



# BEAVERS WIN!

Oregon State beats Arkansas 5-0 to capture national title

SPORTS/1B

# EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, JUNE 29, 2018

142nd Year, No. 181

WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

## Your Weekend



- Get fresh produce at Irrigon Farmers Market
- Community Night Out Friday in Athena
- Watch a movie at Community Park

For times and places see Coming Events, 5A

## Weekend Weather

Fri	Sat	Sun
80/55	85/60	84/54

## Watch a game

Hermiston vs. Pendleton in Little League District Tournament  
7 p.m., Saturday  
Ken Melton Park

## PENDLETON



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Dr. Norman Sitz sorts through items in his office Thursday in Pendleton while getting ready to close his medical practice.

## Mentally ill would avoid jail with new initiative

Umatilla County would start team to address treatment

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Umatilla County is stepping up to reduce the number of mentally ill people in the county jail.

Commissioner George Murdock said mental illness is a major concern nationwide and Umatilla County is no different.

"We have way too many people in jail suffering from mental illness," he said.

To help take on the problem, the county board of commissioners is adopting the Stepping Up Initiative, a national program to get county officials to work with law enforcement, judges, district attorneys and treatment providers to divert people with mental illness from jails and into treatment.

The National Association of Counties, The Council of State Governments

See TREATMENT/5A

# The doctors are out

Pendleton Internal Medicine to close after both doctors retire

By KATHY ANEY  
East Oregonian

Every day for the past month, Dr. Norman Sitz has torn a link off of a paper chain made by his wife, Michelle. Each link represents a remaining day of his career. The chain has shrunk to the point of vanishing. On Friday, he hangs up his stethoscope.

Sitz isn't clear exactly how many patients he's seen during 39 years of practicing medicine in Pendleton.

"I've probably had 1,500-to-2,000 patients who would say I'm their doctor," Sitz said.

Those patients must find a new physician. The 70-year-old reports for work for the last time on Friday and heads into retirement. His partner at Pendleton Internal Medicine, Dr. Dan Marier, retired at the end of last year. The clinic, started by Dr. Joseph Brennan in the 1950s, will close.

"It's the end of an era," Sitz said.

Long-time patient Joyce Hoffman hates to see her doctor go.

"I have known many good, skillful doctors, but the best of them have equal measures of skill and compassion," Hoffman said. "Dr. Sitz has always been at the top of that list, more like a good friend or family member than just a great doctor."



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Dr. Norman Sitz holds out a copy of an ancient Syrian medical script while cleaning out his office Thursday in Pendleton.

Hoffman remembers a time some years ago when her husband Johnnie was too sick to get out of bed for an appointment. She called and canceled, but requested that Sitz call back and advise her. He never called.

"But not long after, my doorbell rang," Hoffman recalled. "There was Dr. Sitz: 'I was in the neighborhood. Thought I'd stop and see how Johnnie was doing.'"

Sitz started his career as one of three doctors in Grand Coulee, Washington. The town had no emergency room physicians, so Sitz

regularly rushed to the hospital after being called at home. Though an internist, he often colored outside the lines of his specialty.

"I delivered babies, did minor surgery, hooked people up to ventilators," Sitz recalled. "I did just about everything."

He moved to Pendleton in 1979 to work in the St. Anthony Hospital emergency room, not planning to stay long.

"Pendleton was the last place I wanted to come, but it turned out to be the best place ever," he said. "I have loved the town of Pendleton."

Sitz also found love, meeting his wife Michelle at St. Anthony Hospital where she worked in the lab. Norm began stopping by to check on lab results on the chance he might run into her. Michelle also noticed Norm, who was known for driving a red pickup and tucking his tie in his shirt pocket so it wouldn't interfere with his stethoscope. Both were runners who happened to be training for the Portland Marathon. They began running together.

"Really, a lot of our courtship happened training for the marathon," Michelle said. "Many of our dates were runs."

One "date" particularly stands out, a 20-mile, high-elevation, out-and-back slog

See DOCTOR/5A

## Everything must go



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A trio of excavators work in concert while demolishing the old Albertsons building on Thursday in Pendleton. Rod Anderson Construction began demolition of the building Tuesday morning and the entire structure should be down by the end of next week.

## Gun ban backers holster initiative

Supporters did not have time to collect new batch of signatures by July 6

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE  
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Supporters of an initiative petition to ban certain firearms in Oregon say they'll withdraw the initiative, but maintain efforts to restrict firearm possession in the state.

Initiative Petition 43, an effort to ban certain types of semiautomatic firearms and magazines holding more than 10 rounds, was proposed by a coalition of faith leaders in the wake of the shooting that killed 17 people at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., on Feb. 14.

Supporters were enthusiastic, but encountered legal opposition to their efforts when gun rights advocates filed challenges at the Oregon Supreme Court against the language used to describe the measure.

Opponents said the petition language didn't adequately

See GUN/6A



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