



Staff photo by Jade McDowell

## New 'water feature' in downtown Hermiston

McKenzie Park was flooded Thursday morning after a thunderstorm swept through Hermiston.

# County ATV proposal drives into opposition

Property owners concerned riders will cause problems

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Umatilla County Commissioner Larry Givens wants to take a harder look at a plan to open certain county roads to all-terrain vehicles.

The county board of commissioners held a public hearing Wednesday to introduce the proposal to allow all-terrain vehicles on certain two-lane gravel county roads east of Highway 11 and north of Abel Road in the Weston and Milton-Freewater area. But Givens said he heard from property owners and ranchers concerned with ATV riders causing problems, such as vandalism.

Terry Nielsen during a phone call Tuesday afternoon said vandals and thieves are some of her top reasons for opposing the county's proposal. Allowing ATV riders to use those rural roads, she said, would invite more crime.

She and her husband, Bill Nielsen, live in Junction City but own a home and land on scenic Abel Road near Weston. She chided the county for not contacting her or other property owners about the new ordinance.

Nielsen also said they lease land to cattle ranchers who do not want folks harassing their cows. And the area is home to wildlife of all kinds, even wolves, she said, and having a bunch of ATV riders there will run

off game and other animals.

The proposal would limit ATV use to daylight hours but would not limit the time of year riders could use the roads. The county also would require drivers have a valid license, a valid state-issued ATV permit and an Oregon ATV safety education card. They also would have to pay \$10 to buy a Umatilla County ATV permit, which the county could revoke if riders break the law or misbehave.

The new county law would end June 30, 2017, but the county board could renew it.

Commissioner Bill Elfing at Wednesday's meeting said the experiment would depend on the ATV users policing themselves.

"Self policing?" Givens asked.

"Yes, that's right," Elfing replied.

Board chairman George Murdock said he suspected those who would misuse ATVs already are misusing them.

At the meeting, ATV proponent Jessie Shaw of Milton-Freewater said he and the group who want the new local law would not tear up private property or ruin farmland. He said the state already allows farmers to drive ATVs, so this would allow other people to legally use them.

No one else spoke for or against the proposal. The board set June 1 as the meeting to consider voting on the ordinance.

Givens said he still has concerns about new ordinance that the county needs to address.

### BRIEFLY

#### EOTEC invites public to first open house

HERMISTON — The Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center is readying to hold an open house next Friday.

The public from 3-7 p.m. on May 13 can check out the event center at 1705 E. Airport Road, Hermiston, and learn about its history and future. The event will include a welcome ceremony at 4:30 p.m.

Heather Cannell, the center's business development manager, said there will be tours, wine tastings and hors d'oeuvres. The center's board of directors will attend, along with Hermiston Mayor Dave Drotzmann, members of the city council, Umatilla County commissioners and other officials.

The center is a partnership between the local governments of Hermiston and Umatilla County and will house the county fair and Farm City Pro Rodeo in 2017. Hermiston City Manager Byron Smith told county commissioners at their Wednesday meeting the event center's construction is in the final phases. He also said the final design on the barns is close, and the EOTEC board could seek bids for that work starting in mid-May and is looking to June to seek bids on building the rodeo arena.

The event center already has 10 bookings he said, which include a regional meeting of the League of Oregon Cities on May 18.



The public is invited to the first open house of the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center on May 13 from 3-7 p.m.

Brass, Frank Sinatra and Ray Charles.

The free event is Saturday beginning at 7 p.m. at Wesley United Methodist Church, 816 S. Main St., Milton-Freewater. Refreshments will be available by The Frogs.

For more information, contact Bob Jones at 541-938-7028 or dubuquer@charter.net.

#### Elks lodge sets Mother's Day brunch

HERMISTON — The Coffey Brothers will perform during a Mother's Day event at the Hermiston Elks Lodge.

A special service honoring mothers, which is open to the public, is Sunday at 10 a.m. at the lodge, 480 E. Main St., Hermiston. A champagne brunch is available from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cost is \$9 per

person. For more information, call the lodge at 541-567-6923 or Jim Voss at 541-571-5116.

#### Seed to Supper offers gardening program

People can learn to grow their own food during a six-session course offered by OSU Extension Service and the Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center.

Seed to Supper began this past week at Yellowhawk and continues Thursdays from 5-7 p.m. at the health center, 73265 Confederated Way, Mission. The other upcoming sessions begin Sunday, May 22 from 3-5 p.m. at the OSU Extension Service in Umatilla Hall at Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.

The program highlights

practical, low-cost gardening techniques for building, planning, planting, maintaining and harvesting a successful vegetable garden. It doesn't matter if you live in an apartment or on acreage, everyone can learn something from the course.

Classes are conducted inside and outside, with classroom lectures followed by time in the garden for hands-on learning. Textbook, seeds and other goodies are available to class participants for free.

For more information or to register, contact Colleen Sanders at 541-278-5403, colleen.sanders@oregonstate.edu, Adrienne Berry at 541-566-0334, adrienneberry@yellowhawk.org or visit www.oregonfoodbank.org/our-work/building-food-security/education-programs/seed-to-supper.

#### White Eagle Grange hosts bingo night

PENDLETON — A progressive jackpot bingo game, a 50-50 pot and regular bingo games are planned during Bingo Night at White Eagle Grange.

The event is Saturday from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the grange hall, 43828 White Eagle Road, Pendleton (between Pendleton and Pilot Rock on Highway 395 South). Regular cards are 50 cents each, and jackpot and blackout bingo are \$1 each. Popcorn and beverages are available by donation.

For more information, contact Gail Wilson at 541-276-3778 or g.wilson@q.com.

#### Oldies Night features hits of '66

MILTON-FREEWATER — Get ready to be transported back 50 years when Oldies Night in Milton-Freewater features songs of 1966.

BJ the DJ will spin familiar tunes — from one-hit wonders to the familiar sounds of The Beach Boys, The Beatles, Simon & Garfunkel, The Righteous Brothers, The Supremes, The Tijuana



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