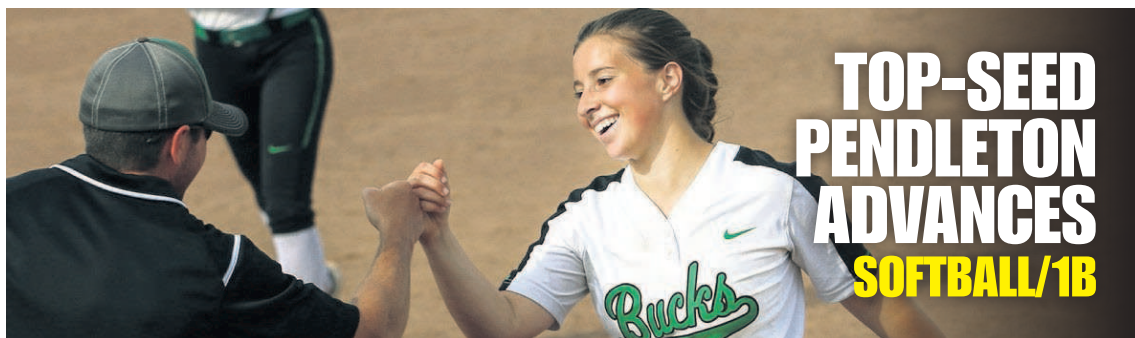


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MIND THE GAP

Community organizations help children overcome the ‘opportunity gap’



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Early College Connections Coordinator Abby Pierce, bottom row, second from left, speaks to a group of Hermiston High School students about a summer transitional program during a tour Tuesday at BMCC’s Hermiston campus.

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

If getting to the middle class was a track event, some children were born at the finish line and some have a full 300-meter hurdle race ahead of them.

In 23 of Oregon’s 36 counties — including Umatilla and Morrow — children born to the lowest 40 percent of income-earners have a less than 50 percent chance of ever reaching the middle class or above as adults, according to a report by the Oregon Community Foundation. The report also cites a national 2013 Pew Charitable Trusts study that found that 70 percent of children born to the bottom 20 percent of income-earners never reach middle class. Meanwhile children born into the middle class and above — helped by parents’ social connections, SAT tutors, extracurricular activities and more — are likely to stay there.

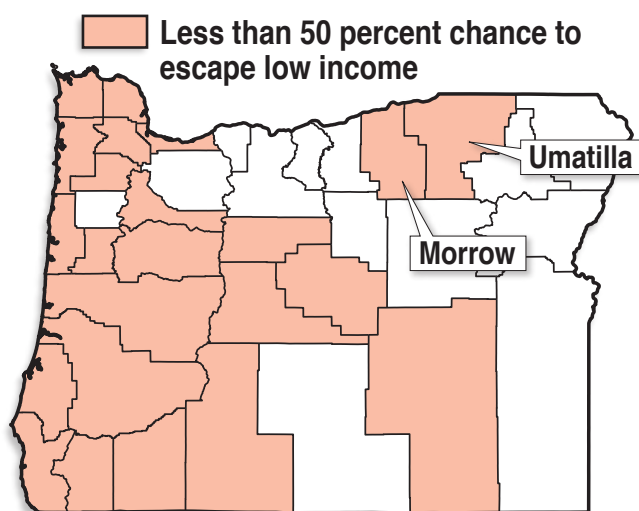
It’s known as the “opportunity gap,” and closing it for local children is a challenge that consumes schools, government agencies and charities in every town.

“This work can’t be done in silos,” Catie Brenaman, family education and support director for Umatilla-Morrow County Head Start said. “This is not a one-agency job.”

See **GAP/13A**

The Opportunity Gap

Children from low-income families in 23 Oregon counties have a less than 50 percent chance of reaching the middle class or above in adulthood.



Source: Oregon Community Foundation

EO Media Group graphic

PENDLETON

Corbett gets another round of high marks

City councilors lax on written evaluation of city manager

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Despite a great deal of turnover on the Pendleton City Council since he was hired, City Manager Robb Corbett continues to find himself on the council’s good side.

The city recently released Corbett’s 2018 evaluation, which showed the council continuing to hold the city manager in high regard.

Each member of the council was given the opportunity to rate Corbett as “exceeds expectations,” “meets expectations,” or “needs improvement” in 16 different categories that evaluated his duties and “core values.”

Collectively, the council rated Corbett as exceeding expectations 48 times, meeting expectations 90 times, and needing improvement only six times. The scores remain virtually the same from the year before, although his “needs improvement” score doubled from the prior year.



Corbett

Although the document reflects the council’s broad views of Corbett’s strengths and weaknesses, more specific compliments or critiques over his recent performance will remain in the confines the council chambers jury room.

Written comments from the council had been part of the evaluation record, but the council ceased that practice last year. Under the notion that it would produce a more honest dialogue, the council chose to deliver their comments orally during executive session, a closed-door meeting between the council and city staff allowable under Oregon public meetings law.

The council discussed Corbett’s 2018 evaluation in executive session at a May 15 meeting and immediately adjourned after emerging from behind closed doors.

Mayor John Turner defended the council’s method of evaluating Corbett, saying the council might be more inclined to change if Corbett was performing poorly, but “the numbers speak for themselves.”

The only category where council opinions diverged was in communication, a category that asks councilors to rate Corbett on his ability to communicate with his staff and the public.

Communication was both one of his best categories (four councilors scored him as “exceeds expectation”), and his worst (three gave him a “development needed”).

See **CORBETT/12A**

PENDLETON

City compels HIV test for boy who spat at paramedics

New law allowed city to require test for paramedics’ safety

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

The city of Pendleton sought a court order to compel a juvenile to provide blood for an HIV test after the boy spat at two paramedics.

City attorney Nancy Kerns said the legal action was the first for the city. Last week the juvenile consented to take the test.

The *East Oregonian* is not identifying the teen nor the paramedics.

Pendleton police the night of April 20 responded to a report of an assault involving juveniles at Stillman Park, 413 S.E. Byers. Stuart Roberts, Pendleton’s police chief, said the youth scattered, but officers later detained and identified them. During that process, a Umatilla Tribal Police officer recognized one name and asked Pendleton police to keep the boy there so he could arrest him.

See **TEST/13A**

A GOAT OF CONFIDENCE



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A goat takes a break from eating vegetation along Pendleton’s levee system. The goats, which are penned in by electrical fencing, will graze their way from the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution to the Ken Melton Little League Park. Trained dogs are guarding the herd. PublicWorks Director Bob Patterson urges people visiting the river parkway to look from a distance.



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