



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

# Smells like snow

A Staffordshire terrier named Maya sticks her nose out the window of a semi-truck. Her owner, truck driver Mark Turner of Minnesota, stopped at the Deadman Pass Rest Area to chain up.

## HERMISTON

# Students donate \$727 to Agape House

East Oregonian

West Park Elementary students put their monthly theme of "sharing" to practical use during January by raising \$727 for the Agape House.

The students presented Agape House director Dave Hughes with a check on Friday during an assembly. He told students that when he was talking to adults about donations to the nonprofit in the future he would point out their example of giving.

"I can't tell you how much this gift means to us," he said.

The school started out with a goal of raising at least \$400 through a penny drive. The final amount far exceeded expectations, requiring Principal Kevin Headings to keep his promise to temporarily dye his hair bright red next week if students reached their goal.

"You guys raised a lot of money for a really good cause," Headings said, congratulating students. "That money will go to



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

Agape House Dave Hughes thanks West Park Elementary School students for their donation to the Agape House.

people in need." The money will go to support the Agape House's food bank.

The third grade class won the inter-class contest, raising \$161. Their prize is a game of dodge ball between

third grade classes. Fourth graders came in a close second with \$159.

The school holds activities around a theme each month, and on Friday staff announced to students that February's theme is "random

acts of kindness." Students were encouraged to do small acts of kindness, from helping an elderly neighbor to sitting with a lonely classmate at lunch, all month long without any expectation of reward.

## HERMISTON

# 'Good Shepherd intersection' considered for makeover

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

The intersection of 11th Street and Elm Avenue, where Highway 207 cuts through Hermiston, could soon get a makeover and new traffic signal.

On Monday the city council will consider two agreements that will allow work to move forward on re-designing the intersection and installing a signal. The intersection is currently a three-way stop, with right of way given to vehicles following the course of 207 west on Elm or north on 11th.

Half of the \$1.6 million project will be paid for by an Oregon Department of Transportation grant, one fourth by the city and one fourth by Good Shepherd Medical Center. It is expected to begin in late 2016 and wrap up in early 2017.

The project has been at the top of the city's trans-

portation plan since 2014. That year Good Shepherd Medical Center announced a multi-phase expansion that is expected to create a total of 58 new permanent jobs, creating an estimated 300 more trips per day through the intersection.

The grant from ODOT is contingent on the creation of new jobs at the hospital. One agreement being considered by the council on Monday would put Good Shepherd Health Care System on the hook for paying back 75 percent of the grant if it does not hire enough new people to meet the grant requirements. The city would pay the other 25 percent.

The second agreement on Monday's agenda is with ODOT to accept the grant of half the project cost, up to \$813,710.

The council will also consider backing a loan to the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center of up to

\$1.5 million.

Umatilla County has already agreed to back the loan with full faith and credit, as long as Hermiston agrees to the same deal. The money will be used to allow potential donors to EOTEC to spread large contributions over the next two to five years while also allowing the EOTEC board to access the cash upfront to finish construction in time for the 2017 fair and rodeo.

According to the resolution, "the guarantee is not considered voluntary floating indebtedness because the financing agreements are expected to be paid entirely from the proceeds of fundraising efforts."

The council had previously passed a resolution allowing EOTEC to take on up to \$1.5 million in debt using the 91 acres of EOTEC property as collateral, but when board members took the proposal to the county

they were informed that state law prohibits counties from using land as collateral.

The council also will give official notice of the May 17 primary election. The mayor and municipal judge positions are both up for re-election in May. The deadline to file with the city for either position is 5 p.m. on March 8. Forms can be picked up at turned in at city hall, 180 NE Second St.

Candidates for the four at-large seats on the city council will not be up for election until the November general election.

## HERMISTON

# Bothum resigns from EOTEC to make arena bid

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

The Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center authority accepted the resignation of board member David Bothum on Friday.

Bothum said he was stepping down as the Farm-City Pro Rodeo's representative on the board in order to bid on construction of the new rodeo arena being designed for EOTEC.

Bothum owns Bothum Construction and is a founding member of the Farm-City Pro Rodeo. The rodeo's current arena at the Umatilla County Fairgrounds was already there when the rodeo began, but since then Bothum has participated in renovation and upkeep.

Board members said they were surprised to see his letter of resignation and expressed appreciation for all of the time he had put into EOTEC.

"We're sorry to see you go," said Byron Smith, board chair and Hermiston city manager.

The Farm-City Pro Rodeo board will make a recommendation to the city of Hermiston for someone to replace Bothum on the EOTEC board. The rodeo board, of which Bothum is a member, is scheduled to meet Tuesday, Feb.

9. The Hermiston City Council will then act on the recommendation at a future meeting.

The bid package for the rodeo arena isn't expected to be issued until April 6. Frew Development Group senior project manager Rob Drier recommended the entire arena, including electrical and plumbing, be bid to a single contractor in order to save time.

"You may save a few dollars but it won't be substantial," he said.

On Friday the board unanimously approved bid packages for paving, sidewalks, landscaping and irrigation, site lighting and signage. Requests for proposals are set to be released Feb. 12.

Drier said certain tasks, such as site lighting and inspections by city code officials, need to be completed before events can be held at the event center. As a result, even though the building is still on schedule for completion on March 31, Drier said the center might not be ready for occupancy on that date. He said it should be completely ready in time for a grand opening event in late April, however.

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## HERMISTON

# Breckheimer pleads guilty to fatal drunk driving

East Oregonian

Alicia G. Breckheimer of Hermiston pleaded guilty Friday to driving drunk and killing a man in a wrong-way crash on Interstate 84.

Breckheimer, 33, changed her plea in circuit court in Hermiston, according to court records. The state accused Breckheimer of driving drunk and killing Robert Henry Baker, 66, of Ione, in a head-on crash March 7, 2014, near Hermiston.

In the crash, Breckheimer drove a 2005 Cadillac CTS at about 1:30 a.m. westbound in the east-bound lanes of Interstate 82 near milepost 4 when she struck Baker's 2006 Chrysler 300, according to police reports. Baker died at the scene.

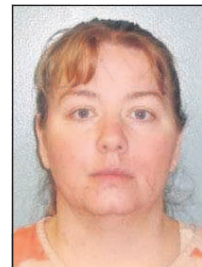
Firefighters freed Breckheimer from the

wreckage and an ambulance took her to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston, which transferred her via an air ambulance to Legacy Emanuel Medical Center, Portland, where she was treated and released.

Her blood alcohol level following the crash, according to the indictment, was at least .15 percent. The legal limit is .08 percent.

Breckheimer pleaded guilty to one count of driving under the influence of intoxicants, three counts of recklessly endangering and one count of second-degree manslaughter. The state dismissed charges of reckless driving and first-degree manslaughter.

Circuit Judge Dan Hill set Breckheimer's sentencing for March 14. Until then, she remains out of jail.



Breckheimer



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## HSD second-fastest growing district in the state

HERMISTON — Hermiston School District is the second-fastest growing school district in the state of Oregon, according to a report by the Oregon Department of Education.

The district grew at a rate of 3.71 percent over the last year, far surpassing the state average of .97 percent. It ranks as the 29th largest district out of 212 in the state.

Hermiston School District started the school year with more than 5,500 students. The growth of more than 200 students from the year before was more than double what a Portland State University

study predicted, lending an even greater sense of urgency to the district's search for new ways to increase the capacity of its schools.

The district currently uses

24 modular classrooms to supplement its regular buildings, which is four more than were being used last time the district went for a bond measure.

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