



BEST IN SHOW
NATION/6A



LOCALS READY FOR RUN AT STATE TITLE
SPORTS/1B

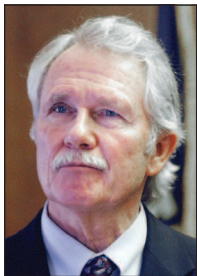
House OKs protection for seed growers
OREGON/10A

EAST OREGONIAN

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2018

142nd Year, No. 86 WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD One dollar

Report: Kitzhaber violated ethics law 11 times



Kitzhaber

By **PARIS ACHEN**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Former Gov. John Kitzhaber violated state ethics laws in at least 11 instances, according to an investigation report released Wednesday by the Oregon Ethics Commission.

Kitzhaber violated law

prohibiting use of his office for personal financial gain when he took actions that benefitted his fiancée, Cylvia Hayes’ environmental consulting firm, 3E Strategies, investigators wrote in 135-page report. He also failed to publicly disclose his potential conflicts of interest and actual conflicts in several instances, as required by state law.

The former governor included Hayes’ income from the firm in his household income in 2011-2013 on statements of economic interest, investigators said.

“Former Governor Kitzhaber was personally responsible to ensure that he did not engage in any policy decisions, discussions,

speeches, meetings, directives to staff or official actions that would further the financial interest of 3E Strategies,” the investigators stated in the report.

The commission is scheduled to consider whether to pursue the violations at a meeting Friday.

“Although former Governor

Kitzhaber stipulated in a proposed settlement agreement that he unintentionally violated the potential conflict statute, he unequivocally rejects the suggestion that he used his public office to obtain a financial benefit for himself or Ms. Hayes,” Janet Hoffman,

See **KITZHABER/10A**

EOTEC partners negotiate agreement for split

Umatilla County will have invested more than \$6 million by 2022

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Umatilla County has spent more than \$4.8 million to create and operate the Eastern Oregon Event and Trade Center since its inception, and plans to spend almost \$1.2 million more in the next five years if Hermiston takes over full control of the event center.

The county’s single biggest contribution to EOTEC was the roughly \$3 million it earned from selling the fairgrounds in 2013. The county provided an additional \$1,050,000 in 2015-16 for construction, and along the way more than \$136,000 for operational support.

Hermiston was to take the reins to EOTEC on March 1, but commissioners last week voted to push that to March 12 when Hermiston City Council meets. The decision must be approved by both entities, which have partnered in the project since the beginning.

Larry Givens, county commissioner, and Byron Smith, Hermiston city manager, said the deal is about cutting down on the number of governments involved in EOTEC, akin to having the correct number of cooks in the kitchen.

“That’s what we’re hoping,” Smith said.

Smith and Givens said the delay allows more time to work out details to the deal. That includes language requiring the city to construct a new building at EOTEC to serve as year-round office and storage space for the county fair.

Smith said the city and county agree on the need for the building

See **EOTEC/10A**



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pre-kindergarten teacher Sarah Leonard writes down words starting with the letter “s” on Wednesday while teaching her class at the Pendleton Early Learning Center.

Foundation for learning

Kindergartners entering school with long path to literacy

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN AND ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Though graduation rates seem like the most obvious way to measure student progress, the key to success starts many years earlier.

The Oregon Kindergarten Assessment, a statewide test now in its fourth year, is given to each kindergartner within the first few days of entering public school.

On average, an incoming Oregon kindergartner recognizes more than 14 uppercase and 12 lowercase letters and can identify the sounds that about eight of



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Pre-kindergarten teacher Sarah Leonard watches students spell their names on Wednesday at the Pendleton Early Learning Center.

those letters make. When asked 16 simple math questions, the students could answer about 11.

In many Eastern Oregon school districts, however, the numbers are far lower. Only Pendleton and

Athena-Weston students tested higher than the state average in all four categories. In Milton-Freewater, the average student entered school only able to identify about two letter sounds and in many districts the average kindergartner knew fewer than 10 uppercase and lowercase letters by sight.

The results serve as a baseline for progress made throughout a student’s school career, and highlight some of the challenges in early elementary classrooms.

The numbers

Hot off the heels of strong graduation scores, the Pendleton School District’s youngest students were also showing above-average performances.

In every assessment subject, Pendleton students scored higher than the state average. In English

See **KINDERGARTEN/10A**

Saint Valentine’s Day massacre in Florida

Former student kills 17 at high school

By **TERRY SPENCER and KELLI KENNEDY**
Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. — A former student opened fire with a semi-automatic rifle at a Florida high school Wednesday, killing at least 17 people and sending hundreds of students fleeing into the streets in the nation’s deadliest school shooting since a gunman attacked an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut.

The shooter, who was equipped with a gas mask and smoke grenades, set off a fire alarm to draw students out of classrooms shortly before the day ended at one of the state’s largest schools, officials said.

Authorities offered no immediate details on the 19-year-old suspect or any possible motive, except to say that he had been kicked out of Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, which has about 3,000 students.

Students who knew the shooter, identified as Nikolas Cruz, described a volatile teenager whose strange behavior had caused others to end friendships with him, particularly after the fight that led to his expulsion.

Frantic parents rushed to the school to find SWAT team members and ambulances surrounding the huge campus. Live television footage showed emergency workers who

See **SHOOTING/9A**



John McCall/South Florida Sun-Sentinel via AP

Students released from a lockdown embrace following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., Wednesday.



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