more focused on punishment than on rehabilitation," Benjamin Chambers, spokesperson for OYA, told Oregon Public Broadcasting.

At NORCOR, offenders as young as 12 faced discipline including isolation for minor infractions, according to the report from Disability Rights Oregon. Most youth reported spending three to six hours per day locked in their cells. Youth could spend weeks "on disciplinary status," according to Disability Rights Oregon attorney Sarah Radcliffe, in which they could not participate in any group activities, had to eat alone, received solitary education in their housing unit and could have phone calls or visits from family.

NORCOR Director Bryan Brandenburg disputed much of the report, but admitted some of the rules were "silly" and would be replaced or changed. He also committed to better documenting isolation incidents and creating grievance and appeals processes for juveniles that get into trouble.

On Wednesday, the Wasco County Board of Commissioners called for an investigation and a transfer of control to an oversight committee.

HERMISTON

New Hope girls tackle 64 gingerbread houses

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The sugar highs were palpable as dozens of teenage girls decorated 64 gingerbread houses at New Hope Community Church on Friday night.

The houses were baked by Shawn Lockwood, after youth pastor Tim Beal asked her to expand what has always been a family Christmas tradition in the Lockwood home.

"We invited his family over to decorate houses with us one year and he asked, 'Would you do it with the youth group?'" she said, adding that several of them had also brought friends from school.

Girls each got a house of their own and a plate to fill up with colorful piles of candy from several tables' worth of gumdrops, mints, Skittles and a variety of other treats. Walls and roofs were soon laden with candy, but plenty of it made it into the teens' mouths, too.

Clair Anderson, who used colorful sticks of gum to create shingles on her roof, said she "just grabbed stuff" from the table and



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Megan Joyce, left, Claire Anderson, Emily Sharon and Chloe Samms decorate gingerbread houses at New Hope Community Church.

then decided where it would go once she started laying down frosting.

Megan Joyce was outlining her roof in purple jawbreakers, giving it what she described as a "Hansel and Gretel" theme.

"My favorite part of

decorating gingerbread houses is you get to make it just creatively, and make it whatever you want," she said.

Cidney Estes was busy poking the candy into the green frosting — her favorite color — that she

had spread liberally all over her house.

Her favorite part? "That I get to eat along the way," she said.

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HERMISTON

Downtown value increased by \$8 million in four years

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Hermiston's urban renewal district has increased in value by more than \$8 million during its first four years of existence.

The Hermiston Urban Renewal Agency began in 2014 to promote downtown Hermiston by re-investing property tax growth back into enhancements to the downtown core. The area covered by HURA has increased in value by 20 percent, from \$42.2 million to \$50.5 million.

Assistant city manager Mark Morgan said in a news release that much of the growth has come from the new Holiday Inn Express. HURA's revenue has increased by \$100,000 in the first year of the hotel's operation. The hotel was given a \$36,400 façade grant from HURA and \$50,000 for sewer improvements from the city of Hermiston.

Other investments of HURA back into downtown have also helped raise property values, including façade grants to various businesses and a

private-public partnership with Mitco Investments to create a new 50-space parking lot open to the public that can be counted toward parking requirements for future commercial development nearby.

"If the main goals of an Urban Renewal Agency are to increase the taxable value and eliminate barriers to new private investment, then I think we can safely say we're hitting it out of the park so far," Morgan wrote.

The city plans to begin building a new festival street next to city hall using urban renewal funds this spring, and a new senior center being built at the end of the street is expected to draw more traffic downtown. Morgan said projects in the downtown area were about contributing to "critical mass."

"The more people we can get to come downtown on a daily basis, the more viable it makes the area for investment by private businesses which depend on passing traffic," he said.

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BRIEFLY

May take 'weeks' for info on police shooting

Ten days after a Pendleton police officer shot a man running from the Walmart parking lot, the public still does not know that officer is, who they shot and how the suspect was armed.

And Baker County District Attorney Matt Shirtcliff, who was put in charge of the investigation Dec. 5, said it could take "weeks" for that information to be released.

Shirtcliff said Thursday that he is still reviewing information and that Oregon State Police continues to investigate.

Shirtcliff did say that the man who was shot has been moved out of intensive care at Oregon Health and Science University hospital in Portland and his condition has been upgraded.

City council to discuss public records fees

HERMISTON — The Hermiston City Council has its final meeting of the year Monday.

The council will discuss a proposal to change the city's fee structure for public records requests to include a \$35 per hour processing fee — paid in increments of 15 minutes — for "lengthy" public records requests that take more than 15 minutes to complete.

According to information in the council's agenda packet, the city spends approximately \$21,000 per year of staff time fulfilling public records requests, some of which take hours to fulfill. Since the city's current fee schedule charges for physical copies and most are now delivered

electronically, the city has had requests that cost up to \$2,000 to fill and yet did not cost the person requesting the records anything because they were given electronically.

The proposed processing fee would help recover costs for such lengthy requests, particularly in light of the fact that the legislature passed a bill this summer setting a 10-day time-frame for fulfilling most requests.

On Monday the council will also discuss a resolution bringing city building codes in line with updated state ones. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at city hall, 180 NE Second St.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

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