



EAST OREGONIAN

FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2019

143rd Year, No. 157

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• **Printmaking student** exhibition opening, Crow's Shadow

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• **Mini CROC Ride**, Tamastlikt Cultural Institute

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Weekend Weather

FRI	SAT	SUN
		
69/43	66/47	72/49

Maxwell Farmers Market returns to Hermiston

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

The Maxwell Farmers Market was bustling during opening day in Hermiston on Thursday.

Vendors of all kinds filled the new Maxwell Siding Pavilion, hawking everything from asparagus to jewelry to a steady stream of people weaving in and out of the booths. Outside the pavilion's shade, customers listened to local musician Dallon Puzey as they sipped beverages from Hermiston Brewing Company or ate from a food truck.

The market inspired some new entrepreneurs in Hermiston this year. Lucia Alvarez said she attended last year's market and decided to try her hand this summer at selling homemade organic salsa under the name Mama Lucy's Salsa.

"I didn't know about it before," she said of the farmer's market. "I thought, 'I can make good salsa!'"

She said she was surprised by the large turnout.

Kira Doyle was another newcomer, both to the market and to selling her product. She had a booth Thursday under the name The Moth and the Moon.

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PENDLETON HEIGHTS DEVELOPER VIOLATES DEAL WITH CITY



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A sign blocks the public from a construction site that will become the next phase of the Pendleton Heights housing project.



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

A backhoe works Thursday on the next phase of the Pendleton Heights housing project. The developer of the project started the construction before repaying a required \$150,000 loan to the city as agreed.

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**
East Oregonian

Starting work on a planned 100-unit complex at Pendleton Heights would ordinarily be good news for a development beset by delays and several rounds renegotiations over an incentives package with the city.

But the Newberg developer responsible for the project never paid the city \$150,000 in debt repayment before starting construction, a violation of the latest deal made between Pendleton Heights and the city.

Construction workers and heavy equipment were visible from Southwest 11th Street on Thursday morning and City Manager Robb Corbett acknowledged that developer Saj Jivanjee hadn't yet made the payment.

Corbett said he spoke with Jivanjee and the developer told him that the construction loan for

the project has been delayed, but he still planned to make the payment in advance of working through those issues.

According to the city manager, Jivanjee said he plans to pay back the \$150,000 by June 15.

While missing the new deadline could cause the city to reconsider its options, Corbett said the city will not take any action against Jivanjee for missing the payment and starting construction.

When asked whether Corbett was disappointed in Jivanjee, he expressed confidence in the developer's reasoning.

"My feelings are that it sounds to me like there was some delays as the result of a number of things, and he's explained them to me, and it seems plausible that sometimes these things take time and I believe that he's genuine in his regret that it's taken the time that it has and that he's

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Senate approves cut to public employee retirement benefits

Legislators approve short-term pension fix cutting PERS

By **SARAH ZIMMERMAN**
Associated Press

SALEM — The Oregon Senate sent the House a short-term pension fix Thursday cutting public employee retirement benefits, a politically difficult vote for Democrats who say they were forced to choose between slashing benefits or letting employer interest rates rise.

Ultimately, some who were originally against the proposal reluctantly came around, saying higher interest rates would eat into budgets and lead to layoffs in the public sector.

"My heart is broken today because my back is against the wall," said Sen. James Manning, Jr., a Democrat who voted yes after signaling his opposition earlier this week. "I have two worlds that are colliding today — how do I respond?"

The plan, which the Senate approved by a 16 to 12 vote Thursday, essentially refinances the \$25 billion in debt incurred from the Public Employee Retirement System, known as PERS. It extends the state's repayment period from 20 to 22 years, which is meant to shield employers from an impending interest rate hike in the upcoming years.

More controversially, the measure also redirects 2.5% of employee salary toward PERS. That translates to a 7 to 12% cut to employees' secondary retirement account, which is a 401(k) type plan meant to supplement the public pension.

Sen. Tim Knopp, a Bend Republican, stressed this "is not a permanent solution," and there needs to be more legislative action if the state wants to substantially pay down the debt.

Senate Minority Leader Herman Baertschiger Jr., who was the public face of a Republican walkout over perceived Democratic inaction on PERS,

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When Princess Aurora broke her foot

Cast of 'Sleeping Beauty' rallied around injured dancer

By **KATHY ANEY**
East Oregonian

Princess Aurora was down. Madison Gruenhagen, lead dancer in Pendleton

Ballet Theatre's production of "Sleeping Beauty," slipped during a rehearsal and fell to the floor. She felt something give.

"A loud crack went through the studio," Madison recalled.

It was obvious immediately that something was seriously wrong with the 14-year-old dancer who had been cast in the show's lead role of Princess

Aurora. Pain shot through her foot. She tried to get up and couldn't.

The opening performance was more than two months away, but Madison's doctor couldn't guarantee her broken foot would heal fast enough for her to dance in the show. He put Madison in an air cast and told her keep weight off the foot.

This was a devastating development, but also a chance to discover how the troupe would deal with adversity. According to director Julie Sneden-Carlson, her dancers reacted with both kindness and grit by rallying around Madison and accepting longer rehearsal times.

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