



# EAST OREGONIAN

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142nd Year, No. 78 WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD \$1.50

## SETTING UP CAMP

Oregon Military Department investing millions in Camp Umatilla for training facility

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

The former Umatilla Chemical Depot may not look like much now, but the site manager for Camp Umatilla thinks it can become the Oregon Military Department's premier training facility.

"We will stand this up to any facility in the state," said retired Lt. Col. Fritz McReynolds.

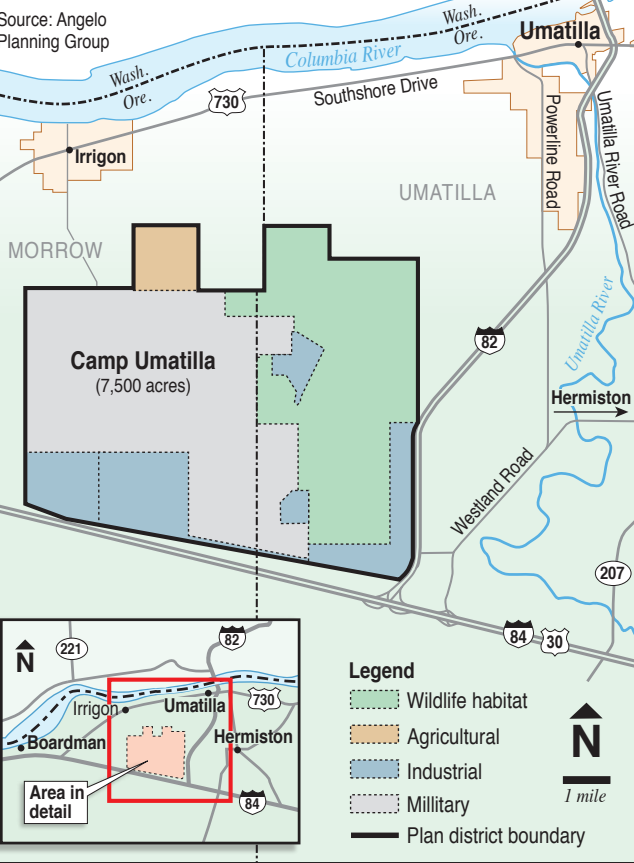
The Oregon Military Department has spent \$2 million on infrastructure upgrades since the U.S. Army signed over 7,500 acres of the former depot for an Oregon National Guard Training Center known as Camp Umatilla in November (the local Columbia Development Authority is still waiting for the Army to transfer their portion, which will be used for private economic development and a wildlife preserve). The department plans to spend another \$25 million in the next three years for remodels, demolitions and new construction.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

### New Camp Umatilla

7,500 acres of the former Umatilla Chemical Depot have been transferred to the Oregon Military Department to develop a National Guard training facility.



The original Umatilla Depot post headquarters building at Camp Umatilla is currently abandoned, but plans are in the works to retrofit the old building and reopen it. The Oregon Military Department plans to create a representative "historical district" inside Camp Umatilla with roughly 12 buildings preserved with as much historical authenticity as possible.

tions and new construction. After that, they will build a \$39 million infantry training schoolhouse.

They have their work cut out for them. The chemical weapons may be gone but asbestos, mold, broken pipes and hantavirus-carrying mice plague some of the 1940s-era buildings that have been "mothballed" for years. It has been a careful process figuring out what can be re-used without any health, safety or environmental concerns.

"Some of the buildings we're looking at preserving, they're just too far gone," McReynolds said. "Some buildings were not meant to be here after 50 years. They just weren't built to that standard."

See CAMP/10A



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

The Oregon Military Department has already spent \$2 million in infrastructure upgrades at Camp Umatilla including the installation of towers and other upgrades at the preexisting gun ranges on the post.

## PENDLETON Project Vahana takes first test flight

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

Project Vahana only went 16 feet into the air for 53 seconds, but the team behind the unmanned aerial system were ecstatic.

Representatives from A<sup>3</sup>, the Silicon Valley subsidiary of Airbus and the Federal Aviation Administration were on hand to watch the first test flight of its air taxi vehicle at the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Range on Wednesday morning.

The taxi is 1,652 pounds and nearly 19 feet long,



Photo courtesy of A<sup>3</sup>

A<sup>3</sup> tested their air taxi vehicle for the first time at the Pendleton UAS Range Wednesday.

See VAHANA/10A

## Pierce gets 212 years for sexual abuse

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Jeffrey Allen Pierce blinked twice into the camera when he heard Circuit Judge Christopher Brauer sentence him to prison for more than 200 years.

Pierce, 40, a former Milton-Freewater gun shop owner, chose to appear Friday afternoon in the Pendleton courtroom via video from the Umatilla County Jail for sentencing on 36 counts of felony sex crimes.

His victim, now a 17-year-old girl, was there in person with a cadre of supporters

See PIERCE/10A



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