

Hermiston Fire launches web video series

Videos highlight staff, actions and experiences

By JENNIFER COLTON
East Oregonian

Hermiston Fire & Emergency Services wants you to know what they do — 50 seconds at a time.

The organization recently launched a web series focused on the staff, actions and experiences of Hermiston firefighters and paramedics. The first video introduces host Josh Smith and the idea; the second talks about a firefighter's work schedule, and the third demonstrates firefighter turn-out gear. Each is about one minute long.

"We show up when people need something, but they don't really know what we do," Chief Scott Stanton said. "This gives people an idea. These guys are out there every day."

The first video was uploaded to Facebook on Feb. 22 and has more than 2,400 views. The success surprised not only Stanton, but Smith, the video's host and director.

"I didn't think anyone outside of the fire department would watch it, much less like it, but I've been getting people from Portland, Hermiston, people I've never met sharing it," he said.

Smith, a firefighter paramedic, has been with Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services for seven years. Smith said the idea for the series came from a brainstorming sessions for Umatilla Fire District 1, the proposed consolidation of the fire districts for Hermiston and Stanfield.

"We identified information as one of the primary reasons this failed last time, so we were brainstorming ideas about how to get the information out," Smith said. "After the first episode, we saw it as a tool for more than just reformation. We can use this to show



Josh Smith, firefighter and paramedic, is filming a new web series for Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services using a GoPro.

Staff Photo by Jennifer Colton

people what it is we do, to answer questions, and to make sure people know we're real people."

What started as a proposal for a 40-second commercial about the reformation transformed into an ongoing web series providing snippets and information about the life of a firefighter. So far, Smith has filmed each episode with his GoPro camera. The first video — 41 seconds long — took 3 1/2 hours to complete, partially because it was Smith's first time on the camera and partially because he was still hammering out the details of the new venture.

Smith has already started filming videos that tour the station and explain different equipment. He plans to shoot some video out on calls as well, but so far his shifts have been too busy with responding to emergencies to take the extra time to film.

"I don't want it to get boring and mundane of me just sitting at a desk,"

Smith said. "I wanted to get some action shots yesterday, but we were too busy. I got some of Code 3 driving from behind the dashboard, but that's about it."

The district hopes to upload a video about twice a week and will continue as long as there is community interest — regardless of the results of the May election.

"We started the series specifically for the vote, but my goal isn't to film the reformation, it's about getting people talking," he said. "If people have questions or comments, post those on the video, and then I will address them. As long as people are interested, we'll keep going."

To view the videos, visit the Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services' Facebook page.

Contact Jennifer Colton at jcolton@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4534



Contributed photo

Hermiston firefighters pose at the Scott Firefighter Stairclimb in Seattle

Firefighters climb stairs for charity

By JENNIFER COLTON
East Oregonian

69 floors in full gear. Hermiston's times this year were:

- Destry Stewart- 17:26
- Dennis McClure- 22:07
- Corey Gorham- 26:44
- Ed Clark- 27:06
- Jesse Brown- 27:44
- Mike Bozeman-32:02
- Jesse Reagan- 38:51
- Daniel Hinton- 35:26
- Mathew Hodge- 43:00

Hermiston Fire's team raised a total of \$19,005 this year.

"I'm proud of the efforts of those guys that do this year in and year out. I did it last year, and I know how hard it is," Hermiston Fire Chief Scott Stanton said Monday. "It's for a great cause and they do a great job representing Hermiston in Seattle."

Nine Hermiston firefighters walked up 69 floors and 1,356 steps in full firefighting gear to reach an observation deck overlooking the city of Seattle — all for a good cause.

The Scott Firefighter Stairclimb supports The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, raising money through sponsorships, individual and department fundraising and entry fees. Hermiston Fire and Emergency Services again sent a team to the stairclimb and raised funds throughout the local community.

Firefighters are timed for how long it takes to climb all

PSD K-5, 6-12 students could get different school year start dates

East Oregonian

A Pendleton School District committee recommended a staggered calendar for the 2016-2017 school year.

Contractors will complete the new Washington and Sherwood Heights elementary schools in time for the next school year, but demolition of the old buildings and other construction means the sites won't be ready until after Round-Up.

The committee considered two calendars to accommodate the construction — the green calendar, which would push the start of school for every grade until Sept. 19, and the gold calendar, which staggers the start date between K-5 and 6-12.

Under the gold calendar,

grades 6-12 start Aug. 29 and take a week off Sept. 12-16 for Round-Up.

K-5 students would start school Sept. 19, although the Pendleton Early Learning Center would hold a "soft start" for kindergartners Aug. 29-Sept. 1.

The Pendleton School Board discussed some of the cons of the proposed calendar at a meeting Tuesday.

"This calendar does present instructional day and instructional hour challenges for the district because there are fewer days for our K-5 students," Superintendent Jon Peterson said.

Because all students end the school year on June 8 despite different start times, K-5 students will only get 161 instructional days as opposed to 170 for grades 6-12.

If elementary school students don't receive a certain number of instructional hours, the district will have to notify the Oregon Department of Education and provide a plan to avoid the shortfall in the future.

The board members debated the district's options, which include adding a few minutes to the school day or converting certain scheduled days off to school days.

Board member Dave Krumbain didn't see a problem dealing with the Department of Education if the district fell short.

"I have no problem just adopting the calendar and just writing a letter to the state," he said. "It's a one-time deal."

The board will consider adopting a calendar at its March 14 meeting.

HERMISTON

Incumbents running unopposed

Mayor Drotzmann running for third term

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Despite a heated presidential race creating controversy for this year's primary elections, local races in Hermiston are promising to be quiet ones.

Mayor David Drotzmann is running unopposed for a third term and Municipal Judge Thomas Creasing is once again running unopposed as well. The filing deadline was 5 p.m. Tuesday.

Drotzmann, a local optometrist who owns Lifetime Vision Source, has been mayor since 2013. He also serves on the city's Community Enhancement Committee, the Branding Committee sponsored by the city and Chamber of Commerce, and the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center's fundraising committee.

Drotzmann is currently serving his second two-year



Drotzmann



Creasing

term, but a rewrite of the city's charter changed the mayor's term to four years starting in 2017. Hermiston's mayor only votes in the event of a tie between the city's eight-person council.

Creasing was elected as municipal judge in 2008 after 14 years as an attorney in Oregon. The municipal court handles Class B and Class C misdemeanors committed in Hermiston.

During the same charter rewrite that changed the mayor's term, the city proposed making the

municipal judge position an appointed position instead of an elected one, but Hermiston residents voted against that amendment.

The primary election is May 17. Because both positions have only one candidate running, the May election will be considered the general election and the positions will not appear again on the November ballot.

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

PENDLETON Report: Fatal old city hall fire an accident

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

A deputy state fire marshal determined "manipulation of pyrotechnic materials" caused an accidental, fatal fire last year in Pendleton.

The official finding backs up what Pendleton Police Chief Stuart Roberts reported days after the deadly event.

Eduardo Quezada, 25, died the morning of July 21, 2015, from an explosion and fire at the old city hall in downtown Pendleton.

The *East Oregonian* requested the report soon after the fire. The Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal finished and sent the report on March 2, 2016.

Fire marshal Scott Goff

wrote that witness statements, videos and other evidence indicated Quezada was alone and on a couch when the blast erupted in the southwest corner of a large family room on the second floor of the former government building.

Goff's report does not have information about what sparked the materials.

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