

PENDLETON



Melissa Sandven, Pendleton High School principal, speaks with freshman Ember Spencer after she pledged to graduate in 2022 during freshman orientation Monday in Pendleton.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

LINKED IN

Pendleton High School freshman connected with first-year help to acclimate

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

On Monday, about 75 juniors and seniors voluntarily returned to Pendleton High School a day early. They didn't have any classes to attend or assignments to turn in; instead, the upperclassmen were on campus as members of Link Crew, a student mentoring club. Hundreds of freshman descended on the PHS campus to acquaint themselves with high school life a day before the rest of their classmates joined them. Link Crew was called in to help. The incoming freshmen played games and listened to an assembly in the morning before transitioning to an accelerated school schedule in the afternoon, moving from class to class to meet their new teachers. In between, Link Crew held a barbecue in the auditorium breezeway where Link Crew members got a chance to further ingratiate themselves with their mentees. Social studies instructor Stu Clem



Pendleton senior Aspen Garton hands a Buckaroo's tee-shirt to freshman Mykasia Campbell during freshman orientation Monday at Pendleton High School.

Staff photo by E.J. Harris

has taught at Pendleton High School for more than 30 years and has helped oversee Link Crew since it was started 20 years ago. After joking that he never expected that food services would be a part of his job, Clem remarked that the freshman class was big this year. Clem said there were 270 freshmen this year, a significant increase over the 207-freshmen average established last

year. That means there's a lot of work to do for senior Mazie Jackson and the rest of the Link Crew. Mazie remembers what it was like to be a freshman, concerned about where to find specific classes in the multi-story facility and how to keep grades up. She brings some of those memo-

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Council postpones vote on airport hotel deal

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Makad Corp. will have to wait at least one more week to get approval for a 75-room hotel at the Pendleton airport. Amidst several questions from the council about the lease language, Mayor John Turner told representatives from the Vancouver, Washington company that both sides needed to clarify some things in the lease and return at a future meeting. Under the proposed lease that was considered on Tuesday, the city would provide in-kind civil and environmental engineering work, water and sewer connection fee waivers, and up to 50 percent permit fee reduction in incentives. Not including the waiver and discount, Corbett estimates the incentive package is worth about \$57,500. The city would also have a stake in the hotel succeeding, and not just from a property tax and lodging room tax standpoint. Instead of a traditional land lease, the city would collect a percentage of the hotel's gross revenue starting in 2021, ranging from 0.25

See COUNCIL/8A

Legislators eye changes to property tax system

By CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE
Capital Bureau

SALEM — As lawmakers meet around the state to discuss how to overhaul the state's public education system, they'll eventually face the question of how to pay for it. Changes to the state's property tax system, which has implications for school funding, could be on the table. "We do not have a revenue structure in this state that can sustain the investments we need in our education system, so we're going to have to change it," House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland, told attendees at the annual Oregon Coastal Caucus Economic Summit last week. Any change in Oregon's complex property tax system is politically difficult because it would require voters to approve changes in the Oregon Constitution. In 1990, Oregon voters approved Measure 5, which instituted constitutional limits on local property taxes of \$1.50 per \$1,000 of

See TAX/8A

HERMISTON

Mobile vendor options opened up



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Customers wait for their orders at Tacos Garcia food truck recently in Hermiston.

City Council discusses mobile food vending, shipping containers and street projects during Monday meeting

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Hermiston is set to welcome new food trucks to town after the city council unanimously amended the mobile food vending ordinance Monday. Among the amendments is an increase from three food truck licenses to six. Those six licenses will be in addition to any mobile vendors who set up shop in the food "pod"

the city is looking to create. The updated ordinance also adds four temporary licenses that vendors can operate under for up to 90 days. City planner Clint Spencer said he believed all of those options combined were "well within what the market can support for a while." "You can always make a change," he said. The city had begun looking at amendments to its original ordinance, passed in 2013, after hearing from potential entrepreneurs, including the owner of Southern Twain BBQ in Pendleton, who complained that they wanted to open a food truck in town but could not because all three licenses

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