



EAST OREGONIAN

SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 2018

142nd Year, No. 122

WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50

Into the aftermath



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Hermiston nurse Tamie Cline will head to U.S. Virgin Islands to help in the ongoing relief efforts to rebuild the islands after being struck by category 5 hurricanes Irma and Maria last September.

Hermiston nurse on mission to help hurricane-stricken children

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Tamie Cline of Hermiston takes off Saturday to the United States Virgin Islands. Not for any vacation, but a medical relief mission.

Cline is a surgical nurse at Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston, and one of 22 nurses nationwide going to help school children as the United States territory recovers from the devastation that back-to-back category 5 hurricanes Irma and Maria delivered in September.

The massive storms, she said, wiped out classrooms, school gyms and cafeterias. The government consolidated thousands of students onto the most viable campuses, she said, and school nurses there are overwhelmed.

"Those kids are not having any screenings at all," Cline said.

The Clinton Global Initiative identified the U.S. Virgin Islands, home to almost 103,000 citizens, as a priority for recovery from the rage of the two storms. The American Federation of Teachers put together a plan to address the

See NURSE/12A



AP Photo/Ricardo Arduengo

A woman with her two children walk past debris left by Hurricane Irma in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands on Sept. 10, 2017. The storm ravaged such lush resort islands as St. Martin, St. Barts, St. Thomas, Barbuda and Anguilla.

Brown to sign tax bill

Governor calls for special session to extend a tax break

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
Capital Bureau

SALEM — Oregon Gov. Kate Brown says she'll sign a controversial business tax bill into law and wants to convene a special session of the Legislature to extend a tax break to sole proprietorships.

Oregon automatically conforms to the federal tax code unless state lawmakers pass legislation specifically to modify it. That's what lawmakers did with Senate Bill 1528. The legislation prevented owners of so-called pass-through businesses — sole proprietorships, partnership, limited liability corporations and S-corporations — from deducting up to 20 percent of their business income from their 2018 state tax return. The deduction was created by the recent federal tax overhaul.

Brown wants lawmakers to convene to tweak Oregon law so that owners of sole proprietorships can receive special tax rates offered to other "pass-throughs" since 2013.

Brown contends that making those changes and disallowing the 20 percent deduction would make the tax system for small business more equitable.

"Through my review and analysis it has become apparent that Oregon's existing preferred rate structure for pass-through entities, which is relatively new, is not perfect and has some inequities in it," Brown, a Democrat running for reelection, wrote in a bill signing letter Friday to Oregon Secretary of State Dennis Richardson. "... It is clear to me that sole proprietors ought to be allowed to participate in this preferred rate structure."

Lawmakers passed the bill in the last days of the recent short session to blunt the effects of the federal tax overhaul on Oregon's revenues. It is expected to



Gov. Brown

More inside

Trump troop request gives opening to governors to say 'no'. Read more on Page 9A

'Help is on the way'

Dispatchers go through months of training to take emergency calls

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

Caitlin Slette remembers one of her first calls as an emergency dispatcher.

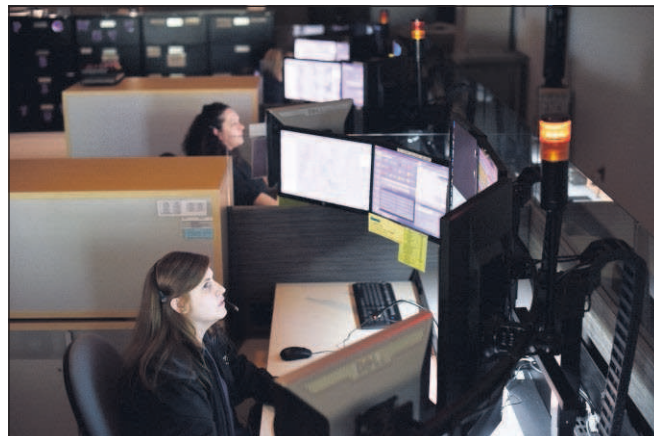
"On my second or third day working on my own, I got a call from someone way out in the county," she said. "(He) said there was someone at his door who

thought his ear had gotten shot off. He kept saying, 'If he comes in, I'm going to shoot him.'"

Slette was able to keep the caller on the phone, and get emergency services to the scene before he acted on his words. This baptism-by-fire is not abnormal for dispatchers — the first point of contact when someone calls 911. Inside the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office in Pendleton, the team of 18 dispatchers field calls from 25 different law enforcement and emergency agencies, directing police officers, fire and

ambulance services to the places where callers need help. But new dispatchers like Slette, who has worked in the job for nearly a year, go through months of training before they can field emergency calls. They learn the basics — finding out a person's location, the reason for the call, and if there are any weapons — and the language of law enforcement. Slette said she trained for about three months before being able to take emergency calls on her own.

"Multitasking is one of the biggest challenges,"



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Umatilla County Sheriff's Department dispatcher Justine Griffith takes a theft call for the Umatilla Sheriff's Department Friday in the dispatch center at the Umatilla County Justice Center in Pendleton.

Slette said. "You just have to watch and familiarize yourself with the system before you start listening."

There are five phases of

training, said Justin Russell, a longtime dispatcher and trainer.

See DISPATCH/12A



7 29467 10002 2