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Walden to hold town halls



Greg Walden

U.S. congressman to hold meetings in 16 counties

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

U.S. Rep. Greg Walden will hold a series of town hall meetings in 16 counties this month, including Umatilla and Morrow counties.

The Republican congressman, who won re-election in November to his 11th term in a competitive race against challenger Jamie McLeod-Skinner, said in a press release that he is eager to hear directly from constituents of Oregon's 2nd District.

"I look forward to getting together with people on the ground and hearing your concerns and ideas and suggestions about this new session of Congress, and giving you an update on the things we've accomplished and what we want to work on going forward," he

said in the prepared statement.

McLeod-Skinner and her supporters were critical of Walden's lack of town halls in the years leading up to the midterm. A "Where's Walden" caravan was created by the activist group Indivisible that traveled around the district counting the number of days since he'd hosted a public event.

During his last in-per-

son town halls in the spring of 2017, Walden faced hostility because of Republican attempts to kill the Affordable Care Act. He attributed it to liberal activists who had "weaponized" the events.

Walden defended his record in the lead-up to the campaign, pointing to telephone town

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WORKING IN THE RAIN



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A worker spends part of a rainy Tuesday morning in a cherry picker lift working on the exterior of the new Pendleton fire station on S.E. Court Avenue. The project, funded by a \$10 million bond passed in May, broke ground eight months ago. Construction is projected to finish this summer.

Agencies team up for after-school program

Response in community survey overwhelming

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Pendleton residents want an after-school program, and the city and local school districts are prepared to give it to them.

The Pendleton Parks and Recreation Department, Pendleton School District, and InterMountain Education Service District are planning to collaborate on a new after-school program that's expected to start during the 2019-20 school year.

Parks and Recreation Director Liam Hughes said he met with school officials shortly after he started with the city last February. They told him that there was a strong community need for an after-school program.

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Correctional facility takes STEPS away from isolation

By AUBREY WEIBER
Oregon Capital Bureau

WOODBURN — Early on the Friday before Christmas, Zack sat in the passenger seat as he rode across the frozen grounds of MacLaren Youth Correctional Facility.

He had been sent to the juvenile equivalent of isolation following an outburst on his living unit.

On his way, though, the 18-year-old encountered a staffer who instead took him to a less confining spot on campus to work through the trouble.

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Effort underway to strengthen hate-crime laws

By ANDREW SELSKY
Associated Press

SALEM — Immigrants, Muslims, people of color, top law enforcement officers and state officials packed into a room to discuss the sharp rise of hate crime in Oregon, with the goal of strengthening the state's lax laws against it.

For all its imagery as a bastion of liberalism, Oregon has a dark history of racism and xenophobia, and today serious attacks and threats often make headlines.

The gathering Monday night in Portland was the first of three planned this week by a task force created by Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum.

Hate crimes increased by 40 percent in Oregon from 2016 to 2017, according to FBI statistics.

"It is appalling that hate-motivated

crimes are on the increase in Oregon," Rosenblum said in a statement. "This reality requires us to act."

More than 100 people attended the "listening session" at Unite Oregon, said Seemab Hussaini, an organizer with the intercultural organization.

Rosenblum's spokeswoman, Kristina Edmunson, said she heard Muslims, Latinos, members of the transgender community and others speak powerfully in the standing-room-only crowd.

One man, an immigrant from Africa, described people shouting racist slurs at him while he was walking down the street in Portland, Hussaini said.

Hussaini, whose group is part of the hate crimes task force, marveled at how it has brought law enforcement



AP Photo/Don Ryan, File

In this July 13, 2016, file photo, Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum poses for a photo at her office in Portland.

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