

EAST OREGONIAN

APRIL 30 – MAY 1, 2022

146th Year, No. 57

WINNER OF 16 ONPA AWARDS IN 2021

\$1.50

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Counting the dollars

Umatilla County commissioner candidate Bower leads in spending

By WYATT TEGGINS
East Oregonian

UMATILLA COUNTY — Candidates running for Umatilla County commissioner have collectively received \$25,500 in contributions and spent \$40,000 on campaign efforts.

Nine candidates in all are seeking two seats on the county board. With less than three weeks until the May 17 election, Cindy Timmons of Milton-Freewater leads the group in fundraising, and Susan Bower of Pendleton leads in campaign expenditures.

The two are among six candidates seeking the Position 1 seat. The others are Bob Barton of Hermiston, Jesse Bonifer of Athena, David Nelson of Pendleton and Alvin Young of Hermiston.

Position 2 Commissioner John Shafer is running for reelection against HollyJo Beers and Rick Pullen, both of Pendleton.

A \$5,000 donation April 4 from the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, AFL-CIO, in Maryland pushed Timmons' campaign coffers to a total of \$8,550, according to ORESTAR, the Oregon Secretary of State's website for campaign finance activity.

She explained the union represents the employees at Marv's Glass Shop in Milton-Freewater, which she and her husband own. Timmons, who also is a professional tutor at Blue Mountain Community College, discussed her gratitude for the contribution and beliefs in proper worker education and protection, referring to career and technical education programs in high schools as "the next step in education."

Timmons so far has spent \$8,827.55 on her campaign, more than \$14,000 less than Bower. So far, Bower has spent \$23,200, more than every other candidate combined.

But she also has been campaigning for the position since June 2021, nearly six months before any other candidate in the race. Bower's spending has helped her run a plethora of Facebook ads, send out several waves of mailers, host meet-and-greets and hire a campaign assistant to help with the process while Bower works full time managing her small business.

"It's incredibly important that every person in the county gets to know the candidate," she explained.

Bower said she set a budget of \$30,000 for this election and fully intends on spending that much.

"I am at a position in my life where I can make choices," she said. "I want

See Dollars, Page A9



A homeless man pushes a grocery cart full of his possessions across Dorion Avenue in Pendleton on April 5, 2022. Local charities are reporting a struggle to meet the demands for needs as the pandemic subsides.
Kathy Aney/East Oregonian

HARD TIMES

Local charities struggle in period of declining donations, inflation, supply shortages and influx of those in need

By JOHN TILLMAN
East Oregonian

HERMISTON — Charities in Northeastern Oregon are struggling to meet the needs of an increasing number of clients. While the pandemic has subsided, some donations have declined and prices soared, amid supply shortages.

Mark Gomolski of Agape House food bank painted the overall scenario.

"When everything was shut down during the pandemic, monetary donations increased," he said. "Food donations stayed about the same. Now demand is up for services. We have very few fresh vegetables. Fresh fruit, yes, and bread, but not vegetables."

Pendleton's Salvation Army faces the same issues.

"During the pandemic, donations went up, but so did our needs," Maj. DeWayne Halstad said. "Now donations have dropped off. We're feeding a bit fewer people, but our costs are way up."

The Irrigon Emergency Assistance Center



East Oregonian, File

Lois Cram, right, stocks shelves at Agape House in Hermiston on April 15, 2020, for the organization's backpack program. Now as the pandemic wanes two years later, Agape House and other local charities report several challenges are making it harder to serve a larger number of clients.

helps with rent and utilities and finding jobs, as well as providing food. Coordinator Ina Abercrombie said need has increased in the area.

"Three-and-a-half months into 2022, we've already spent half as much as in 2021. This year is going to be tough," she said.

Lisa Patton of Heppner's Neighborhood Center of South Morrow County echoed that.

"Demand has very much increased," she said. "The need is great. People suffer sticker shock at the grocery store."

Halstad said during the pandemic, The Salvation Army in Pendleton fed about 150 meals daily.

"Now we're down to around 105 per day, with 50 here (105 S.E. Emigrant Ave.) and 55 delivered to elderly and shut-ins. But prices of supplies don't come down," he said. "For example, to-go containers used

to cost us \$20 for 200; now it's \$55 for 200."

Serving indoors has hurdles as well, he said, with a need for more staff and with clients getting into fights and arguments at the tables.

"We could really use support," Halstad concluded. "Especially big, No. 10 canned goods. We have vegetable shortages. Frozen hamburger, chicken breasts, stuff like that. Spaghetti sauce."

Business changes, problems also fall on charities

Gomolski said changes in agribusiness affect the Hermiston food bank.

"Bud-Rich Potato was bought out, so it

See Charity, Page A9

Search and rescue teams train in Baker County

By JAYSON JACOBY
Baker City Herald

BAKER COUNTY — The searchers will clamber over logs and rock outcroppings and wend their way between the pines, looking for someone who isn't actually lost.

But the status of the "victim" is the only part of the episode that's simulated.

Every other aspect of a three-day training exercise in the forests southwest of Baker City is to replicate, as accurately as possible, a real-life mission in which lives are at stake.

The subject of the exercise is a real person — just not one who's in danger.

"These are very realistic scenarios," said Baker County Sheriff Travis Ash, who is serving as host for the

annual regional training bringing together search and rescue members from the 10 counties that comprise the Eastern Oregon Search and Rescue group.

Ash said he expects about 60



"IT IS A REAL SCENARIO WHERE THEY WILL HAVE TO USE THEIR SKILLS TO FIND THE PERSON."

— Travis Ash, Baker County Sheriff

people will gather this weekend at Union Creek campground, on the north shore of Phillips Reservoir, about 17 miles southwest of Baker City.

They'll represent nine other coun-

ties in addition to Baker: Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa and Wheeler.

The exercise started Friday, April 29, and will continue through

Sunday morning, May 1.

Ash said travelers in the area, which includes the Union Creek Road north of Highway 7, should expect to see official vehicles from all the participating counties. Signs

announcing the training will be posted.

He said he doesn't expect any traffic delays on Highway 7 itself.

The regional training sites rotate among the counties, Ash said. Last year's exercise took place at Salt Creek Summit in Wallowa County. Baker County most recently hosted the event in 2015.

Union Creek campground, which is not open to the public for the season, is an ideal base for the training, Ash said.

Many of the search and rescue members will be camping for the weekend, and Union Creek, rare among Forest Service facilities, has campsites with full hookups for trailers and RVs.

See Training, Page A9



7 294671 10002 2