

HERMISTON

PGG auctioning off 122 acres of industrial property

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

Pendleton Grain Growers is putting 122 acres of industrial land up for auction outside Hermiston.

The flat property off Feedville Road sits adjacent to the Hinkle Rail Yard and near two interstates, which Realty Marketing/Northwest is describing as the perfect opportunity for an “intermodal distribution complex” shipping freight via rail, truck, and even barge. An example plan provided in promotional materials shows a distribution center and office with a solar farm and rail spur.

“I think that’s a real

opportunity for the property,” RMNW president and broker John Rosenthal said.

PGG has been auctioning off multiple properties across the county in the last two years after members voted to dissolve the financially struggling co-op. Rosenthal said RMNW has been working with the co-op to auction surplus properties and is has “worked pretty well.”

The Hermiston property is divided into three sections that can be bid on individually or in bulk. There is an undeveloped 10-acre lot off Hinkle Road, an undeveloped, Utah-shaped 105-acre parcel between Feedville Road and the rail

yard, and a 7-acre parcel with warehouses, office and truck shop currently leased to Crop Production Services.

Rosenthal said that lease comes up for renewal in 2023, and is a revenue opportunity for potential new owners.

A brochure about the property notes that Walmart, FedEx, UPS, Lamb Weston and Amazon were all drawn to the area by low cost freight, labor, land, power and water. Rosenthal said there has already been significant interest in the PGG property.

The property is just outside Hermiston city limits. Rosenthal said while



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PGG is auctioning off these three parcels outside Hermiston.

it is not currently included in Hermiston’s Enterprise Zone, city staff have said that it would be possible for the city council to vote to

expand the tax incentive to include a project there.

PGG hopes to get at least \$3.29 million from sale of the property. Bids will be

accepted until Dec. 5. Bid packages, environmental reports and other information are available by calling 1-800-845-3524.

PENDLETON

Symphony opens season with ‘Bucolic Beethoven’

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
East Oregonian

A pair of violin soloists — Hannah Leland and Hannah Burnett — will join the Oregon East Symphony during its season-opener.

“Bucolic Beethoven” features a performance of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s “Sinfonia Concertante” and Ludwig van Beethoven’s “Symphony No. 6.” Under the direction of Beau Benson, the concert is Sunday at 2 p.m. in the Vert Auditorium, 480 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$20 for

seniors, \$15 for students or \$65 for a family of four.

Praised for her “passion and precision,” Leland is an active soloist, chamber musician, orchestral violinist and teacher. Leland received a doctor of musical arts degree in violin performance from Arizona State University. In addition to private lessons, Leland teaches at George Fox University in Newberg and Chemeketa Community College in Salem. She is a tenured member of Portland Opera and frequently performs as a substitute with the Oregon Symphony.



Contributed photos

Hannah Leland and Hannah Burnett are co-soloists for the Oregon East Symphony season opener. The Nov. 4 concert is at the Vert Auditorium in Pendleton.

As half of the violin-piano duo Duo Odéon, Leland travels across the United States to perform, present, and research

the music of American composers of the 20th century and today. Referred to as “an auspicious debut CD,” the duo

released “Specter” in June 2018. The album has garnered critical acclaim.

A native of Waco, Texas, Burnett began playing viola at the age of 3. She studied at the Central Texas String Academy from 2001-16 with Julia Hardie. A four-time member of the Texas All State Orchestra, Burnett toured China and Europe with the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America in 2015 and 2016. After graduating from Midway High School in 2016, she entered The Juilliard School in New York City, where she studies under

Roger Tapping.

Burnett’s true passion lies with chamber music. For the last two summers, she has been a young artist at the Kneisel Hall Chamber Music Festival in Blue Hill, Maine. At school, she is regularly involved in several ensembles.

Advance tickets are available at the symphony office, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton Art + Frame, 36 S.W. Court Ave., or www.oregoneastsymphony.org. In addition, season ticket packages are still available. For questions, call 541-276-0320.

School ratings show some growth on test scores

Superintendents putting data to use

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**
East Oregonian

Reports released by the state last week show Umatilla County’s largest school districts are near or below the state average in most categories, with a few notable exceptions.

The ratings, which the Oregon Department of Education released to the public on Oct. 24, offer data for every district and individual school and tracks progress based on Smarter Balanced state test scores. The rating areas include English and math scores and growth, and success of English language learners. Each report also tracks schools’ chronic absenteeism, or students who are absent for 10 percent or more of school days. For high schools, there is also data for freshmen on track, and four- and five-year graduation rates.

Data was presented in “At-a-Glance” documents, which used graphs to show overall progress of schools in each category. An accompanying report offers more detail, looking at student performance by subcategories like race, economic background and disabilities. The ratings were divided into

five levels, with level 1 being the lowest and level 5 the highest.

Hermiston scored at or below the state average in most areas, scoring at the lowest category in only one area — on-time graduation. Hermiston is at 66 percent, about 10 percent lower than state average. The district saw its strongest overall ratings in math and reading growth, where the majority of the district’s elementary school students scored a level 4 or 5.

Its freshmen-on-track score was 82 percent, just below the state’s average of 85 percent. The district’s elementary schoolers scored below the state average in English language arts, but its high schoolers were above at a “level 4.” District math scores were around the state average at the elementary schools, but below average at the middle and high school.

Hermiston Schools Superintendent Tricia Mooney said the information in the reports had been previously available to the public or to districts, but the at-a-glance profiles made it more understandable.

“As a district we have some areas we can be proud of and some areas that need

more of our attention,” she wrote in an email to the *EO*. “The good news is that we have a committed staff, talented students and a supportive community working together to prepare all of our students for their next steps.”

Pendleton tended to have lower scores than the state average for reading and math, with the exception of its high school reading scores, which were a “level 4,” and its elementary school math scores, which met the state average. The district showed average levels of growth in both areas.

Pendleton was around the state average for its freshmen on track, but scored higher with an 83 percent four-year graduation rate.

Pendleton Superintendent Chris Fritsch said the above-average graduation rate has allowed the district to put more resources into Hawthorne School, which had scores in the bottom 10 percent of the state.

He said the data show many areas they are proud of, but also some where they can improve.

“I am encouraged that our on-track ninth-grade class made a dramatic increase (up 10 percentage points) and is

now at the state average, 85 percent,” Fritsch wrote in an email to the *EO*.

Umatilla School District scored low on many of its math and reading ratings, with only the high school meeting the state average in reading. But the district scored above the state average in its graduation and freshmen-on-track ratings. About 95 percent of Umatilla’s ninth-graders are on track to graduate, and 82 percent are graduating in four years.

Umatilla Superintendent Heidi Sipe said while she appreciates the new format for the state report cards, the district doesn’t use them as their only measure of progress.

“We decided many years ago not to focus on SBAC (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium) as there is no correlation between Oregon students’ results on SBAC and their graduation or college success,” Sipe said. “While we do monitor the report card to determine individual student growth

on SBAC, we use our local assessments to determine actual student skill level.”

Sipe noted the school’s 82 percent on-time graduation rate and 95 percent freshmen-on-track rates as marks of success, and added that they still need to improve attendance at the lower grade levels. She also said that some students opt out of taking the state test.

The data had been prepared weeks ago and presented to school superintendents, but Oregon Department of Education Director Colt Gill initially

planned to wait and release the results in mid-November. An article in *The Oregonian* noted that Gill was appointed to his position by Gov. Kate Brown, whose opponent in the governor’s race, Knute Buehler, has taken Brown to task for the state’s low graduation rates and public school performance.

The Oregonian also presented the data in a simplified format, after noting that the state did provide the data, but only in individual documents, and not in a way readers could compare multiple schools’ scores.

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