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EAST OREGONIAN

TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2018

142nd Year, No. 133

WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Pendleton Fire Chief Mike Ciraulo speaks at Blue Mountain Community College in January. He announced his immediate retirement Monday.

EO file photo

PENDLETON

Fire chief announces abrupt retirement

Ciraulo helped pass 2017 fire bond

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

When the new Pendleton Fire Station No. 1 opens in 2019, the fire chief who helped make it a reality will no longer work for the city.

Pendleton Fire Chief Mike Ciraulo announced his retirement Monday, effective immediately, marking a sudden end to his two-and-a-half-year career with the city. Both City Manager Robb Corbett and Ciraulo were

mum on the reasons behind the retirement, declining to comment beyond what was written in a Monday afternoon press release. According to the press release, Ciraulo and the city administration began having discussions about the fire chief's retirement over the

past two weeks. Although talks initially revolved around departing on June 30, the retirement date was moved up to Monday once Ciraulo committed to leaving the fire department. Corbett referred questions about what led to the

See FIRE CHIEF/8A

HERMISTON

Hundreds show their love for city

Residents picked up litter, planted flowers, washed cars

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

There are many reasons to love Hermiston, according to the people who live there. On Saturday, hundreds turned out for the annual "I Love My City" event. Several churches and civic organizations sent volunteers to pick up trash, plant flowers and wash cars — all in the name of loving the place where they live. The event is spearheaded by several local churches including Hermiston Christian Center, Hermiston Assembly of God and New Hope Community Church. Groups of people worked to clean up McKenzie Park, Hodge Park, the railroad tracks, and residents' yards. There were free car washes in the parking lots of Les Schwab and Tacos Y Mas. Volunteers planted flowers and laid bark chips at McKenzie Park, and members of Rotary Club pulled weeds on the footpath along Highway 395. "Hermiston is a great city," said Henri Valette, a pastor at New Hope Church. "The people who've grown up here probably don't realize what an awesome place it is."

See LOVE/8A



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Kirsten Myers (left) and Lillee Ruiz invite people to come to the Les Schwab Tire parking lot for a free car wash during Saturday morning's I Love My City event.

Who's hungry?



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A fledgling barn owl looks out of a nesting box Monday at Blue Mountain Wildlife's West Richland raptor rehabilitation center outside of Richland.

Displaced owlets at Blue Mountain Wildlife eat about 1,200 mice per day

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Four baby barn owls plowed through a plate of mice like hungry teenage boys devouring a pizza. Michele Caron watched with a grin. The volunteer spends about two-and-a-half hours each morning and evening feeding hundreds of voracious owlets at the West Richland raptor rehabilitation center, an arm of Pendleton's Blue Mountain Wildlife. The facility is dealing with a deluge of orphaned baby owls this year. Most

years, about 100 owlets end up here during the entire season. This year, it's 307 and counting. It costs money to feed all these hungry birds. Caron gets regular shipments of mice transported via FedEx to her front door. The mice come frozen. "It costs 65 cents a mouse," Caron said. "Right now, we're feeding about 1,200 mice a day." Caron lives a double life. By day, she dons a suit and goes to her day job as clinical services director at the Tri-Cities Cancer Center. After work and in the

morning, she pulls on a sweatshirt, jeans and boots and goes to feed the owls. On this morning, she is just about done. She peered into several incubators containing recent hatchlings and 20 eggs and then checked on some slightly older owlets (weeks instead of days old) in a bank of bigger cages. Instead of cut-up mice, the bigger owlets gorged on entire mouse carcasses, swallowing them whole. When Caron opened one of the cages, seven baby owls huddled

See OWLETS/8A

PENDLETON

Group protests infringement of Second Amendment



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A few participants chat at the end of Saturday's Second Amendment rally at Til Taylor Park in Pendleton.

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

About 75 people turned out for a rally in Pendleton on Saturday morning to support their right to own and carry firearms. The group gathered at Til Taylor Park in a coordinated effort with other gun-rights rallies throughout Oregon. HollyJo Beers, vice-lead of the Oregon Three Percenters of Umatilla County, helped organize the event. She told the audience they needed to stand up for themselves, and for the Second Amendment of the Constitution, which reads: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." "What part of 'shall not be infringed'

don't they understand?" she asked. The crowd also heard from Rob Lovett, a Greater Hermiston Area Tea Party member, who asked people to get out and vote against Initiative Petitions 43 and 44 in November. "If these measures pass, your arms will be locked up," he said. Measure 43 proposes a statewide ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Measure 44 would require Oregon gun owners to comply with several requirements for their firearms, including specific storage rules, directly supervising any child who uses their gun, reporting a lost or stolen gun within 24 hours, and taking full liability for any injury caused with their gun, except when defending themselves or someone else.

See GUNS/8A



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