



ABOUT TOWN

Depot land handoff stalled

Water is still a sticking point in the transfer of the Umatilla Chemical Depot land to local control, which the Army now estimates won't happen until December 2017.

At a Columbia Development Authority meeting last week, executive director Greg Smith told the board that after the CDA and Oregon National Guard worked out an agreement to give the National Guard 23 percent of the depot's water, he received a "string of emails" from the National Guard bureau in Washington, D.C., saying that less than 44 percent was unacceptable.

"That 23 percent represents almost double the amount needed, based on their own study," Smith said. "44 percent seems excessive."

He said it appeared they thought that since the National Guard was getting 44 percent of the acreage in the depot for its training facility, they should get 44 percent of the water.

"This is coming from folks who do not understand Oregon water law or how it is distributed," Smith said.

The Columbia Development Authority board has said in the past it doesn't make sense to accept the land unless it had enough water rights to make it viable for a range of industrial uses.

The CDA originally planned to receive the land in 2015. That year, the Army told them to instead plan on final conveyance by Nov. 2016. This spring they were told it wouldn't happen until May 2017.

Doherty named ag teacher of the year

Hermiston teacher Melissa Doherty has been named the 2016 Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year.

Doherty, who teaches second grade at Rocky Heights Elementary School, was chosen to honor her "exemplary incorporation of agriculture across curricula."

According to a news release from the

Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, Doherty realized that many of her students did not know any more about where their

food came from than their peers in big cities. As a result, she worked to integrate information about agriculture across subjects.

"I saw how valuable the experience was to the students and how they remembered their experiences even years afterward," Doherty said. "I was sold on the value of using agriculture to bring subjects to life."

Students in Doherty's classroom have used egg incubators to hatch chickens and care for the hatchlings. They have also gone through the process of germinating, planting and harvesting potatoes to make their own potato chips. Other learning activities have included field trips, cooking classes, gardening and measuring weather data.



Melissa Doherty

WARMING UP FOR ECHO OKTOBERFEST:



FOOD, FUN AND FRIGTS, OH MY!

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
Community Editor

A steady stream of people laughed, jumped and screamed while catching a glimpse of the spooky fun planned during this weekend's Echo Oktoberfest.

With a sweatshirt cinched up around his face, Mario Saldana missed some of the scariest parts during Saturday's opening night of the Haunted Warehouse at Echo Ridge Cellars. Peering through his hoodie, the 12-year-old provided entertainment for Jose and Desirae Zamudio.

The Hermiston couple brought five youths — who ranged in age from 7-12 — to the attraction's opening night. Desirae, who wore a Jack-o'-lantern sized smile, often lagged behind to watch the group's reactions to the frightening fun.

Gary Marcum, aka Chainsaw Charlie, quickly got on board to help with the event. Echo's

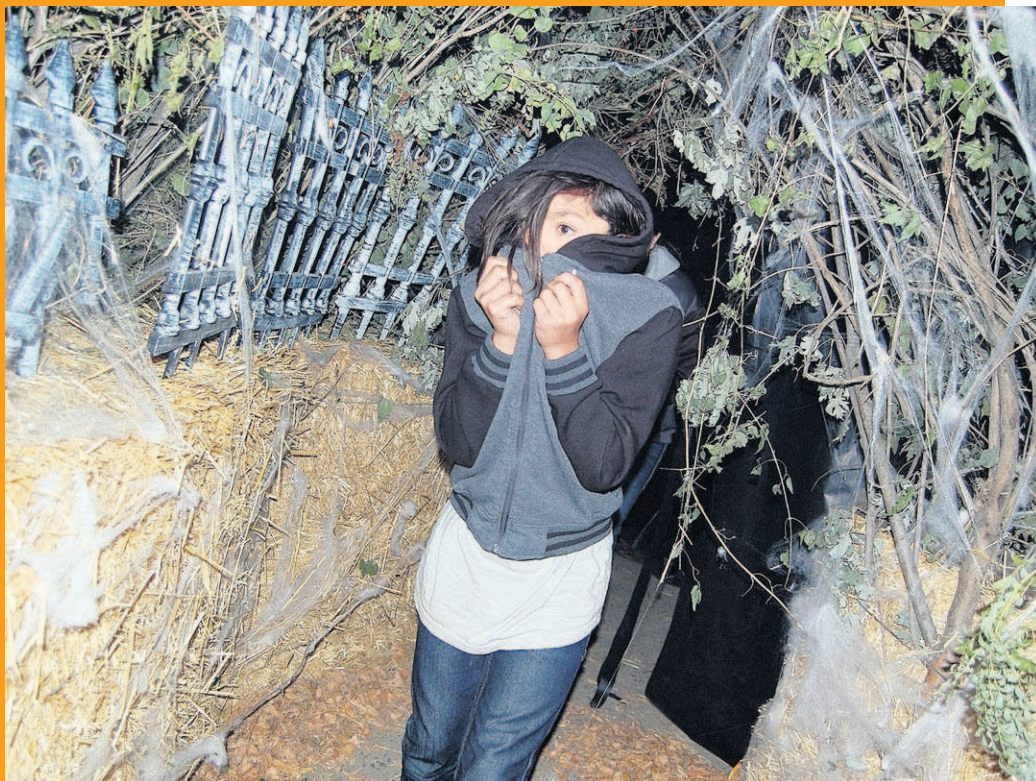
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STAFF PHOTOS BY TAMMY MALGESINI

Top: A creature confronts Desirae Zamudio in the Haunted Warehouse Saturday at Echo Ridge Cellars. The attraction is part of this weekend's Echo Oktoberfest. It also will be open Saturday, Oct. 29 and Halloween.

Middle: Mario Saldana, 12, hides his face while going through the haunted forest in the Haunted Warehouse Saturday at Echo Ridge Cellars.

Bottom: A scary figure greets Desirae Zamudio, Justus Zamudio, 10, Kingo Villarreal, 8, Mario Saldana, 12, Linkin Zamudio, 7, and Jose Zamudio in the Haunted Warehouse Saturday at Echo Ridge Cellars.



FUN, CREATIVITY A POTENT MIX FOR BETTER SCIENCE CLASS



STAFF PHOTO BY E.J. HARRIS

Seventh-grader Jocilyn Tusten constructs a Stellar's jay nest in a science class Monday at Sandstone Middle School in Hermiston.

Science teachers say fun is a key element in high test scores

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
Hermiston Herald

Hermiston School District has a lot of budding scientists in its classrooms, if state test scores are any indication.

For years, the district's middle school students have consistently beaten the state average on science tests by wide margins, and a similar trend has begun at the high school. Last year 79 percent of Hermiston eighth graders met

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