

HERMISTON

# Festival fosters local artists

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Hermiston's efforts to foster an arts scene were on exhibit Saturday at the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival downtown.

Local artists — and a few from Washington — showed off their talents and talked about how they got their start in art.

Alana McWilliam, of Umatilla, said she has only been painting for four years.

"I was retired, and then I had a heart attack and almost didn't make it," she said. "I thought, 'Well I'd better start doing something to keep busy.'"

She took a few local art classes, then ordered some tapes from famed artist Bob Ross to learn how to refine her technique. She said she "still can't draw," but has managed to become a good enough painter for people to regularly buy her landscapes at the Saturday Market in McKenzie Park.

Saturday was her first time participating in the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival, which doubled as a season opening of the market. She said she was excited to meet the other artists who have been at their craft longer than she has.

"It's just fun," she said. "It gets me out of the house and I've met some really nice people."

Sandra Spencer of Hermiston, who was displaying a selection of colorful oil paintings, said she started painting in 2000 as a hobby and found she quite enjoyed it.

"There's a moment when it comes together and you know everything is balanced, and it's just working," she said. "It's probably like a



"Guardian" by Chris Huffman.

Staff photo by Jade McDowell



"Death is the Road to Awe" by Sandra Gunn.

Staff photo by Jade McDowell



Gina May of Pasco shows off the paper flowers she makes and sells during the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival in Hermiston.

Staff photo by Jade McDowell



"Drinking Buddies" by Sandra Spencer.

Staff photo by Jade McDowell

runner's high."

Spencer said it was fun to come out and people-watch and meet other artists.

"It's great to see people bring out their children, so their children get an interest early," she said.

Dan Earp of Hermiston said he has been drawing since he was a kid, but photography was more of a recent hobby. He was displaying a collection of pencil drawings and nature

photography.

He said it was his fourth time participating in the festival, which is in its 12th year. So far he has just stuck to local events but said he would like to try his hand at a few bigger shows later in the year.

He said he appreciated the Eastern Oregon Arts Festival because there was "plenty of room to grow" for Hermiston's arts community.

As part of the event, the city of Hermiston had a set of posters on display asking for feedback on ideas for a city art plan. Spencer said she hoped the city follows through on beginning to install more art around the city.

A few of the public art location suggestions included Newport Park, Belt Park, Riverfront Park, the Hermiston Public Library, Main Street, Hermiston

Avenue, Highway 395, West Park Elementary and the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center.

Types of art suggested included murals, large and small sculptures, decorative fencing, "functional art" such as decorative benches, "yarn bombing" and artistic signs.

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BRIEFLY



Jewell

## Hermiston man charged with hate crime

HERMISTON — A Hermiston man is in custody after allegedly assaulting a black Pendleton man because of his race.

Vernon Allen Jewell, 52, approached Eddie Scott at about 6 p.m. Saturday in the parking lot of Foxwood Apartments on Orchard Avenue.

According to a Hermiston Police report, Jewell was "belligerent" and calling Scott racial slurs.

Jewell swung at Scott, again calling him a racial slur, according to the report. As Jewell continued to come aggressively at Scott, he punched Jewell in the mouth in self-defense.

During the investigation, Jewell was identified as the primary aggressor.

When Jewell was being taken into custody, he resisted arrest, but officer Carlos Balli and another cop were able to gain control of him.

Jewell was charged with second-degree intimidation (aggravated assault), second-degree disorderly conduct and resisting arrest. The misdemeanor assault charge is considered a hate crime because the attack was because of the victim's race.

As of Monday, Jewell was lodged in the Umatilla County Jail with a \$15,000 bail.

PENDLETON

# Happy Canyon memorializes original home

By JADE MCDOWELL  
East Oregonian

Memories from 100 years of Happy Canyon were shared all around on Saturday, as the pageant's directors and supporters unveiled a new plaque commemorating wild west show's former home on Emigrant Avenue.

"This is a very special day for all of us," Happy Canyon President JJ Spriet said.

The celebration took place in the parking lot of Baxter Auto Parts in the 300 block of Southwest Emigrant Avenue, where wooden grandstands, an arena and dance hall housed Happy Canyon from 1916 until 1954. The original arena — now just a memory — seated 4,800 people in a semicircle. It was the first of its kind in Eastern Oregon and also hosted the first car show in the region.

The Indian pageant and night show moved to its current location next to Round-Up Stadium in 1955.

Emile Holeman, the pageant's



Former Happy Canyon president Emile Holeman, left, prepares to cut the ribbon on a new plaque commemorating the pageant's former location while longtime Happy Canyon actor Fritz Hill makes a toast.

Staff photo by Jade McDowell

oldest living president, was on hand to cut the ribbon around the plaque and reminisce about the days that he lived in the stone house just across the street as a little boy.

"I spent many hours with a tennis racket and tennis ball bouncing it up against the wall of Happy Canyon," he said.

Chief Gary Burke, who represents the fourth generation of Burke men

to participate in Happy Canyon, said when he was growing up the pageant was something he looked forward to every year — and still is. He called it an honor to portray his ancestors in the show.

Fritz Hill, a former actor and director for Happy Canyon, said he made an impromptu and uninvited debut in the show as a child.

"I came with my dad and

watched on the sidelines, and when I was seven or eight I had enough of watching and just walked on," he said. "It's been really a journey."

He was formally invited back the following year.

Jim Duff, who served as Happy Canyon president during its 75th anniversary, said his first involvement with the pageant was as a teenager collecting discarded beer bottles from under the grandstands. He said he considers Happy Canyon part of his family's heritage.

"I sure hope it goes another hundred years," he said.

His wish was met with cheers from supporters, followed by a ceremonial ribbon-cutting by Holeman, accompanied by the Hick Band.

But first, Fritz made a toast — with Pendleton Whisky, of course.

"Here's to Happy Canyon!" he said.

Contact Jade McDowell at [jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com](mailto:jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4536.

## Two-vehicle crash closes lane of I-84

BOARDMAN — A two-vehicle crash closed one westbound lane of Interstate 84 near Boardman Monday afternoon.

Morrow County Sheriff Ken Matlack said a minivan and a semi-truck were involved in the crash. An air ambulance was sent for at least one of the four victims.

The crash took place about 2 p.m. Monday afternoon near exit 159 to Tower Road.

The cause of the crash wasn't immediately known.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to [news@eastoregonian.com](mailto:news@eastoregonian.com)

## Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board briefed on project

By GEORGE PLAVEN  
East Oregonian

The Oregon Hanford Cleanup Board met Monday at Tamastlikt Cultural Institute in Mission, where members were briefed by the Department of Energy on an underground storage tank that recently leaked thousands of gallons of nuclear waste between its double shells.

Stephen Pfaff, with the DOE's Office of River Protection, discussed the situation with Tank AY-102, which leaked 8 inches of sludge into its annulus — the 2-foot-wide space between shells — in April. Pfaff said they've since pumped some of that leaked material back into the primary tank.

AY-102 has been slowly leaking since 2012, but last month's discovery marked a dramatic increase from about 70 gallons to more than 3,000 gallons, according to the *Tri-City Herald*. Workers at Hanford were already pumping out the sludge to move it into another sturdier double-shell tank.

Pfaff said they do not know why AY-102 suddenly

began leaking more rapidly, though there is no indication the material breached the outer shell into the environment. There is also no indication of any leaks at Tank AY-101, where radioactive particles had been measured at elevated levels.

As for the 42 Hanford workers evaluated for exposure to chemical vapors, Pfaff said an assessment team has been looking into better tools and training that should be

incorporated beginning next year. All workers have since been released and returned to work.

In a separate presentation, Pfaff discussed the proposed setup and operations of a low-activity waste plant at Hanford that must be commissioned by no later than 2023, per court order. The facility is part of the overall Waste Treatment and Immobilization Plant, where waste will be made into

glass. Pfaff said they are still working on overcoming technical issues and fine-tuning designs.

The board will meet again Tuesday at Tamastlikt from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The public is welcome to attend.

MISSION

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