

# EAST OREGONIAN

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145th Year, No. 67

WINNER OF THE 2020 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

\$1.50



Alex Wittwer/La Grande Observer

Pendleton Police Department officer Cass Clark and police dog Bali train to find a suspect on Saturday, March 20, 2021, at the training compound in Pendleton. Pendleton police received Bali as part of a scholarship through the nonprofit Working Dogs Oregon.

**VACCINE ROLL OUT**

## CTUIR vaccinates thousands

Tribes have now vaccinated more than 2,600 people on the reservation

By **BRYCE DOLE**  
*East Oregonian*

PENDLETON — Kyndra Nelson was nervous.

She shuffled side-to-side waiting at the front of the line wearing her cross-country uniform for the meet planned later than afternoon. She's terrified of shots, but she found solace in the fact that, at the very least, "it won't hurt like breaking my arm did."

Nelson sat down in a booth. Two members of the Oregon National Guard prepared her vaccine. One took her arm and asked her if she could relax.

"I'm trying," she said, her head turned over her left shoulder. In moments, it was over. She threw her hands over head and

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# WORKING DOGS

Police in Eastern Oregon partner up for K-9 training

By **ALEX WITTWER**  
*La Grande Observer*

**P**ENDLETON — Under blue skies amid brisk wind, a cadre of K-9 handlers and trainers met Saturday, March 20, in Pendleton. The purpose — train the working dogs that serve Eastern Oregon's police and sheriff's offices.

Police resources for training in rural Oregon are limited, so inter-departmental training is a crucial way to pool assets and provide opportunities that resemble real-life situations the K-9 units could run into while working calls.

"There's a good knowledge sharing that occurs with different departments, and how things they have seen in the past add to the experience," said Noah Robbins, master trainer and owner of Howling Creek in Hockinson, Washington. "It's a good learning opportunity to learn from others."

The training compound, just north of the Pendleton Police Department, hosts a small warehouse, a derelict bus and a firing range. Here, the dogs can train in several tactical situations, such as tracking, apprehension, evidence finding and with real gunfire.

"We have a lot of room here," Robbins said. "From the dog's

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Alex Wittwer/La Grande Observer

Union County Sheriff's Office deputy Dane Jensen, left, with Pendleton Police Department officer Cass Clark and K-9 Bali train on Saturday, March 20, 2021, at a compound in Pendleton. The joint training helps officers, deputies and K-9s practice real-world scenarios as a team.

## Police, fire bonds on ballot

Bond package would raise \$13.1 million for Umatilla County Fire District No. 1

By **JADE MCDOWELL** and **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
*East Oregonian*

HERMISTON — Umatilla County Fire District No. 1 and the city of Milton-Freewater are asking voters to approve bonds for public safety during the May 18 election.

UCFD1 is asking voters to approve a bond that would help the fire district cover equipment, vehicle and facility upgrades.

If voters approve Measure 30-148 during the May 18 election, the 20-year bond package would raise \$13.1 million for the fire district and add 23 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value to property taxes in the district, which covers Hermiston, Stanfield and the Hat Rock area.

UCFD Fire Chief Scott Stanton said continued population growth in the area is creating new challenges

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## Area school board races get competitive

By **ANTONIO SIERRA**  
*East Oregonian*

UMATILLA COUNTY — This May, thousands of Umatilla County residents will get something that isn't supposed to be novel in a democracy — a choice.

Each spring of every odd numbered year, dozens of seats governing services like public education, fire protection, parks and recreation, public libraries and more go up for election. During most of those elections, most candidates either run unopposed or no one runs at all, meaning the election is determined by write-in or appointment.

But after the Thursday, March 18, filing deadline for this year's May 18 election, residents stepped up to run for office, especially in the Pendleton and Hermiston school districts.

"We're thrilled there's so much interest," Pendleton School Board Chair Debbie McBee said in an interview.

### Pendleton breaks a long dry streak

All of the school board seats up for election were open this year as McBee and incumbents Gary George and Steve Umbarger all declined to run

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Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian, File

Boxes of ballots await counting at the Umatilla County Elections office in Pendleton on Nov. 3, 2020.

