

**FARM BILL A
BREAKTHROUGH
FOR HEMP**

REGION, A3



**HERMISTON WINS
MCC WRESTLING
DUALS**

SPORTS, B1

EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2018

143rd Year, No. 42

WINNER OF THE 2018 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar

Your Weekend



- **"The Grinch"** matinee, Pendleton
- **Living Nativity**, Pendleton and Hermiston
- **Christmas Music Fest**, Heppner

FOR TIMES AND LOCATIONS
CHECK COMING EVENTS, A5

Weekend Weather		
FRI	SAT	SUN
49/35	47/38	49/42

**St. Anthony
ends hospice
care, Dec. 31**

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Citing budgetary concerns, Pendleton's only hospital is ending hospice care.

In early December, St. Anthony Hospital began advertising the hospice's Dec. 31 closure and sending out letters to patients and bereaved family members.

In a letter to the bereaved obtained by the *East Oregonian*, the hospital declines to provide a reason for the closure and advises patients to seek care with other nearby hospice centers.

"It's been a great pleasure and an honor to serve you," the letter concludes. "We wish you well."

St. Anthony Hospital President Harry Geller said it was a tough decision to cut the end-of-life care program, but the hospital didn't have the budget to continue that service.

In anticipation of the closure, Geller said St. Anthony has been transitioning most of the hospital hospice's approximately 40 patients to home hospice care.

Geller said the St. Anthony hospice is no longer accepting new patients and has only four patients remaining, which the hospital will either continue to care for past the Dec. 31 deadline or transition to another hospice care facility.

See Hospital, Page A2

HERMISTON



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Jeff Sepulveda of Hermiston was diagnosed with scleroderma, a fatal autoimmune disease that attacks a person's lungs, this summer and was told by his doctor he had five years to live.

No cure, but hope

Stem cell transplant carries high price tag

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

Hearing he had five years left to live jolted Jeff Sepulveda.

The Hermiston man and wife Rebecca got the grim prediction from his doctor in October at the Oregon Health & Science University Hospital in Portland. Sepulveda has scleroderma, an autoimmune disease that attacks healthy tissue. People with scleroderma often experience stiffening and tightening of the skin and connective tissue, the feeling of slowly turning to stone.

In Sepulveda's case, the disease affects his lungs. Pulmonary function has dropped to 46 percent as the fibrosis in his lungs worsens. The couple digested the devastating news as they drove home to Hermiston after the doctor's appointment.

"It hit me and my wife pretty



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Poor circulation in the extremities was Jeff Sepulveda's first sign that something was wrong after he was diagnosed with Raynaud's disease.

hard," he said. "It was a quiet ride home."

They looked for options, but found few. Sepulveda takes a drug called mycophenolate to keep the disease at

bay, but it's not a cure.

"It slows the process down," he said. "It's not a cure by any means."

See Hope, Page A8



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Christmas characters glow this week from Pete Rosenberg's yard. The Hermiston man pays about \$20 extra each month to light his Christmas display.

Conservation measures can lower electric bills

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

As electric rates go up, consumers have the power to lower their energy bills through conservation.

December, however, can be a difficult month to conserve power.

Christmas decorations suck up electricity. The onset of cold weather makes people want to turn up the heat. Christmas vacations can mean more time at home, translating to more time running the television and other appliances. And

any houseguests for the holidays means extra dishes, laundry and showers.

Some people see an increased electric bill as just another part of their Christmas budget. Pete Rosenberg of Hermiston said the collection of inflatables and lights in his front yard add about \$20 to \$30 to his December electric bill each year, but that's "not too bad."

"The joy outweighs the price," he said. Rosenberg said he enjoys seeing the lights in his yard and in other yards this

See Electricity, Page A8



CHI St. Anthony Hospital Family Clinic is recognized as a Patient-Centered Primary Care Home.

What does that mean for you?

- Better-coordinated care.
- Listening to your concerns and answering questions.
- After-hours nurse consultation.
- Healthcare providers who will help connect you with the care you need in a safe and timely way.
- Healthcare providers who play an active role in your health.

CHI St. Anthony Hospital

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Mon through Thurs, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. • Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Sat and Sun, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are preferred.

