

## Money available for Stanfield's downtown facades, sidewalks

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
Staff Writer

The Stanfield City Council took the next step in approving the city's curb appeal by implementing two new grant programs on Sept. 15.

The council passed ordinances that created a facade grant program and a sidewalk improvement grant program that together will represent a \$40,000 investment in downtown.

"We want to get the word out to as many people as possible and hopefully get things cleaned up," City Manager Blair Larsen said.

For the facade improvement program, the city will match up to 50 percent and \$10,000 for projects that improve the exterior of Main Street and Coe Avenue buildings.

The sidewalk improvement program will pay up to

50 percent of the cost of sidewalk construction within the city right-of-way.

The Stanfield Public Works Committee will review applications for the sidewalk grant and the Main Street Revitalization Committee will review applications for facade grants.

Larsen said applications will be accepted from now until Jan. 1, 2016 to give anyone considering investing in sidewalks or facade improvements plenty of time to make a decision.

"We can't do it on a first come, first served basis because we don't have enough money available to serve everyone so we want to make sure we give awards to the best projects," he said.

The city budgeted \$20,000 for each of the two grant programs during the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

## AgSource has new sales rep

AgSource Laboratories announced that Paulina Medelez has accepted the position of territory sales representative.

Medelez has worked with the laboratory for 10 years, most recently as AgSource's laboratory manager in Umatilla.

She has a good relationship with customers, a great knowledge of the laboratory and a strong background in customer service.

"From her past positions, Paulina has gained valuable experience in the laboratory," says Chris Ibsen, director of sales. "I look forward to working with her

new role. She's really going to hit the ground running."

Medelez will work with customers in Washington and Oregon. She will sell AgSource's services, from water testing to plant tissue and soil analyses. She will work directly with customers, including municipalities, businesses, homeowners, ag dealers, and farm operation.

Medelez has a bachelor's degree in business management from Columbia Basin College and a biochemistry science degree from Guanajuato Mexico and an associate's degree in agribusiness from Columbia Basin College in 2011.



Paulina Medelez

## U.S. Cellular to host free business workshop

Hermiston's U.S. Cellular store will host a business solutions workshop at 7:30 a.m. Sept. 24 at the store, 650 N. First St., Suite A.

The free event will al-

low people to learn about mobile security, the mobile workplace, mobile registers, business productivity, fleet tracking, remote monitoring and more.

# NOT 'FLASH IN THE PAN'

Forty years ago developer proposed Hermiston Plaza

By **JADE MCDOWELL**  
Staff Writer

The work currently going on at Hermiston Plaza to renovate parking and landscaping builds on a project proposed 40 years ago.

The Sept. 25, 1975 edition of the Hermiston Herald held a front page story titled "New Shopping Plaza Eyed" after Eugene developer Earl Green appeared before the Hermiston City Council to ask that 14 acres at the junction of Highland Avenue and Highway 395 be annexed into the city and zoned for commercial use.

He also said he would be willing to pay to add a traffic signal and left turn lanes at the intersection.

His plan was to build a \$4 million shopping center anchored by three major tenants and hosting up to an additional 30 businesses.

From the article: "Green said he couldn't reveal the names of the major tenants at this time but would do so at the next regularly scheduled



STAFF PHOTO BY SEAN HART

Since Dickerhoof Properties purchased Hermiston Plaza in November, the company has spent about \$500,000 on upgrades and plans to complete landscaping at the center by the holidays.

### HISTORY

meeting of the Hermiston Planning Commission.

... Green, who is a civil engineer, said preliminary plans call for 140,000 square feet of buildings. The three major tenants would occupy 35,000, 32,000 and 15,000 square feet respectively. There would be parking for about 600-650 vehicles and 'lots of landscaping.'

The developer told the Hermiston Herald he wanted to break ground in December. Two of the major stores have set deadlines to

open by September, 1976.

Green said this was no 'flash in the pan' proposal. He said he has spent thousands of dollars already and that he has no intention of walking away from it. He said he has been working on the proposal for the last 15 months.

A total of 13 separate properties are involved in the proposal including highway right-of-way recently purchased from the state. The right-of-way was to have been used for a new highway.

... Green said the center was somewhere between a regional shopping center

and a community shopping center. He pointed out that the center would 'enhance' and 'benefit' downtown businesses.

"The one thing I don't want to do is kill the downtown core area," he said."

Three weeks later the Herald ran a second story announcing "Major Tenants Named at Plaza Center." Green told the Hermiston planning commission that Safeway (already located at what is today the Hermiston Conference Center building), Pay Less Drug and the Oregon-based dime store chain Sprouse-Reitz had all agreed to anchor the plaza.

The stores did open at the newly built plaza, but not until June 1978 — two years after Green had said they would.

The world's first Shari's restaurant also opened in 1978 at the Hermiston Plaza, but the Herald did not include the restaurant in its articles about the plaza that year.

Today Safeway still anchors the 150,000 square foot plaza, but Pay Less Drug and Sprouse-Reitz have been replaced by Big Lots, Bealls, the Dollar Tree and about 13 other businesses.

## New visitor center now open in Irrigon

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**  
Staff Writer

Slowly but surely, Irrigon is beginning to find its identity as a community.

Nestled along the Columbia River among swaths of irrigated farmland, the town of about 1,800 people lies conveniently between major job centers in Hermiston and the Port of Morrow. The local high school reopened in 2005 and recently made headlines with boys basketball and girls softball state titles. A new library and marina boat launch opened to the public earlier this year.

On Sept. 16, the Irrigon Chamber of Commerce held a grand opening ceremony for its new visitor center across the street from City Hall, where chamber president Phyllis Danielson said they hope to share Irrigon's story with a wider audience.

"This is a huge moment for our little village," Danielson told the crowd of roughly 30 guests. "Irrigon has so much to offer. We're coming into our own."

Guest speakers included City Manager Aaron Palmquist, Mayor Sam Heath and state Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner. Smith said the visitor center is an opportunity for Irrigon to promote business and bring people together.



STAFF PHOTO BY GEORGE PLAVERN

Irrigon Mayor Sam Heath speaks during the grand opening of the city's new visitor center Wednesday. Rep. Greg Smith, R-Heppner, was a special guest during the ceremony.

As a legislator, Smith said he will continue to do what he can to make sure Irrigon has the tools to thrive. He sees the town as an increasingly attractive place for middle-class families, with good schools and outdoor recreation in the heart of agricultural production.

"Irrigon is in a perfect position,"

Smith said. "This visitor center is going to help get that word out."

The building, located at 490 E. Highway 730, used to be Julie's Healthier Choice, a fruit and vegetable stand that maintains a homey atmosphere. The Irrigon chamber began renting the space from Stuart and Julie Dick in July, and secured an \$8,000 grant from the Wildhorse Foundation for furnishing and technology.

Danielson said she hopes to recruit volunteers who can work enough five-hour shifts to open the center three days a week. Wednesday's celebration was a soft opening, though Danielson said she was more than happy with the turnout and support.

"It's been a lot of hard work, but it's absolutely been a labor of love," she said. "There's not a doubt in my mind this visitor center will be open for a very long time."

Danielson is a retired assistant superintendent for Morrow County Schools and owner of Stokes Landing Bed & Breakfast, who helped revive the Irrigon Chamber of Commerce two years ago after the organization planned to fold. In two years, she said the group has grown from six to 68 members, erased \$1,500 of debt and now has \$21,000 in the bank to operate the new visitor center.

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- Gary L. West | Editor • gwest@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4532
- Tammy Malgesini | Community Editor • tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com • 541-564-4539
- Sam Barbee | Sports Reporter • sbarbee@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4542
- Kim La Plant | Multi-media consultant • klaplant@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4530
- Jade McDowell | Reporter • jmcowell@eastoregonian.com • 541-564-4536
- Sean Hart | Reporter • smhart@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4534
- Jeanne Jewett | Multi-Media Consultant • jjewett@hermistonherald.com • 541-564-4531

To contact the Hermiston Herald for news, advertising or subscription information:  
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• stop by our offices at 333 E. Main St.  
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**STUDENT OF THE WEEK**

**Susana Carrera**  
HERMISTON HIGH SCHOOL

Susana Carrera has lived in the US for a year and a half. In that time her English has really developed. She is currently ranked 19th in her class in GPA even with the language deficiency. She has A's and B's in all of her classes with a GPA of 3.75 - even though she has very little academic language. She does so well because of her hard work. She is an outstanding student.

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