

What will \$100,000 get you?

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

The Umatilla County Fair has a new deal to rent space from the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center for \$100,000.

Housing the fair was central to the design of the 75-acre EOTEC, complete with more than 80,000 square feet of barn space and a 25,500-square-foot exhibition and event hall. The entire project, including a rodeo arena, cost \$16 million to build.

The fair takes place during the second full week in August, and more than 80,000 attend. The fair gets full use of EOTEC for six weeks — from three weeks before fair week and for two weeks after.

Umatilla County commissioners have said the \$100,000 price tag is a more than fair rate when you look at what other venues offer. That same amount, for example, would pay for almost eight weeks at the Pendleton Convention Center, which provides 40,000 square feet of space but has no barns.

The *East Oregonian* called other large venues within a 60-mile radius and asked how far \$100,000 would go. This is no apples-to-apples comparison, but rather a rudimentary test of whether the Umatilla County Fair is getting a fair price.

Pendleton Round-Up Grounds

What: Like the names says, this is home to the Pendleton Round-Up and much more.

Size: 25.3 acres
Major facilities include the 17,000-seat arena, capable of hosting rodeos and concerts, The Pavilion with 22,000 square feet of space for equine and livestock events, and The Let 'er Buck Room, the iconic bar that seats approximately 250 people or 600 if they stand (perhaps more during the Pendleton Round-Up).

Cost: \$40,000 for five-day use of the full facility.

What would \$100,000 get you: 12-and-a-half days.

Randy Thomas, Round-Up publicity director, said the cost can be subjective. The Round-Up maintains the grounds all year and donates the use of grounds to 4-H, Pendleton High School for the football team, and other youth groups and events.

“Others uses are highly situationally dependent,” he continued. “Is it nonprofit use, or for profit use? If tickets are sold, typically our ticketing system is requested. What kind of set-up, cleaning, maintenance is involved to



The Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center.



The Pendleton Round-Up Grounds.

meet specific needs? Is this a first time event that we are encouraging?”

The Pendleton Convention Center

What: City-owned-and-operated center that houses events ranging from Pendleton Bike Week to quilt shows to basketball games.

Size: 40,000 square feet
Major facilities include the Main Hall at 13,216 square feet that can seat 900 for a banquet, 11 meeting rooms throughout the building, and a 500-car parking lot.

Cost: \$1,860 a day for nonprofit organizations, such as the Umatilla County Fair.

What would \$100,000 get you: Almost 54 days (eight weeks) of use for a nonprofit.

Wildhorse Resort & Casino

What: Gaming and entertainment resort owned by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton.

Size: The whole resort is big, but the casino provides more than 14,300 square feet for events and meetings.

Major facilities include the Rivers Event Center, the 6,700-square-foot room with a stage capable of holding

260 people for a banquet or up to 960 for a reception, and Cayuse Hall, a meeting room with 4,420 square feet of usable space.

Cost: Approximately \$1,200 per day to rent all the space.

What would \$100,000 get you: A tick more than 83 days (almost 12 weeks).

Diane Long, Wildhorse marketing director, said Wildhorse is set up to support guests 24/7.

“This includes room access, security, food etc.,” she said. “So if a group rents space for three days it is theirs for those three days.”

The only limitation may be after-midnight catering support. “Food is available, of course,” she said, “but we would probably make special arraignments for catering support after midnight.”

The TRAC (Trade Recreation Agricultural Center), Pasco

What it is: A large complex that hosts conventions, sporting events and concerts. Franklin County owns and operates TRAC with financial support from the city of Pasco.

Size: 22 acres overall.

Major facilities include the 40,000-square-foot Exhi-

bition Hall, the live-sized arena and multiple parking lots.

Cost: The entire site is available starting at \$12,000 a day. The second day costs \$10,000, and each day after is \$8,000.

What would \$100,000 get you: 11 days, 18 hours.

TRAC event manager George Rodriguez said events can run 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., and probably the largest event is an annual sportsman show, which uses the whole site. Tom French, the TRAC’s general manager, cautioned while the center has much to offer and accommodates a variety of events, it would not be able to hold a county fair.

Walla Walla County Fairgrounds, Walla Walla

What: Home to the Walla Walla County Fair

Size: 90-some acres
Major facilities include the Community Center, with more than 12,000 square feet that can hold 798 people, the Expo Building that provides 33,600 square feet and can hold a rodeo, and the covered outdoor arena spanning 11,200 square feet.

Cost: About \$3,333 per day.

What would \$100,000 get you: 30 days.

Koren Schmaltz, the exhibition and rental coordinator for the Walla Walla County Fair, explained the fair in the past rented its grounds to the Walla Walla Balloon Stampede for \$10,000 for three days. At that rate, she said, \$100,000 gets 30 days of use.

Getting that space might be tough. Schmaltz said the Community Center, for example, is booked out for a year.

Contact Phil Wright at pwright@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0833.

PENDLETON

PHS principal to resign at end of school year

East Oregonian

After he finishes his fifth year with the school district, Dan Greenough will resign as Pendleton High School principal.

Superintendent Chris Fritsch said Thursday that Greenough submitted his resignation letter in early January, stating he needed to look for “new opportunities.”

Fritsch said he and Greenough are working through a transition plan and the district is accepting applications for his replacement.

Greenough didn’t respond to a call seeking comment.

Pendleton High School saw improvements under Greenough’s watch.

The high school’s graduation rate rose from 86.2 percent in 2013-2014, his first year at the school, to 94.7 percent in 2016-2017.

Although the Oregon

Department of Education hasn’t assigned overall scores for schools since the 2013-2014 school year, Pendleton High School earned a Level 5, the highest rating, for its graduation rate on its 2016-2017 report card. Among its four other performance indicators, Pendleton High School didn’t earn below a Level 3.

After a round of layoffs over the summer, Greenough’s responsibilities expanded to include overseeing the Pendleton Technology and Trade Center, which houses Hawthorne Alternative High School and some of the district’s career technical education programs.

Greenough was hired by the district after previously serving as a principal at Weston-McEwen High School and Onalaska High School in Southwestern Washington.



Greenough

BRIEFLY

Grants available for preservation projects

SALEM — Thousands of dollars in grants are available for historic preservation projects throughout the state of Oregon.

Grants for work on historic properties and for archaeology projects are available through the State Historic Preservation Office. The annual grants provide up to \$20,000 in matching funds for preservation projects. Opportunities include:

- The Preserving Oregon Grants fund preservation of historic buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Work may include non-maintenance preservation like window repair, roof work, foundation projects, and plumbing and electrical needs.

- The Diamonds in the Rough Grants help restore or reconstruct the facades of buildings that have been heavily altered over the years. The grant projects return buildings to their historic appearance and potentially qualify them for historic register designation.

Potential applicants can visit with preservation office staff about potential grant projects and gain assistance with the online grant system. Also, grant workshops on project planning, grant writing and using the online grant application will be available. Free workshops are March 8 and 13 in Salem. In addition, webinar workshops will be available March 15 and 22.

For more information about the grants and workshops, contact Kuri Gill at kuri.gill@oregon.gov, 503-986-0685 or visit www.oregonheritage.org.

Kiwanis seek scholarship applicants

HERMISTON — The Hermiston Noon Kiwanis Club is accepting applications for its Perry Johnson and Russell Dorran post-secondary

education scholarships.

Current seniors at Hermiston High School or graduates of Hermiston who are attending college in academic programs are eligible to apply. Applications are available at the HHS counseling office or the Hermiston Chamber of Commerce, 1055 S. Highway 395, Suite 111.

Evaluation of applicants includes academic record, community service, leadership qualities and financial need. The applications must be submitted by Friday, March 23. Interviews with potential recipients will be scheduled.

The scholarships are given in memory of a pair of past Kiwanis members. A Baptist minister, Johnson championed youth services and supported education. Dorran was a charter member of the club, as well as the Hermiston Elks Lodge, Hermiston Development Corporation and Blue Mountain Community College board.

For more information, contact George Clough at 541-567-6024, 541-314-3182 or Hermiston Noon Kiwanis Club, P.O. Box 375, Hermiston, OR 97838.

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

Wolf compensation bill clears initial hurdle

By MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI
Capital Bureau

SALEM — A proposal tying the amount of money available to ranchers for livestock losses to Oregon’s wolf population to Oregon’s wolf population has cleared its first hurdle.

Under House Bill 4106, Oregon lawmakers would be required to appropriate money to the state’s wolf compensation fund based on the population of the species, to the extent practicable.

The bill will be scheduled for a work session during the next meeting of the House Agriculture Committee on Feb. 13, allowing the proposal to survive an initial legislative deadline, said Rep. Brian Clem, D-Salem, the committee’s chair.

Several ranchers testified that it only makes sense to increase compensation funding as the number of wolves in Oregon continues rising. State wildlife regulators currently peg the wolf population at more than 100, though some ranchers consider this a low estimate.

In Wallowa County, which is home to eight confirmed wolf packs, it costs up to \$30,000 a year to have a range rider patrol for the predators, said Rod Childers, a rancher in the area.

“One range rider is not cutting it,” he said. “There’s no way he can respond to all those different packs.”

The Oregon League of Conservation Voters opposes HB 4106 because it would confirm the “falsehood” that rising wolf populations

will necessarily result in more livestock kills, said Paige Spence, the group’s Oregon conservation network director.

“Predation rates have not increased with Oregon’s increased wolf population,” she said.

Sean Stevens, executive director of the Oregon Wild environmental group, said problems with fraud and abuse of the wolf compensation fund should be resolved before the program is expanded.

Counties have recommended the disbursal of compensation funds without sufficient input from local committees, sometimes in areas with no wolves or confirmed deprecations, he said.

Childers, the Wallow

County rancher, said that wolf compensation funds are well-vetted.

“We do the best we can on the ground,” he said. “I don’t believe there’s widespread fraud in any of our programs.”

In some cases, wolf compensation funds are used to prepare for the arrival of wolves in regions they’ve yet to be documented, said Todd Nash, a rancher and chair of the Oregon Cattlemen’s Association’s wolf committee.

For example, the money pays for the disposal of livestock and wildlife carcasses, which would otherwise attract predators, as well as the installation of fladry, which is rope adorned with ribbons to deter predators.

“If they’re being proactive, that’s a wonderful thing, isn’t it?” Nash said.

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