

# Chamber hosts Pendleton political candidate forum

East Oregonian

Candidates for local office get 10 weeks between the filing deadline and Election Day on May 15 to make an impression on voters.

They'll get a chance to earn some votes at a Pendleton Chamber of Commerce candidate forum on April 19

at Pendleton High School.

Megan Lauer, the chamber's interim executive director, said candidates for the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners, Pendleton City Council and Oregon Circuit Court Judge District 6 will all be invited to participate in the forum.

Lauer said each candidate

will be given the chance to make a short statement before a question-and-answer session from the audience.

The council, commission and court all feature contested races.

In the race for county commissioner Position 1, Tom Bailor and Rick Pullen are challenging incumbent

George Murdock.

Position 2 incumbent Larry Givens has also drawn opposition from Athena Mayor John Shafer.

The Pendleton City Council has two contested races.

David Chorazy, Carole Innes and Chuck LeValle have filed for the open Ward 1

seat while at-large incumbent Jake Cambier will attempt to fend off a challenge from Rex Morehouse.

Incumbent Ward 2 Councilor McKennon McDonald and Ward 3 newcomer Linda Neuman are both running unopposed.

Position 1 is the only open seat on the local circuit

court bench, and Pendleton attorneys Michael Breiling and Rob Collins are vying to fill it. Position 4 Judge Eva Temple and Position 5 Judge Christopher Brauer are running unopposed.

The forum is free to attend and will be in the Pendleton High School auditorium at 6:30 p.m. on April 19.

## BRIEFLY

### AAUW program focuses on Cascadia earthquake

**PENDLETON** — Information about basic geology of the Cascadia Subduction Zone is featured during a presentation at the American Association of University Women's April general membership meeting.

Philip Schmitz, a physics and geology professor at Blue Mountain Community College, will focus on what to expect during a Cascadia Subduction event and will discuss the impact on communities in the Pacific Northwest, including what residents in Eastern Oregon might expect. Anyone interested in hearing the presentation is invited to attend. The meeting is Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Vert Club Room, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton.

Schmitz obtained a degree in environmental and evolutionary biology at Notre Dame and a master's degree in geological engineering from the University of Utah. He has work, study and research experience in many regions of the United States as well as at the University of Siberia in Novosibirsk.

The AAUW works to advance equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy and research. The Pendleton affiliate is the closest group in the region. For more information, contact Marlene Krout at [mkrout@yahoo.com](mailto:mkrout@yahoo.com) or 541-276-7596.

### Great Scots, it's almost Tartan Day

**ATHENA** — Bagpipes, highland dancing and a Scotch egg lunch are featured during a Tartan Day event in Athena.

The Athena Caledonian Games invites the public to celebrate Tartan Day, which was designated as April 6 by a Senate Resolution in 1998 and signed by President George W. Bush in a 2005 proclamation. It's a day to remember our ancestors and recognize the contributions that the Scottish have made to our way of life, said Sue Friese, president of Athena Caledonian Games.

The local celebration is Friday at noon at the Sugar Shack Espresso Bar, 353 E. Main St., Athena. Friese encourages people to dress in plaid. Cassandra Humphrys of Mid-Columbia School of Highland Dance will be on hand.

For more information, contact Friese at 541-566-3880 or [athenacaledoniangames@gmail.com](mailto:athenacaledoniangames@gmail.com).

## Westfall makes case for ag as FFA vice president

Hermiston senior elected to statewide office

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

Dylan Westfall is not your traditional Future Farmers of America student — if there is such a thing.

The Hermiston High School senior's path to FFA state office has been unconventional, but Westfall is excited to take the role. At a statewide FFA convention in Redmond last weekend, Westfall was elected vice president for the FFA state officer team.

"I didn't join for the 'right reasons,'" Westfall said. "I had no agricultural background prior to sophomore year."

He said he took his first FFA class simply with the intention of completing one of the programs of study that Hermiston High School offers. But through attending some of the required events, Westfall found himself wanting to come back, and soon took on leadership roles such as chapter and district officer.

"I kind of fell in love with FFA," he said.

Westfall and the five other students elected to state office, all current high school seniors, will spend the next year going to leadership trainings and visiting every school in the state with an FFA chapter to teach students about the program.

The students were elected after being selected from a pool of 24 hopefuls, following a rigorous, three-day session of multiple interviews and tests, both theoretical and practical.

Finalists for the spots had to give a speech to their peers. Westfall got some laughs with his.

"My speech theme was, 'How I'm like your favorite underwear,'" he said. "I'm supportive, I'm reliable and I'm reliable. I used it to relate to everyone, because everyone wears it, but I also used it to relate back to me."



Dylan Westfall, a Hermiston High School senior, was recently elected vice-president for the statewide FFA student leadership team.

Contributed photo

Hermiston FFA teacher Leah Smith said the last time Hermiston had a state officer was 12 years ago.

The officers have all agreed to defer college for a year in order to serve in the positions.

Smith said officers don't get paid for their roles, but the state FFA organization reimburses them for things like food and travel, and the experience gives them a better shot at scholarships at agriculture-focused colleges.

Westfall said he's looking forward to learning about all aspects of the agriculture industry, from farming to communications, and helping students understand that FFA is not limited to people who only come from farming backgrounds.

Westfall himself is interested in majoring in ag communications.

"I don't have a ton of knowledge on farming," he said. "I have more of the leadership experience, and how to advocate for ag on social media."

He said he's become passionate about dispelling inaccurate information about the industry that he feels often circulates.

He said because farmers are so busy with the physical

demands of running an operation, they often don't have the ability to advocate for themselves.

"As agriculturalists, we have to learn how to not slander other people, but defend ourselves," he said.

One area where he's observed issues, he said, is with the dairy industry.

"Dairy prices are so low right now," he said. "Everyone thinks dairy cattle are being tortured. There are some (farms) that don't do the right thing, but most are."

He said many people who bear that misconception are going away from dairy, which is impacting the industry in Oregon.

"It's hard for them to come back from that," he said.

Smith said that while Westfall asked for help where necessary, he was largely self-motivated in preparing for the role.

"He made his own success," Smith said.

Contact Jayati Ramakrishnan at 541-564-4534 or [jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com](mailto:jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com)

## PENDLETON

### Longtime laborer shares poetry at writers' series

East Oregonian

Clemens Starck considers Pendleton one of his old stomping grounds.

He worked on the railroad between Pendleton and La Grande 60 years ago, riding the pusher locomotives down the grade on the weekends to drink at bars in Pendleton. Starck will return to town this time to present his award-winning poetry during the First Draft Writers' Series.

The free event is Thursday, April 19 at 7 p.m. at Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St. After the reading, Starck will field questions from the audience. In addition, there will be an open mic for local writers to read from their work.

Born in 1937 in Rochester, New York, Starck dropped out of Princeton. He continued his education on the road, riding freight trains and working at a variety of jobs across the country. He's been a ranch hand in Eastern Oregon, a newspaper reporter on Wall Street, a door-to-door salesman and a merchant seaman. He also worked construction up and down the West Coast for more than 20 years.

As a poet, Starck received a scholarship from the Breadloaf Writers Conference as well as a grant and year-long residency at the Helene V. Wurlitzer Foundation of New Mexico. In 1998, he was the Witter Bynner Fellow and poet-in-residence at Willamette University, where he has taught on several occasions. In February 2004, he was visiting poet at the University of California at Santa Cruz.

Starck's first book of

poems, "Journeyman's Wages," received the 1996 Oregon Book Award as well as the William Stafford Memorial Poetry Award from the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association. His next two books — "Studying Russian on Company Time" (1999) and "China Basin" (2002) — were also finalists for the Oregon Book Award. "Traveling Incognito," a letterpress chapbook from Wood Works in Seattle, appeared in 2004. "Rembrandt, Chainsaw," another letterpress chapbook, was published in the fall of 2011.

The late Jim Harrison, poet and author of "Legends of the Fall," said of Starck's work, "(There are) some truly extraordinary poems here. Easily, gracefully, right up there with the best work being done today."

His most recent book of poems, "Old Dogs, New Tricks," was published by Oblio Press in the spring of 2016. He lives on 40-some acres in the country outside of Dallas, Oregon.

Showcasing notable Pacific Northwest authors, First Draft Writers' Series meets the third Thursday of each month. It celebrates writing and provides an opportunity for people in Eastern Oregon to engage in discussions about a variety of topics.

For more information about the writers' series, call 541-278-9201 or visit [www.pendletonarts.org](http://www.pendletonarts.org). For more about Starck, go to [www.clemstarck.com](http://www.clemstarck.com).

Contact Community Editor Tammy Malgesini at [tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com](mailto:tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4539



Starck

### Ace Hardware hosts annual tree giveaway

**HERMISTON** — An upcoming Arbor Day tree giveaway is sponsored by the Hermiston Rotary Club and Hermiston Parks & Recreation.

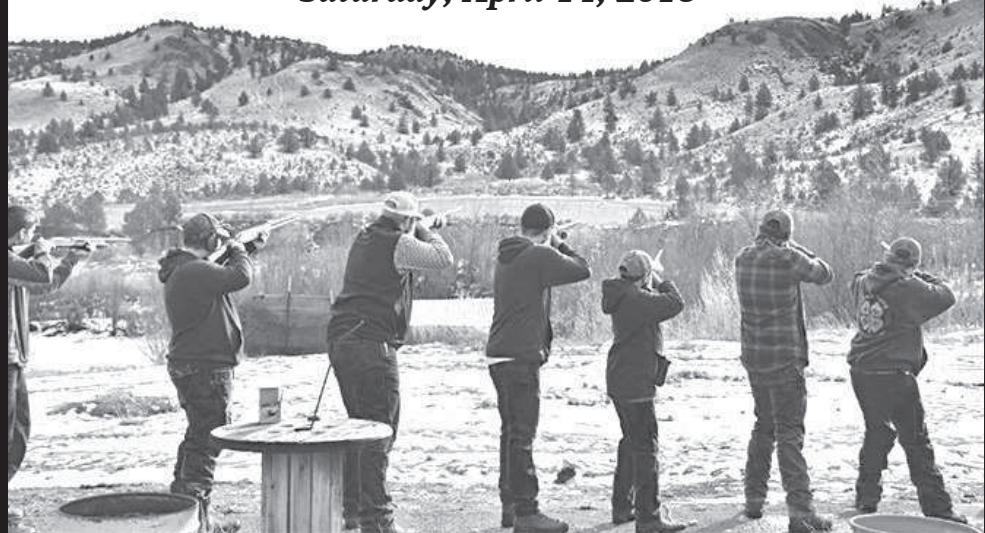
The free event is Saturday starting at 9 a.m. at Smitty's Ace Hardware, 1845 N. First St., Hermiston. Tree starts, which are available

on a first-serve basis, include flame Amur maple, red maple, special select river birch, Eastern redbud, Callery pear, European mountain ash, bald cypress and Japanese Zelkova. For the best selection, people are encouraged to arrive early.

For more information, call 541-667-5018.

### Jackpot Clay Pigeon Shoot Fundraiser

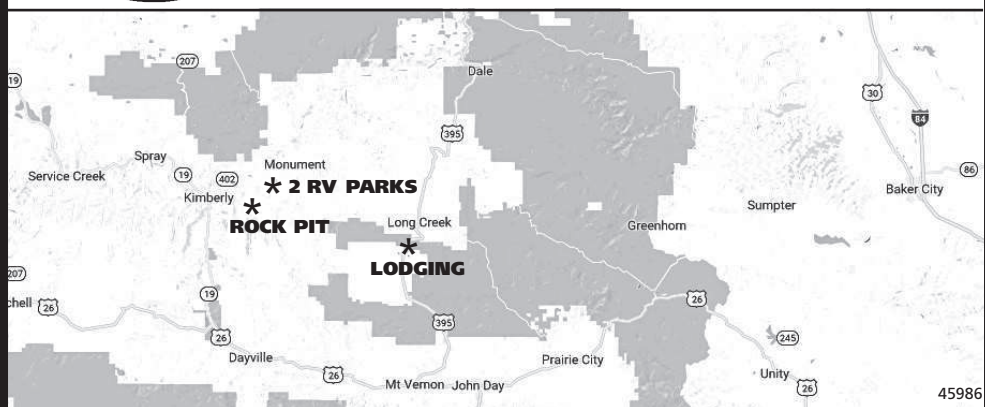
Saturday, April 14, 2018



Only \$3 per shoot!

There will be a Jackpot Clay Pigeon Shoot Fundraiser for the Grant County Sheriff Search and Rescue on Saturday, April 14, 2018 from 11am - 4pm at the pit at Kimberly Rock Products. Cost is \$3 per shoot. Baked good auction will be held and a raffle of various items. Concessions and lunch will be available by donation only.

Call (541) 934-2143 for more information.



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