

HERMISTON

Summer reading program keeps brains, bodies active

By **JADE MCDOWELL**
East Oregonian

When a dozen teenagers gathered for the Hermiston Public Library's summer reading program on Thursday, there wasn't a book in sight.

That's because the program focuses on keeping both brains and bodies active for the summer, and this meeting was geared toward the latter.

Teens were told to wear comfortable clothing. When they arrived at the library they were directed to the yard of First United Methodist Church next door, where they were greeted by an obstacle course, water balloons, pool noodles and an inflatable water slide.

Zeferino Araiza, who is heading into the seventh grade this fall, was quickly soaking wet and grinning ear to ear.

"I like reading, and I also like summer activities, so this is my two favorite things combined," he said.

He heard about the summer reading program at school and decided it sounded like fun. The library offers a summer reading program for children, another for teenagers and a third for adults. In the teenage version, students are asked to think about how much reading they are capable of doing over the summer and to set a goal. Zeferino — an avid reader who said the Redwall series is his favorite — said he pledged to read 22 books over the summer.

If teenagers think summer reading programs are for "nerds" who want to spend the summer indoors reading, they're behind the times. Today's summer reading programs — including the one at Hermiston Public Library — often combine reading, exercise, brain games and arts into one package.



Marcos Preciado, 11, of Hermiston makes a splash while playing on an inflatable waterslide Thursday at the Hermiston Public Library's summer reading program.



Flor Peña, 16, of Hermiston does the limbo while running an obstacle course Thursday during the Hermiston Public Library's summer reading program.

"We want to make them use their brain cells over the summer instead of turning to mush," said Kelly Martinez, the library's teen programming assistant. "It's OK to enjoy yourself, too."

So far the teens have participated in a book club, made crafts and pulled "work-it sticks" telling them what kinds of exercise to do. The program's end-of-summer wrap-up party will take place at the Hermiston

Family Aquatic Center, where participants in all three age groups will celebrate their reading accomplishments together.

Juan Vargas, an incoming senior at Hermiston High School, said despite his age it was his first time participating in a summer reading program. A friend brought him along, he said, and he was enjoying the chance to get to know some new friends. He said activities

like the water obstacle course were fun, but he was also taking the reading challenge seriously.

"It's kind of a commitment," he said.

Ebony Wilson, also a senior, started out Thursday afternoon throwing water balloons for the middle school students to dodge as they moved through the obstacle course. She said she had been volunteering at the library for a year helping with activities, so she decided to participate in the teen summer reading program while also helping the younger kids.

"I like how the library encourages little kids to read and be active," she said. "This is really fun."

The children's and teens' summer reading programs have activities three to four days a week at varying times. For a schedule visit www.hermistonlibrary.us/calendar or pick up a calendar from the library

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

BRIEFLY

Northwest Grain Growers takes on Mission elevator

MISSION — Operations of the Mission grain elevator is changing hands.

Northwest Grain Growers, Walla Walla, will assume Grain Craft's lease of the elevator from the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation. Grain Craft, the owner and operator of Pendleton Flour Mills, announced the change Thursday.

Grain Craft will continue to purchase and handle wheat directly from the producer to the Pendleton flour mill, according to the statement, and the new partnership with Northwest Grain Growers will "support efforts to optimize the handling, storage, marketing and customer service of grain handling in the Pendleton area."

Grain Craft also asked farmers that do not have an account with Northwest Grain Growers to call them as soon as possible at 509-525-6510 or 800-994-4290.

"We are committed to making this transition as smooth as possible, as harvest is fast approaching," Grain Craft's statement said.

Sheriff's office purchases defibrillators with Wildhorse grant

PENDLETON — The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office used a \$6,000 grant from the Wildhorse Foundation to help purchase 11 automated external defibrillators and a training device.

The defibrillators were \$525 each and the training package was \$395, according to the invoice from Bound Tree Medical of Dublin, Ohio, for a total of \$6,170. The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners approved the expenditure at its meeting Wednesday.

Sheriff's Sgt. John Shaffer told the board that using the devices in the

first minute of a cardiac arrest ups the chance of survival to 90 percent. The jail will add an additional defibrillator to their arsenal and the rest will go into patrol vehicles. He said deputies often are the first to arrive at an emergency, and having these devices can save someone's life before an ambulance arrives.

He also said the sheriff's office plans to buy 11 more defibrillators, which will go into staff vehicles and marine patrol boats.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation established the Wildhorse Foundation in 2001 to benefit the community on behalf of Wildhorse Resort and Casino. The grant to the sheriff's office was one of 33 grants totaling \$196,200 the foundation awarded in the first quarter of 2016.

Science teacher to help develop new curricula

UKIAH — A local teacher has been chosen to assist in developing innovative nationwide science curricula.

Laura Orr, who has taught in the Ukiah School District for 13 years, was selected as a teacher advisor for an initiative called "Bringing the Universe to America's Classrooms." Orr will help create new digital learning tools in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects.

The education team at Boston public media producer WGBH is partnering with NASA to distribute the materials to teachers and students free of charge.

WGBH selected teacher advisors based on number of years teaching and willingness to innovate in the classroom. Orr was one of 50 candidates selected nationwide from more than 650 applicants.

Orr specializes in astronomy and local environmental science in her classes. She also leads the 4-H home economics, science and livestock clubs.

Environmental group meets on watermaster issue

HERMISTON — The environmental group Tour of Knowledge meets Friday and invited the public to attend via Skype.

The group plans to discuss the recent decision from the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners addressing funding and staffing of the Oregon Department of Water Resources' local watermaster office.

For more information, contact Tour of Knowledge executive director Eileen Laramore at 541-303-3872.

White Eagle Grange holds bingo night

PENDLETON — Head to the White Eagle Grange Saturday for Bingo Night from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The grange is located at 43828 White Eagle Road, between Pendleton and Pilot Rock on Highway 395 South.

Cards are 50 cents per game, with great prizes for each winner. The progressive jackpot game begins at 7:30 p.m., with cards \$1 each. A cash pot waits for the winner. The final blackout game, also \$1 per card, pays out a 50/50 prize.

Popcorn and beverages are available for purchase. All ages are encouraged to attend.

For more information, call Gail Wilson at 541-276-3778.

Genealogy group to meet

PENDLETON — The Blue Mountain Genealogy Society meets Tuesday at 1 p.m. at Pendleton City Hall's community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave. Attendees are asked to bring information about someone from their family tree on the Line-Aligner form.

The group meets the first Monday of every month.

Umatilla County Fire District 1 becomes a reality

Will not see tax funds until Nov.

By **ALEXA LOUGEE**
East Oregonian

July 1 marks the first day for Umatilla County Fire District 1. There will be a new district and a new name, but new services will have a delayed roll-out.

Fire Chief Scott Stanton said the six weeks since the measure passed has simply not been enough time to get everything in place.

In May, voters passed measures to dissolve the Stanfield and Hermiston fire districts and create one unified district. The combined tax rate on assessed property values in Hermiston and Stanfield is expected to bring in \$900,000. Chief Stanton said the district won't see those funds until November.

Once the money is available the district will begin hiring additional crew needed to staff Fire Station 2 on Diagonal Road around the clock. Stanton described it as a "lengthy hiring process." Potential hires have to go through a series of mental and physical evaluations as well as a stint at the fire academy. The fire district is aiming for a March 2016 target date to have full crews at both stations.

This week the district welcomed four seasonal firefighters from the resident intern program to help reduce the strain on full-time firefighters.

"They've already made a huge difference," Stanton said.

Other changes are underway, too.

Re-lettering has begun, new business cards have been ordered and the website is under construction. The new district emblem will be chosen by a committee then sent off for production before it can be applied to uniforms.

On Friday, five new members of the unified fire board will be sworn in prior to the board's first meeting.

Upgrades are still needed for the Diagonal station. The station has been around for 30 years, but this will be the first time firefighters have been there full-time. A paging system, computers and other information technology projects are slated to begin soon.

Supporters of the redistricting efforts argued additional staff members and updated equipment will help meet the demand of a growing population and work to shorten response times.

Contact Alexa Lougee at alougee@eastoregonian.com

County boosts patrol, jail for sheriff's office

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

The Umatilla County Sheriff's Office wrapped up this fiscal year with additions in the jail and patrol.

Sheriff's Terry Rowan brought the changes to the county board of commissioners for approval and authorization Wednesday as the new budget kicks in Friday. The board voted 3-0 in favor.

Rowan told the board the contracts for jail space with Morrow and Wallowa counties raised the population at the jail, which averaged 208.5 inmates a day in May and throughout the last week was closer to 225 a day. Adding a full-time corrections technician in the jail control room, Rowan said, was the best way to provide monitoring and supervision for a larger inmate population.

The technician will open and close doors in the jail, answer phones and respond to inmates when they "buzz" in using an internal communications system. But the person will not work as a corrections officer and will not have to undergo training at the Oregon Public Safety

Academy. Rowan also said the tech position frees up corrections officers to better do their jobs and he plans to hire an on-call employee already familiar with the work.

In another jail move, the sheriff's office promoted corrections Sgt. Thoren Hearn to lieutenant effective Friday. Hearn already handled some administrative duties, and Rowan said this allows Hearn to be the backup to jail commander Capt. Stuart Harp.

And the county board also formalized adding a patrol deputy. Rowan said the U.S. Corps of Engineers contracts with the sheriff's office for a marine patrol from May through September, but the pool of applicants willing to work half a year is shrinking. So pairing that contract with money from his budget and the general fund allowed for funding of a full-time deputy to work roads and other duties the rest of the year.

He said the move will help cut down on response times, which is a critical concern.

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FRIDAY, JULY 2
Music on the Laren
Tyler Brooks
SATURDAY, JULY 3
Elwood
6:00-9:00 PM
HAMLEY STEAKHOUSE & SALOON
COURT & MAIN, PENDLETON • 541.278.1100

July 8th-10th
Family Event with Scottish Music, Dancing & Sport
Friday July 8
5:30-7:30pm
Caledonian Dinner in the City Park
8:15pm
Free Movie: Babe
Saturday July 9
Vendors, Parade Entertainment in the Park
Dancing, Piping & Scottish Athletic Competitions
Kids' Games Story Tellers
Caledonian Tattoo
Kirkin O' the Tartan
Celtic Harp Horseshoe Tournaments
Athena Caledonian Games
www.athenacaledoniangames.com