

ORDINANCE: Sometimes the site of fights, drugs

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a monetary fine,” Roberts wrote. “Juveniles will receive a referral to youth services. At the time of violation, the offender will be trespassed from parkway and bridges. If the trespass admonishment is violated the criminal charge of trespass will be filed.”

The ordinance was originally proposed due to concerns over a group of Pendleton High School students and other youth gathering on the Bedford Bridge throughout the day.

Roberts reported that the gathering spot sometimes became the site of fights and drug deals, as well as the intimidation of students and pedestrians using the bridge and the parkway.

High school administrators were limited in what they could do.

Superintendent Jon Peterson said the high school is an open campus,

meaning students are free to leave during breaks in their day. The intermingling of students and non-students at an off-campus location during school hours made the task of mitigating dangerous situations a “management nightmare.”

The scope of the original ordinance applied the law to all public walkways in the city, raising the concerns of Councilwoman Jane Hill.

The city council tabled the issue while Hill and Roberts met with high school administrators and students.

Peterson said the students invited to the meeting were a good mix of those who use the bridge as a hangout spot and students who use it strictly for crossing.

At Tuesday’s meeting, Roberts said the students reported that 80 percent of the youth on the bridge acted responsibly while 20 percent cause the majority of the problems.

The group tried to brainstorm ideas for safer areas for students to congregate away from the bridge, but were unable to find an acceptable location.

After the meeting, Roberts said he made the decision to restrict the scope to just the parkway and adjoining bridges where there was the highest concentration of complaints from citizens about obstruction and annoyance.

The ordinance that passed drew the praise of both Hill and Peterson, both of whom felt it could be used to properly address the problem.

Roberts wrote one trade-off from the smaller scope is that police won’t have guidelines for protesters who use public walkways, an issue he felt would need to be addressed in the future.

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GAS: Limited to counties with fewer than 40,000 residents

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tion electric-car owners find themselves in now,” Bentz said.

Bentz’s bill sailed through the House on a bipartisan 60-0 vote. It’s now awaiting a committee hearing in the Senate.

The measure is limited to counties where there are fewer than 40,000 residents. That accounts for half of Oregon’s counties and almost all of eastern Oregon — but not Umatilla.

Oregonians have rebuffed every attempt to overturn the ban on self-service gas since it was instituted, including a ballot measure they rejected in 1982 that would have legalized self-service pumps. The opposition has been so strong that legislators haven’t introduced a measure to overturn the ban since 2003.

New Jersey has stuck

with its restrictions, too. In 2011, Gov. Chris Christie said he wouldn’t support legislation for self-service gasoline because most residents don’t want it, despite proposing self-serve gas while campaigning for governor in 2009.

Oregon’s ban lists 17 motives. Among them, self-service “discriminates against customers who are elderly or have disabilities who are unable to serve themselves,” and it could create a “dangerous situation” for unattended children.

“In Oregon, the first reason that the law gives to ban self-service gas in effect is, ‘You will set yourself on fire,’” said Steve Buckstein, co-founder of the Cascade Policy Institute, a libertarian think tank.

These days, the arguments against self-service are mainly that full-service stations create jobs and

make life more convenient by letting drivers stay in their vehicles.

Bentz said owners and operators of rural gas stations asked him to introduce HB 3011 this year.

If it’s a frosty winter’s night and the needle on the fuel gauge is nudging empty, drivers in rural Oregon may grow desperate when, after driving hours in search of a filling station, they find it empty and closed.

“Numerous times, I’ve been woken in the middle of the night by the sheriff’s dispatch because we have folks who follow their phones and aren’t very smart and don’t fill up till their gas lights are on,” said Tom Downs, who owns a gas station in southeastern Oregon.

“Out of the goodness of our hearts, we get up in the middle of the night and fuel them so they can get on their way,” he said.



Staff photo by E.J. Harris
Kriss Dammeyer talks with a player about hitting while coaching her softball team on Thursday at Newport Park in Hermiston.

THRIVE: ‘Real hope comes from above’

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to my story.

“I have an absolute direct connection with these kids. No two stories are exactly alike but they are close enough I can look and say, ‘Honey I know exactly how you feel sitting alone in your room feeling empty about life.’”

She said she never imagined as a child she could become the type of person she is today: first in her family to graduate from college, running a nonprofit full-time and married with two children.

“I am thoroughly, thoroughly at peace,” she said.

She wants to give children in tough circumstances hope that their lives can get better too, instead of continuing the cycle of poor choices.

“There are a lot of broken, lonely kids out there,” she said.

Her husband Scott and children Makenna, 10, and Kaiden, 8, help her in that endeavor. She said she brings her children to the same extracurriculars the Made to Thrive kids participate in, and she is proud of how much grace they show to peers who sometimes exhibit behavioral problems linked to their home life.

“A lot of times they’re some of these kids’ first friends,” she said.

Dammeyer said she has been moved by other children and parents as well,

who often step up to start giving rides or equipment to Made to Thrive kids joining their team or class.

Made to Thrive’s financial sponsor is New Hope Community Church. Dammeyer said while some families have started attending the church since being helped by the nonprofit, it’s been an organic thing and not something they were pressured to do.

“Real hope comes from above,” she said. “We don’t push that on people but we just live in such a way that we hope people see that.”

Made to Thrive is based in Hermiston but has begun taking referrals from surrounding communities. Some of them are part of the 188 children in foster care in Umatilla County and others are homeless, low-income or have single parents.

So far, Dammeyer said, she has been carefully adding volunteers and participating families through word of mouth to avoid expanding too rapidly and not giving participants the support they need. Donations of money and equipment have come in the same way.

For more information about Made to Thrive visit www.madetothrive.org or contact Dammeyer at 541-571-6169 or kriss@madetothrive.org.

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