

LOCAL

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State compromises on teacher test

Options offered to check skills

By David Steves
The 17-member Teacher Standards and Practices Commission rejected a proposal to permanently drop the state's basic-skills test for new teachers.

Instead, it voted to continue testing but to provide alternatives to the test, which has been criticized as being culturally biased. "I think our basic concern is that our testing method does not fit everyone," Nora Schikler, a commission member and a teacher at Salem's Morningstar Elementary School, said after Friday's vote.

Commissioner Jodi Engel called Friday's unanimous decision a fragile compromise. The commission established a committee to revamp the state's teacher testing process. It will propose ways to measure teachers' basic skills without limiting them solely to a paper-and-pencil exam. In the meantime, the commission's May decision to suspend basic-skills testing for teachers remains in place. The test will be scheduled for September.

The newly formed committee's proposals will be based on guidelines that the commission outlined Friday. They call for the state to continue to require teacher certification candidates to take a basic-skills test. The California Basic Educational Skills Test and the

National Teachers Examination probably would continue to be used as tests. Engel, a Willamette University professor, said. But the state no longer would require teachers to pass that test in order to become certified for Oregon's public classrooms, Engel said.

Those who failed the test would be allowed to take other routes toward certification. If they didn't want to repeat the test, they could take remedial college work. Or they could appear before a panel of educators, who would assess candidates and determine whether they met a minimum competency standard. Specifics of these alternatives will be worked out by the committee, Schikler said.

"Basically, what we did was recognize the fact that our testing instrument isn't a fair assessment of Turn to Teachers, Page 3D.

Albany festival lifts off

Hot-air balloons grounded by wind

By John Bragg
The Statesman Journal

ALBANY — Victorian Week, a celebration of Albany's historic roots, got off the ground Friday, but the Great Balloon Escape failed.

At dawn, the rising sun saturated the colorful panels of 28 hot-air balloons stretched across a field near West Albany High School.

The flight was to inaugurate a week-long celebration of Albany's historic roots, which continues through next weekend. Most events will swing into action today, including carriage rides, museum visits, historic house tours, and wine and food at Monticelli Vineyard.

By mid-morning Friday, picnickers were already gathered in the park. Some people got up early just to watch the balloons; others helped by them out, laid ladders or joined chase crews to retrieve the drifting balloons.

But at a preflight meeting, the pilots got some bad news. Wind and weather conditions were marginal, flight master Dale Donaldson of Albany, Wash., said. High pressure was moving into Oregon and with it, some easterly weather.

That boded well for a cheerful festival, but not for ballooning. The rising winds would make landings rough.

Pilot Dan Marinovic of Spokane, Wash., wasn't optimistic about lift-off. "There's too much wind. This is about twice what we'll fly in," he said.

And too many neighboring fields where balloons might land were unimproved — "red zones," Marinovic said. Red zones are areas where landings are hazardous or forbidden. All things considered, it left too little time for decision-making.

The air grew warmer as a pre-flight speech drizzled on and pilots milled around impatiently. About half of them started pumping hot air into their balloons. Within minutes, one, then two, then three and finally four balloons became airborne.



Strong winds prevent hot-air balloons from flying in the Great Balloon Escape at Albany's Victorian Week.

At first they sailed south instinctively, but in less than five minutes, they started settling back to the earth, still in sight of the launching ground. Too rough a wind, came the radio report.

Donaldson closed the launch field. Pilots lifted the top panels out of their cradles to let out the hot air. The balloons tugged, sagged and sank back to the ground.

Lisel Carter of Portland nudged on a tether line as her balloon, Fry Rite, settled. The still air of dawn had grown into gusts, and there was no sense in taking chances. "Landing wouldn't be bad," she said. "Landing would be rough."

The balloon pilots will try again today and Sunday, hoping for less formality and lift-off by 6:30 or earlier.

Get up early and get down early" is the ballooner's credo, Carter said.

— Carol Carter of Portland
About events at Great Balloon Escape at Albany Victorian Week.

Chemeketa suffers pains of growth

By David Steves
The Statesman Journal

Chemeketa Community College's rapid growth has hindered the college financially, President Bill Segura said Friday.

But he and other Chemeketa officials are trying to find ways to pay for the cost of growth without turning to taxpayers for more money.

Segura attributed the philosophy in part to the political climate, which he declared during a speech at a Salem City Club luncheon.

"It's a Republican," he said. "Part of the reason is my belief that money doesn't fix problems. Money may not fix problems, but at Chemeketa it is an integral part of the college's needs and successes, which Segura described during his 30-minute speech.

He said Chemeketa's buildings have strained under the weight of its enrollment growth. Chemeketa's student population has increased Turn to Segura, Page 3D.

Senate committee considers gag rule for ethics panel

By Shawn Witz
The Statesman Journal

A Senate committee is considering placing a gag order on the state Government Ethics Commission. Lawyer John DiLorenzo Jr. recommended the restriction earlier this spring to the Senate Committee on Government Operations.

The committee has sent out a survey to members of the media seeking information about how often and in what conditions they talk with other commission staff and members.

DiLorenzo represents Sen. C.T. "Cal" Houck, R-Salem. The ethics commission has found probable cause to think that Houck violated ethics laws by using his office for personal gain. Houck has denied the charges.

DiLorenzo said the ethics commission should be barred from commenting about any complaint until after a preliminary review and a decision by the commission to investigate. "We thought that the harm that could be wreaked on public officials through the public's right to know," DiLorenzo said.

Committee Chairman Sen. Glenn Otis, D-Turn to Panel, Page 3D.

Father of missing Santiam Junction girl says she ran away

By Amy Edwards
The Statesman Journal

The father of a teen-age girl missing from her home near the Santiam Pass said Friday that she had run away.

Steven Pickle of Medford said he had reasons to doubt that Rachanda Les Pickle, 13, was abducted July 10 from her home at Santiam Junction.

Rachanda's mother, Linda Ackroyd, still is convinced that her daughter was kidnapped. Steven Pickle said that until about 8:30 p.m. Thursday, he also suspected kidnaping. Now he thinks that Rachanda, possibly with some help, ran away.

"I haven't got no way to substantiate that, but what I learned I got from some pretty credible sources," Pickle said. Pickle declined comment about who he had heard. He said Rachanda probably ran away because she got tired of living on the way from her friends.

Rachanda has lived for about six years with her mother, stepfather and brother at a state Highway Division maintenance complex, where her stepfather, John Ackroyd, works. Their home, at the junction of Highways 20 and 22, is about 20 miles from the nearest towns, Sisters to the east or Madras to the west.

Pickle said he had found a New York on the Block T-shirt that Rachanda's mother thought she had been wearing when she disappeared. When she left his home, she had a suitcase and a black duffel bag filled with more clothes than was found at her home.

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because he hadn't seen her in two years," he said. Ackroyd said Pickle did not tell her why he thought that Rachanda had run away.

Salem

Utility panelist has brain tumor removed
Public Utility Commissioner Nancy Ryles was in stable condition Friday after 2½-hour surgery to remove a brain tumor. Ryles, 52, was resting after the surgery at UCLA Medical Center, a morning supervisor said. Ryles suffered a seizure Saturday while attending a meeting in Los Angeles. Tests revealed two brain tumors, according to Kris Bradford, the information director for the commission. One of the tumors was removed Friday. Scheduling of further treatment is awaiting biopsy results.

Region

Newberg man denies slaying Idaho woman
NEWBERG — An Oregon man has pleaded innocent to a charge of first-degree murder in connection with the June 3 slaying of an Idaho teacher. Benjamin D. Rye, 26, of Newberg, was arraigned Friday before District Judge Jim Douglas in Caldwell, Idaho. Douglas set the trial for Feb. 25. Rye was returned to Idaho on Thursday from Newberg. He was arrested July 5 after investigators traced a handgun thought to have been used in slaying Marlene Fineman at her Nampa home source.

Albany man drowns in Corvallis gravel pit

CORVALLIS — An Albany man drowned in a gravel pit pond near Corvallis despite his 13-year-old son's attempt to save him. Johnny L. Douglas was swimming about 7 p.m. Thursday when he began having trouble, his brother-in-law, LeRoy Goro Jr. of Albany, told Benton County detectives. Douglas' son, Johnny Jr., pushed a small rubber raft and then an outboard bin, but the man could not reach them. Goro, who could not swim, sent for help. Corvallis rescuers arrived within 20 minutes but could not revive Douglas.

Portland

Mayor refuses permit for Hiroshima event
Mayor Bud Clark has refused to permit a permit to allow citizens to parade through downtown Portland commemorating the bombing of Hiroshima in World War II. Organizers of the Shoshone Project in Portland have used water soluble paint annually since 1983 to create images of people and animals killed in the Aug. 6, 1945, atomic attack. Executive aide Tim Gallagher said Clark opposed graffiti. Lisa Roegner said she was investigating whether the project could be done on a lease scale.

Oregon

Wrestler admits attack on Pendleton woman
PENDLETON — An Barr, a professional wrestler known as "Bastard," has pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting a fan. The plea bargain was reached Friday, just before his trial. Barr, 27, of Portland, was accused of raping a 19-year-old Pendleton woman after a match July 16, 1989. Circuit Judge Robert Abrams sentenced Barr to two years probation, 180 hours of community service, a \$1,000 fine and restitution to his victim. — From staff, wire reports

Morning Salute

The 1989 edition for families will be the largest ever and very successful as a member of the national series that all state school participation in the state shooting sports. The series continues to be the most comprehensive in the 18 states that participate in the two-week festival. The shooting sports are working on the 1990 festival with the assistance of the Oregon State Fair. See you next year! — Santa Ana State and Pendleton Chamber