

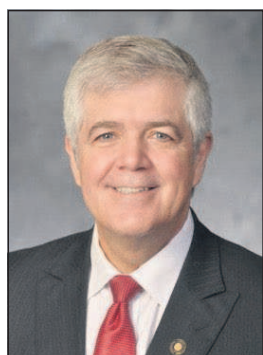
EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Cliff Bentz

Rep. Bentz picked for Senate seat

SALEM — Rep. Cliff Bentz, an Ontario Republican, was selected Thursday to fill the Senate seat for District 30, the largest in the state.

Commissions and courts in Baker, Deschutes, Jefferson, Lake, Wasco, Grant, Harney, Malheur and Wheeler counties voted to appoint Bentz to finish the remainder of Sen. Ted Ferrioli's term.

Ferrioli, a Republican from John Day, officially resigned from office Nov. 22 to begin his appointment as a member of the power council, which oversees electrical energy co-operatives, public utility districts and hydroelectric generation facilities, along with planning, conservation and management of other renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar and geothermal.

The vote took place at the Grant County Regional Airport in John Day after the commissioners interviewed Bentz and another candidate, Dr. Eric Wattenburg, a family, emergency and urgent care doctor, small business owner and medical radio show host from Bend. Suzan Ellis Jones, a rancher and Baker County Republican Party chair from Bridgeport, was also nominated as a candidate but did not participate in the interview process. Republican precinct committee persons from District 30 nominated the candidates.

Bentz, a rancher, farmer and attorney, joined the Oregon House of Representatives in 2008. He has been on the revenue committee since he was first elected, and was vice chair in the last two sessions.

"The Senate Republicans are excited to welcome Representative Bentz to our caucus," said Senator Jackie Winters, R-Salem, in a press release. "Rep. Bentz will be a tremendous addition to our team, and I look forward to working with him in the sessions to come."

Ferrioli was first elected in 1996 and his term expires in 2021.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Budtender Janice Garrett weighs an order of marijuana for a customer at Kind Leaf on Thursday in Pendleton.

AG takes potshot at pot shops

Pendleton dispensary owner says 'business as usual' after DOJ policy change

By ANTONIO SIERRA and CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
EO Media Group

Although U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions reopened the door to enforcing the federal prohibition on marijuana in Oregon, Pendleton marijuana entrepreneur Brandon Krenzler isn't sweating it.

As Oregon's top politicians issued terse statements condemning Sessions' rescission of a 2013 Department of Justice memo that eased enforcement on states where the drug is legal, Krenzler, the co-owner of the Kind Leaf Pendleton marijuana dispensary characterized the decision as a "scare tactic."

"I don't find it to be very worrisome," he said.

He said it will be "business as usual" at Kind Leaf, Pendleton's first recreational marijuana retailer, and will proceed with plans to start Burnswell Family



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions on Thursday rescinded the Cole memo, set out guidelines for federal prosecutors in states that had legalized marijuana to focus their resources on larger-scale concerns.

Farms, an affiliated cannabis grow recently approved by the city's planning commission.

Although marijuana remains illegal under federal law, the Obama-era policy, referred to as the Cole Memo,

set out guidelines for federal prosecutors in states that had legalized marijuana to focus their resources on larger-scale concerns such as trafficking

See MARIJUANA/8A

Forum to discuss marijuana

PENDLETON — Brandon Krenzler will share more of his thoughts on the cannabis industry and marijuana legalization at the 2018 Eastern Oregon Forum opener.

Krenzler, partner/owner of Kind Leaf, a cannabis dispensary; Steve Hardin, manager of emergency services at CHI/St. Anthony Hospital; and Dr. David Conant-Norville, a child and adolescent psychiatrist with Mind Matters clinics in Pendleton and Hillsboro; will tackle the topic of "Legal Marijuana in Pendleton: One Year Later."

The forum is Tuesday, Jan. 16 at 7 p.m. in Science and Technology Building Room ST-200 at Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. The forum is open to the public and tickets are \$5 at the door and free for students. People can purchase a \$15 membership (\$25 for couples) for admission to all four forums for the season.

The Eastern Oregon Forum is a collaborative effort between BMCC, InterMountain Education Service District, East Oregonian, American Association of University Women and Harriet Isom, a former United States ambassador. For more information contact Karen Parker at 541-966-3177 or karen.parker@imesd.k12.or.us.

Local libraries work to stay relevant

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

Almost everyone now has a smartphone in their pockets — a portal to random facts or the president's stream of consciousness. As information becomes easier to access, public libraries have had to examine the services they provide and prove to patrons that they remain relevant.

Proof of relevance is clear for many rural librarians.

"We may be the only internet access people have, so we provide that," said Kristin Williams, the director of the Athena Public Library. "I'd definitely say we're seeing a lot more people use digital items. We check out books to people's iPads and Kindles. Digital circulation has gone up."

Several rural librarians in Umatilla County said print media is still the most popular resource at their libraries.

Echo City Administrator Diane Berry said each town has had to assess its own needs, and the library adapts accordingly.

"As the economy declined, people had let their cable TV drop," she said. "We had a large video collection because there's no



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Patrons of libraries in the SAGE system, like the one here in Pilot Rock, can look up and order any material offered in the system and have it delivered to their local library branch.

See LIBRARIES/8A



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