

BELUSHI HAPPILY GROWING POT IN OREGON
NORTHWEST/2A



BUCKS TO END REGULAR SEASON AGAINST BENSON
SPORTS/1B

EAST OREGONIAN

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143rd Year, No. 2

WINNER OF THE 2018 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Audit reveals PERS vulnerable to cyberattacks, natural disasters

Lack of planning has left Oregon's public pension system unprepared

By **CLAIRE WITHYCOMBE**
Capital Bureau

SALEM — The state's public pension agency isn't prepared for a major disaster like an earthquake or flood, and Oregonians' personal information could be at risk if the agency doesn't do more to protect its systems from attacks, state auditors say.

More than 365,000 Oregonians are in the Public Employees Retirement System, which pays about \$310 million in pensions every month.

The long-criticized system is facing \$25.3 billion in unfunded retirement obligations, making it a perennial point of contention in the Legislature and on the campaign trail.

But a report released Wednesday by Secretary of State Dennis Richardson said PERS is also beleaguered by a lack of planning for critical information technology projects.

Auditors found that the agency couldn't restore its IT systems after a disaster.

A major disaster — depending on how long critical systems are unavailable — could threaten the agency's ability to issue payments on time or to the right people.

It could also mean that critical information is lost.

See PERS/8A

BOARDMAN

Lost Valley Farm hit with \$187,000 fine by regulators

Record CAFO fine stems from alleged wastewater violations

By **MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI**
EO Media Group

Oregon farm regulators have issued a fine of more than \$187,000 to a Boardman dairy, citing more than 220 violations of its wastewater permit between last December and late August.

Among the alleged violations by Lost Valley Farm are unauthorized manure discharges, storing too much manure in lagoons, repeatedly applying manure to fields without first installing required soil moisture sensors and keeping excessive numbers of mature cattle.

The dairy has until early November to challenge the civil penalties issued by the Oregon Department of Agriculture's confined animal feeding program before an administra-

See FINE/8A



Artist Jean Christofori Howton hangs an original painting while preparing for a gallery at her home in Hat Rock on Wednesday outside of Hermiston. Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Abstract nature

Hat Rock artist develops an international following with fresh look at nature

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Jean Christofori Howton sees beauty everywhere. "Cabbages are wonderful to paint and draw," she said, holding up a small painting layered in every shade of green imaginable. "They're drowning in deep shadows."

She slid the cabbage painting into a blank section of wall underneath a drawing of sheep, testing the fit. She was working Wednesday afternoon — as she has every day this week — to transform her home into the Hat Rock Art Gallery ahead of an open house she is planning for Saturday.

The house's architecture already has an art gallery vibe. Visitors walking



Artist Jean Christofori Howton has shown her work at galleries in the Pacific Northwest and in Europe. Staff photo by E.J. Harris

through the front door are greeted by a mirrored wall underneath a spacious loft with vaulted ceilings. Natural lighting filters through skylights and tall windows with views of the Columbia River.

Most noticeable is the art covering every wall. In the kitchen, it's black and white pencil drawings of llamas and chickens. Upstairs, large abstract paintings present swirling mixes of rich color in the loft, while the

"skywalk" connected to the loft features oil paintings of planets in purple and blue.

On Wednesday, there were still some blank spaces to be filled with the paint-

See ARTIST/8A

"I had so many pieces of art tucked away everywhere, I'm getting everything uncluttered"

— Jean Christofori Howton, artist



A construction crew works on building a temporary bridge at the Eighth Street river crossing on Aug. 20 in Pendleton. EO file photo

PENDLETON

Council ups its stake in Eighth Street Bridge

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Dismayed at the rising cost, the Pendleton City Council nonetheless unanimously voted to increase its contribution to the Eighth Street Bridge project by \$78,837.

The lion's share of the now \$8.6 million project is funded by the Oregon Department of Transportation, but the city is required to provide a 10.27 percent match.

When ODOT's estimate rose, the second time the department has revised the bridge's projected budget, the city's

local match climbed to \$883,595.

Community Development Director Tim Simons attributed most of the rising costs to ODOT's decision to delay the project by a year, which produced inflationary costs for the construction materials.

But Simons said ODOT is also dealing with the effects of a federal lawsuit over the Americans with Disabilities Act.

According to *The Oregonian*, the state and a disability rights group settled the lawsuit in 2016. As a result, the

See BRIDGE/8A



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