

LUNAR TRIFECTA THIS WEEK
NATION/7A



Playing for Liam

Pilot Rock head girls basketball coach Dan Diest and player Sarah Lambert wear camo at Saturday's game against Culver in honor of Liam Flanagan. The 8-year-old died a week ago from necrotizing fasciitis, a flesh-eating disease that started after the Pilot Rock second grader injured himself in a bike accident.

For more on the game and event, see Page 1B.
Staff photo by Kathy Aney



EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Short session a tight fit for big proposals

Local legislators talk about their bills, goals in 35-day assembly

By PHIL WRIGHT
and GEORGE PLAVEN
East Oregonian

Rep. Greg Smith of Heppner said he anticipates long days when the Legislature's short session convenes Monday.

The Republican representing House District 57 has eight committee assignments, including vice chair on the House committee on revenue, co-vice chair on the joint committee on ways and means and co-chair on a ways and means subcommittee.

"I'm really going to spend

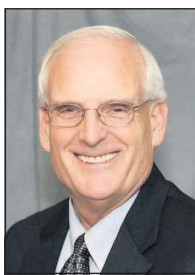
the vast majority of my time working policy issues through money," Smith said.

Some issues are heavy lifts for the 35-day session, such as the implications the federal tax bill carries for Oregon and the state's budget.

"Oregon is 100 percent connected with federal tax law," Smith said, so lawmakers need to determine whether any parts of Oregon's tax law should break those connections. That's complicated, he said, and the conversations will not be easy.



Smith



Hansell



Barreto

Senate President Peter Courtney, D-Salem, said at an Associated Press forum Monday "we've got a serious budget issue" because of an expected deficit of \$200 million to \$300 million stemming from those changes.

Republican Sen. Bill Hansell of Athena said reforming the Public Employee Retirement

System is another major piece that comes with no easy answers. Democratic Gov. Kate Brown's task force on how to cover some of the system's \$20-billion unfunded liability included selling off state universities and the State Accident Insurance Fund. Hansell called those bad ideas. SAIF, he said, is one of Oregon's best

functioning programs, so selling that makes no sense.

Hansell said he believes the short session should be about tweaks to the state's budget, approving legislation that has broad bipartisan support and amending bills that made it into law from the previous session.

Senators get to propose one bill each while representatives get two, and lawmakers have just 10 days to shuttle legislation through both chambers.

The bills

House Bill 4106 requires the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife to prepare a report each biennium on the change in wolf population. Legislators would then allo-

cate money from the general fund to the Department of Agriculture's Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program that "fully reflects the estimated change."

The bill is spearheaded by Rep. Greg Barreto, R-Cove. Co-sponsors include Sen. Hansell, as well as Rep. Brad Witt, D-Clatskanie, and Sen. Herman Baertschiger Jr., R-Grants Pass.

The idea, Barreto said, is simple — compensation for ranchers would correlate directly with the number of wolves living in the state.

"It's one of those bills that shouldn't be controversial," Barreto said. "In fact, it

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Staff photo by E.J. Harris

An island in the fog

A layer of receding fog on Monday exposes the offices of the InterMountain Education Service District overlooking Pendleton.

Carbon pricing unlikely this year

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

SALEM — State legislation to require massive polluters to pay for their carbon emissions is unlikely to move forward this year, legislative leaders said Monday.

House Democrats lack enough votes to pass the "cap and invest" bill in the House of Representatives, said House Republican Leader Mike McLane of Powell Butte.

Oregon Senate Majority Leader Ginny Burdick, D-Portland, echoed doubt about the proposal's prospects in 2018.

"It's an issue that needs to be dealt with. My personal opinion is that we most likely will not be able to get over the finish line," said Burdick, who supports the proposal.

But House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, said she

See CARBON/8A

HERMISTON

Downtown festival street construction begins Thursday

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The street in front of Hermiston City Hall will close Thursday and not re-open until Memorial Day as contractors transform it into a festival street designed to host events.

Moreno & Nelson Construction of Walla Walla will begin work on Northeast Second Street between Main Street and Gladys Avenue this week. An ad-hoc committee of business owners helped create the street's design, which was then finalized by city engineers Anderson Perry & Associates.

"We're to the point of



Contributed image

This concept image shows the proposed Hermiston festival street improvement project.

construction and we're very excited about that," city planner Clint Spencer told a group of downtown business

owners at an informational meeting Monday.

The project will put the sidewalk and lanes of travel

on the same level, separating pedestrians from vehicles using trees and short posts called bollards instead of a curb. During events such as farmer's markets or arts festivals, the street — which will feature decorative brickwork, landscaping, lighting and other elements — can be blocked to vehicle traffic.

Representatives from Moreno & Nelson Construction answered questions about access to building entrances, cleanup and other concerns Monday, and said they hoped to make construction as painless as possible for nearby businesses and First United Methodist Church. While the sidewalks in front

of businesses like Scrubs Life and Brickhouse Coffee & Bistro will be missing for part of the construction phase, contractors plan to lay down gravel and take other steps to make it easier for the public to access the buildings.

They said the best thing people can do is spread the word that though there will be work going on during the day Monday through Friday businesses are still open. The same portion of Second Street has been closed for the last three Decembers for the city's Christmas tree and light display.

Future phases will extend
See FESTIVAL/8A

