

ROOM AT THE TOP



City of Milton-Freewater Public Works superintendent Brain Steadman and Parks and Recreation superintendent Craig Rouse look over historical photos of the auditorium on the third floor of the Milton-Freewater City Hall building. The building was originally built in 1910 as the new location for Columbia College.

Milton-Freewater City Hall looks to reopen auditorium

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Milton-Freewater City Hall’s interior only starts to resemble its historic exterior the more people ascend its stairs, but the city is looking to change that.

The Milton-Freewater City Council recently approved taking out a \$520,000 loan to complement a \$167,000 Federal Transit Administration grant and a \$19,000 local match to fund a new elevator at city hall. City officials believe that an elevator will not only improve accessibility to the 108-year-old building, but also reopen its uninhabited third floor and its crown jewel — an auditorium — to the public.

“It’s the public’s building, so the public should be able to access it,” City Manager Linda Hall said.

Behind the main entrance at city hall, the main reception area’s cream colored wall and dark blue carpets aren’t distinguishable from other public office buildings.

City hall started its life as Columbia College, a Seventh-day Adventist school that was built for \$30,000 in 1910, according to the National Register of Historic Places.

The college closed its doors in 1925, and in 1929, a city referendum paved the way for the city of Milton, still more than 20 years away from merging with neighboring Freewater, to buy the facility for a relative steal — \$20,000.

The register noted that Columbia College’s third floor auditorium was a community asset in its time.

See HALL/8A



Restoration work has already begun on the main staircase to the third floor of the Milton-Freewater City Hall building where a layer of paint and been stripped and the wood is being refinished.



A lift chair offers the only access to the second floor of the Milton-Freewater City Hall for wheelchair users in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Steelhead fishing season ends abruptly

Low numbers prompt decision, state also reduces bag limit on salmon

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

Steelhead fishing on the Umatilla River ended Monday due to the low number of returning fish.

The closure is in effect on the Umatilla from Threemile Dam to the Umatilla Indian Reservation boundary. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife also reduced the bag limit of salmon on the river from three adult fall Chinook or coho salmon per day to one and five jack salmon per day through Nov. 30. Anglers also can take five mini jack coho (8-15 inches in length) or fall Chinook per day on that stretch of the river.

Bill Duke, ODFW district fish biologist in Pendleton, said the department set the season on the Umatilla from Sept. 1 through Nov. 30, but the number of fish coming through Bonneville Dam prompted the early end.

The 10-year average has been around 2,500 wild steelhead and 900 hatchery, he said, but fewer than 670 wild steelhead have come through at Bonneville and only around 150 hatchery fish.

See STEELHEAD/8A

Microsoft co-founder, philanthropist Paul Allen dies at 65

By PHUONG LE
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Paul G. Allen, who co-founded Microsoft with his childhood friend Bill Gates before becoming a billionaire philanthropist who invested in conservation, space travel, arts and culture and professional sports, died Monday. He was 65.

He died in Seattle from complications of non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, his company Vulcan Inc. announced.

Gates said he was heartbroken about the loss of one of his “oldest and dearest friends.”

“Personal computing would not have existed without him,” Gates said in a statement.



Paul Allen

See ALLEN/7A

PENDLETON

A walk through pain to prevent suicide

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

It wasn’t difficult to identify the Grant Minkler contingent at Pendleton’s Roy Raley Park on Saturday.

Many came in Weston-McEwen red to remember Minkler, and even though he wasn’t there to experience it, the memories of him and others like him were still acutely felt at the Pendleton Out of the Darkness Walk.

Dozens of people from around Umatilla County wore shirts, drew chalk memorials on the Roy Raley basketball courts, and

walked up and down the Pendleton River Parkway to support suicide prevention.

Brooke Dornberger, 15, of Weston, had participated in the Out of the Darkness walk before, but she played a leading role in 2018.

A sophomore at Weston-McEwen High School, Brooke decided to get a head start on her senior project by raising money for the walk.

As of Saturday morning, she had raised more than \$1,200 for suicide prevention and she hoped that she would eventually be able to meet her \$2,000 goal. She estimated that she’s spent

more than 100 hours on this effort, far surpassing the minimum number of hours required for the project.

While the project may help her graduate, it’s also personal for Brooke.

Organizers distributed bead necklaces that indicated how suicide affected each walker: purple meant someone lost a family member or friend to suicide, others wore a green necklace because they had struggled with it personally, while blue was for attendees who just wanted to support the cause.



Brooke Dornberger, right, and her mom Jonie Mills, both of Weston, hold a collection of photos of her uncle, Grant Minkler.

See SUICIDE/8A