

FIRE: Cause of the fire is under investigation

Continued from 1A

noon and consumed a tall pile of wood, spreading to a stand of trees and fully engulfing a pickup truck before being extinguished by the Pendleton Fire Department.

Neighbor Chelsea Pace said she and Matthew Raz were washing their vehicles when they heard a loud bang. A minute later they noticed flames in the wood pile on a lot down the street and called 9-1-1.

The owners of the house directly behind the lot with the fire weren't home, so Pace said she, Raz and a few other neighbors pulled a pair of dogs from the back yard, then hooked hoses up to the pump for the swimming pool in the yard, keeping the bushes and fence between the wood pile and the house watered down until the fire department arrived.

"It was pretty crazy," she said.

She said all four of the tires on the truck "popped pretty loud" one at a time



Pendleton firefighters search a charred wood pile for hot spots after it caught on fire Saturday afternoon on Broadlane Avenue in Pendleton.

from the heat of the fire, bringing people out of their homes to see what had happened.

The cause of the fire, which sent up a plume of smoke over the Southgate area, is under investigation.

Jade McDowell and Antonio Sierra contributed to this report.

Hermiston raises money for epilepsy research

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

More than 100 people helped raise money for people with disabilities on Saturday during the 2015 Northwest Run/Walk for Epilepsy in downtown Hermiston.

Organizer Debbie Herrera said the event raised about \$7,000. Half of the money will go toward local programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities at the Arc of Umatilla County and the other half will go to Epilepsy Northwest.

Herrera has a daughter with epilepsy, as does fellow organizer Kristi Smalley. Smalley said her daughter Jillian is one of the three in four girls with autism who experience seizures.

The seizures started when Jillian was about 14, Smalley said, and although medication has helped reduce the number of seizures it hasn't made them go away.

"It really affects the lives of everyone around her," Smalley said. "I always have one ear toward her listening for sounds of a seizure starting."

She said Jillian is "such a little fighter" that she doesn't take an entire day to recover like many people do, but the seizures still take a lot out of her.

Smalley was part of Jilli's Silly Walkers, one of the eight teams participating in the event. The group walked from McKenzie Park south along Highway 395 in matching T-shirts, drawing friendly honks and waves. After returning to the park the group listened to the stories of some of the participants' experiences with epilepsy.

Tasha Bleyenbergsaid at age 10 her son started throwing up frequently.



Participants in the 2015 Northwest Run/Walk for Epilepsy march down First Street.

Eventually she saw him do it and realized it was a seizure that was making him vomit. She made an appointment with a specialist, but before he could get in to see the doctor he had an hour and a half long seizure, resulting in medics having to paralyze him and fly him to Oregon Health and Science University in Portland.

Now medications help him recover quickly from the seizures, which are much less frequent, but the ordeal has made its mark on the family.

"I don't think we ever thought something like this could happen to us," Bleyenbergsaid.

Becky Higgins said she knows firsthand how frustrating and disruptive epilepsy can be.

"Throughout my childhood I had about 20 to 30 seizures a day and they were uncontrollable with the medication of the day," she said.

In 1990 doctors told her she was a candidate for surgery that might stop the seizures, which were originating in her left temporal lobe. She said she decided to go ahead with the surgery, which removed part of her temporal lobe, and "from that day on no more seizures."

After the money from registrations and donations was counted up, Smalley thanked the crowd for coming, and especially those who shared their stories.

"For those of us touched by a seizure disorder we all have different stories," she said, "but we all have the common bond of wanting to see more research into epilepsy."

HERMISTON



Annette Webb, right, sells sock puppets and perennials at the Hermiston Farmer's Market.

Saturday Market in full swing

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

The number of booths at the Hermiston Saturday Market continues to expand at McKenzie Park.

Visitors to the market found the fresh, locally grown produce that serves as most farmer's markets' signature offering, but also a few quirkier items too.

Annette Webb of Stanfield was selling colorful sock puppets Saturday next to her selection of perennial flowers.

"I've had kids that are just thrilled to death with them but also kids that are terrified," she said.

Webb said her sister, who works in daycare, got her started on the puppets and she thought they would make a fun addition to the plants. When she's feeling especially creative she'll make 20 puppets in a day.

"Lots of hot glue and a lot of burned fingers, let me tell you," she said of the process.

Webb said she enjoys the camaraderie of the market, where she chats with vendors in neighboring stalls between customers. She also participates in the Stanfield market on Tuesdays at Bard Park from 3-7 p.m.

Wanda Brown was supervising a booth by Horizon Project, which enables adults with intellectual disabilities to participate in community activities, while her clients were off getting lunch.

The crafts at the booth were all made by Horizon Project clients under the direction of a job coach. Brown said this was the first year they had sold their products at the Saturday market but so far it had been worthwhile.

"They're not used to talking to a bunch of strangers walking by so that's been a good experience from a community integration standpoint," she said.

Down the path, Naomi and Ildefonso Zuniga were selling fresh pesticide-free produce at a booth. Finley's Fresh Produce has been a staple at the market for a while but Naomi said this was the first year the Zunigas had participated in the market after taking over the business.

"We offer just about everything — kale, carrots, Walla Walla onions, lettuce, beets ... watermelon will be coming soon, hopefully before the Fourth of July," she said.

The stand is set up to accept vouchers from WIC and the Oregon Farm Direct Nutrition program. Naomi said she encouraged people to check out the Saturday Market and grab some fresh produce picked straight from Umatilla County fields.

"Support local farmers," she said.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

PENDLETON

Man commits suicide in hospital parking lot

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

A 79-year-old man Monday morning fatally shot himself at St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton. Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts said at this time he would only confirm the man suffered from a terminal illness and would not identify the victim due to concerns of the family.

Hospital staff at about 10:30 a.m. called 9-1-1 to report the suicide. The man died outside a red Dodge pickup that was stopped half on grass in the far southeast corner of the hospital's parking lot at 2801 St. Anthony Way.

Pendleton police arrived to the scene within minutes, blocked roadways and taped off the area around the body. Someone also covered the body in a yellow tarp.

Several hospital employees patrolled the area near the body to prevent public access, and facilities director Craig Smith said the hospital was not in an emergency situation but was open as usual. St. Anthony president Harry Geller also observed the scene.

Oregon has one of the highest suicide rates in the nation. The Oregon Health Authority's 2012 report on suicide said it has been on the rise in the state since 2000, and in 2010 the suicide rate in Oregon was 17.1 per 100,000 deaths, a figure 41 percent higher than the national average.

Contact Phil Wright at pwright@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0833.

Hermiston School District wins accounting award

HERMISTON — The Hermiston School District has been recognized for its financial reporting for the eighth year in a row.

The district received the county's highest award for governmental accounting from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada for its 2013-2014 annual financial report.

The district has received the award a total of nine times for demonstrating a "spirit of full disclosure" in its financial reporting.

HSD deputy superintendent Wade Smith said he was proud of the district's business office staff and school board members for their commitment to transparency and financial accountability.

Summer reading program offers Native culture

IONE — The University of Oregon's Museum of Natural and Cultural History is bringing a hands-on program to Ione City Park Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. as part of the Ione Public Library's summer reading program.

Be A Hero For the Environment includes a series of activity tables and touchable artifacts from Oregon's Native American cultures. The hour-long presentation is suitable for all ages.

Kiwanis offer adult scholarships

PENDLETON — The Pendleton Kiwanis Club is offering two competitive \$1,000 scholarships to be awarded for use during the fall, winter and/or spring terms of the 2015-2016 academic year.

The purpose of the Kiwanis scholarships is to support adult students who have been out of high school for a period of time and would like to go to college and/or enroll in a training program. It may also be for adults who wish to complete an undergraduate or training program previously started.

To receive an application, or if you have questions about the application or application process, email Linda Neuman at lindkn@aol.com as soon as possible. Completed applications are due no later than Wednesday, July 26.

PHS class of '62 plans reunion

PENDLETON — A meet and greet reunion for the Pendleton High School class of 1962 is set for July 21-23.

The event begins with a social dinner Tuesday, July 21 at 6 p.m. at Roosters Restaurant, 1515 Southgate Place, Pendleton. An all-class barbecue picnic for 1960-65 is planned for Wednesday, July 22 from

BRIEFLY

For more information, contact the library at 541-561-9828.

11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Stillman Park, 413 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Also, that evening there's a prime rib and salmon buffet dinner at Hamley Slickfork Saloon, 8 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton. A morning gathering is planned Thursday, July 23 from 9:30-11 a.m. at the Buckin' Bean Coffee Roasters, 405 N.W. Despain Ave., Pendleton. Also, class pictures will be distributed.

For more information or to register, call Leslie Weimer at 541 561-8037.

Church to hold rummage sale

PENDLETON — The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer has planned a rummage sale in the church's parish hall, located at 241 S.E. Second St. The sale is Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information, call the church at 541-276-3809.

Fourth of July runs with color

MILTON-FREEWATER — Celebrate the Fourth of

July with splash of color during Milton-Freewater's first color run/walk.

The Color Me Freedom 5K Run/Walk benefits Kiwanis scholarships and Friends of 1186, a group that supports local soldiers and their families while deployed or in transition from full military status.

The event is Saturday, July 4 with registration beginning at 7:30 a.m. and the run/walk at 8 a.m. at Yantis Park, 200 DeHaven St., Milton-Freewater. For those that pre-register, the cost is \$15 or \$25 with a T-shirt. Race day entries are \$5 more. Participants 8 and under are free to run or \$10 for a T-shirt.

For more information or to register, contact Sharame Marlatt at 541-969-7467, marlattfam@outlook.com or find the event on Facebook.

Submit information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

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