

HERMISTON

Church responds to tragedy with city-wide love

Volunteers offer prayer, car washes, block party

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

After watching dark events unfold in the community and the nation, parishioners at Hermiston Assembly of God decided to bring a bit of light to peoples' lives on Saturday.

About 70 volunteers spread across Hermiston, clad in bright red T-shirts with the words "I Love My City" emblazoned across their chests. They held two free car washes, handed out food and drink at the parks, hosted a block party and went door to door offering to pray with anyone who needed it.

Pastor Terry Haight said the congregation hopes to make the I Love My City concept a regular event around town.

"We've got (the slogan) on our chest, so people can see it," he said,



Staff photo by Jade McDowell
Kaitlyn Bicknell and Bekah Tollman, both 15, wash cars for free during an "I Love My City" event hosted by Hermiston Assembly of God on Saturday.

"but we want them to feel it, too." The idea for the event came after

three people and wounded a fourth. One of the victims was Hermiston Assembly of God member JJ Hurtado, 14, and his church family was heavily involved in the candlelight vigil and memorial services held in his honor.

"Just to see the response of the city, if anything it revealed that we have a lot of hurting people," Haight said.

The hurt didn't seem to just be local. Turning on the news revealed terror attacks, riots, shootings and political strife.

As the congregation turned to their faith for comfort, they wanted others to feel God's love as they did. That's why on Saturday afternoon Haight was in the Les Schwab parking lot, working alongside red-clad parishioners covered from head to toe in soap and grime, scrubbing cars clean while their owners sat in the shade enjoying cookies and — if they wanted — prayers for the struggles they were facing.

"We're just trying to convey the message that God is still good, and he still loves us," Haight said.

He said washing someone's car for them or handing them a bottle of water while they watch their child's soccer game is a way to express that love. Whatever religious beliefs someone in the community might hold, he said the I Love My City volunteers wanted to be there to help them.

"When people are hurting, for some people you just need to come and sit with them, and others are looking for answers," he said.

Haight said the church has already gotten interest from other pastors about joining future I Love My City events, so the bright red T-shirts seen around on Saturday will likely be seen again in Hermiston on a larger scale.

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

Rollover kills woman, crashes injure others over weekend

5-year-old Athena boy hit on the way to school

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

One woman died in a rollover on the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton on Saturday, and other crashes over the past four days sent people to hospitals, including a 5-year-old boy from Athena.

Chuck Sams, spokesman for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, reported the victim in Saturday's crash was Victoria Sproed, 46, a Umatilla tribal member who lived in Mission.

Umatilla Tribal Police at 8:45 p.m. Saturday responded to an anonymous report of a crash off Mission Road near the Cayuse Road turn off, according to a written statement from Sams. Officers found an overturned 2009 Mazda along the roadside ditch, and the Umatilla Tribal Fire Department arrived a short time later.

Sproed died before authorities arrived.

Tribal police and Oregon State Police are working on the crash reconstruction to determine the cause, Sams stated. Details about Sproed's memorial services are on the Records page of Tuesday's East Oregonian.

Monday morning a car in Athena struck a 5-year-old boy.

Umatilla County undersheriff Jim Littlefield said driver was facing the glaring sun on South First Street in the small town when her car hit the boy after he darted into traffic.

The collision was at a low speed, he said, and the child suffered a cut to his head and possibly a leg injury but was talking at the scene. However, the boy has a history of "brain problems," Littlefield said, and an air ambulance flew him to a hospital.

Littlefield said the investigation was on-going and he planned to have more information Tuesday.

Three people suffered injuries Friday in separate crashes at opposite sides of Umatilla County.

One car rolled at about 4:30 p.m. on Interstate 82 between Umatilla and Powerline Road. Ambulances took two people to a hospital.

A car around 7:30 that evening rolled and collided with a house at 35 Willow Drive on the Umatilla Indian Reservation. The driver suffered non-life threatening injuries and took an ambulance ride to St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton, according to Pendleton Assistant Fire Chief Shawn Penniger.

Then Saturday a few minutes after midnight, a 17-year-old boy suffered minor injuries in a car crash near Pendleton.

Oregon State Police reported the teen was driving a green Toyota Tundra east on Interstate 84 near milepost 206,

about a mile west of Pendleton, when he became drowsy and headed off the road.

The Toyota traveled about 200 feet before the teen took the wheel and reentered the right eastbound lane, which resulted in a "critical yaw," according to state police, causing the vehicle to drift over the east-going lanes, drive into the median and roll several times before stopping on the left shoulder of the westbound side of the interstate.

Information from police dispatch reports showed he was bleeding from his head. State police reported the injuries were minor, and his parents took him home from the Pendleton hospital.

The Walla Walla Union-Bulletin reported Logan J. Thompson, 21, of the small town of Hartline, Washington, died early Monday in a crash with a semitrailer on Highway 12 in western Walla Walla County.

Thompson was driving east in a 2014 Dodge Ram pickup on the highway 10 miles east of Burbank at about 1:35 a.m. when he crossed into the westbound lane. The pickup collided with an oncoming 2015 Kenworth. Thompson died at the scene.

The semi driver, Brent A. Kyser, 40, of Powell Butte, was not injured. Both vehicles were damaged beyond repair.

Washington State Patrol continues to investigate the crash.

Contact Phil Wright at pwright@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0833.

HERMISTON



Staff photo by Jade McDowell
Nita Saysell (bottom row, center) celebrated her 100th birthday Saturday. Pictured with her (left and right) nephews Lyle and Gary Oleis, and (top row, left to right) her son Al Saysell, cousin Letha Hanson, daughter Glenda Isaac and grandson Doug Young.

Woman celebrates 100th birthday

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

Nita Saysell celebrated her 100th birthday three days early with a roomful of family and friends in Hermiston on Saturday.

The Hermiston resident insisted she doesn't have any secrets to living to 100, but her daughter Glenda Isaac, also of Hermiston, said she thinks it's the dancing and the housework that kept Saysell active for many years.

"She loved to dance," Isaac said. "She danced until she was 85."

The dancing was never on a professional level, but the centenarian danced her way through dance halls, service clubs and senior centers throughout her life.

Saysell lived on her own until four months ago when she had some health struggles. Her daughter and son-in-law Mike Isaac said she always had an independent streak.

"She was changing light bulbs and pushing a vacuum cleaner not too long ago," Mike said.

Perhaps even more impressively, after moving to Oregon 10 years ago Saysell took her very first driver's

test at the age of 90. She had gotten her first license before today's licensing tests were a standard part of driving, and then was grandfathered in as she moved from state to state throughout her life, until her move to Oregon. Instead of shrinking from the challenge, she had her family quiz her on traffic laws so she would be ready.

"She passed the test and drove for another three years," Glenda said.

Saysell grew up in Rogers, Montana without electricity and rode a horse five miles each way to a one-room school house when she was a girl. She lived most of her adult life in Seattle.

Mike said his mother-in-law has always been a kind and resourceful person determined to make lemonade out of life's lemons. Now, as age takes its toll and she is experiencing hearing loss, she has become quieter.

As for the experience of turning 100, she said she is "doing alright so far."

"I just feel the same," she said.

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

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

TUESDAY, SEPT. 27
PENDLETON TOASTMASTERS No. 154, 6:45 a.m., Pendleton City Hall community room, 501 S.W. Emigrant Ave. (toastmasterdarleneesue@gmail.com).
TOPS CHAPTER OR 1110, 8 a.m. weigh-in, meeting starts at 8:45 a.m., Missionary Baptist Church, 125 E. Beech St., Hermiston. (Margaret Wetterling 541-720-0276).
BIBLE STUDY, 10 a.m., First United Methodist Church, 352 S.E. Second St., Pendleton. (Rev. Jim Pierce 541-276-2616).
GREENFIELD GRANGE PINOCHLE, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., The Hall, Boardman.
HERMISTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 12 noon, Hermiston Conference Center, 415 S. Highway 395. Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan is the guest speaker. Cost to attend is \$10 for chamber members, \$13 for non-members, RSVP requested. (541-567-6151).
"THE LIFE MODEL - LIVING FROM THE HEART JESUS GAVE YOU" BOOK STUDY GROUP, 1-2:30 p.m., Bowman Building, 17 S.W. Frazer, Pendleton. (Pat 541-276-6671).
STUDYING THE MIRACLES OF JESUS, 4-6 p.m., Good Samaritan Ministries, 319 W. Locust Ave., Hermiston. (541-564-1041).
COLUMBIA RIVER TOASTMASTERS, 6-7 p.m., McNary Fire Hall, 305 Willamette St., Umatilla. (<http://toastmasters.org>).
PENDLETON EAGLES TACOS AND BINGO, 6 p.m., Pendleton Eagles Lodge #28, 428 S. Main St., Pendleton. Regular packet \$10, special packet \$5. Proceeds donated to local charities. Public welcome. (541-278-2828).
WILLOW CREEK SYMPHONY, 6-7:30 p.m. orchestra, 7:30-8:30 p.m. singers, Irrigon Jr./Sr. High School, 315 E. Wyoming Ave. (RaNiel Dunn 541-289-4696).
A SHARP PLAYERS ORCHESTRA, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Pendleton High School band room, 1800 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. Intermediate orchestra for players of any instrument. (Oregon East Symphony 541-276-0320).
AWANA, 6:30-8 p.m., Pendleton Baptist Church, 3202 S.W. Nye Ave., Pendleton. For children ages 3 through the sixth grade. (541-276-7590).
IRRIGON/UMATILLA LIONS CLUB, 6:30 p.m., Amanda's Bar and Grill, 610 Sixth St., Umatilla.
PRELUDES ORCHESTRA, 6:30 p.m., Blue Mountain Community College McRae Activity Center, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. For beginning strings players of all ages. (Oregon East Symphony 541-276-0320).
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 28
CREDIT PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL, 7:30-9 a.m., Shari's, 319 S.E. Nye Ave., Pendleton. (LaFrance Grubbs 541-276-5318).
WILLOW RUN LADIES GOLF CLUB, 8 a.m., rain or shine at the Willow Run Golf Course, Boardman. Participants do not need to be a member to play with the club. (541-481-4381).
ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL OF PENDLETON, 12 noon program meeting, Red Lion Hotel, 304 S.E. Nye Ave., Pendleton.

HERMISTON

Portland children's author to come to HSD

East Oregonian

Children's book author Roland Smith will be visiting Hermiston School District elementary and middle schools Oct. 4-7.

According to a district press release, the trip was made possible when Connie Nicodemus, a Title I teacher at Desert View Elementary School, applied for a grant from the Hermiston Education Foundation to bring the Portland native to Eastern Oregon.

Nicodemus' effort was rewarded with \$5,000 from the foundation and an additional \$700 from Altrusa International of Hermiston and \$1,000 from each elementary and middle school or its parent-teacher organization.

The district is using the opportunity to promote literacy and develop writing skills.

Hermiston schools have been preparing for Smith, the author of books like "B is for Beaver" and "Storm Runners," by having elementary teachers and students read the books and holding a student writing contest at Highland Hills and Desert View elementary schools, the winners of which will have lunch with Smith at their schools.

Smith will be featured at Armand Larive Middle School's Parent Night Oct. 5, where he will be available to sign books.

FREE FLU SHOT CLINIC
Vaccine for all ages (kids to senior citizens)
Saturday, October 22
from 9:00am - 2:00pm
Good Shepherd Conference Rooms 1 & 2

Call 541-667-3509 or email healthinfo@gshealth.org

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HERITAGE STATION
The Umatilla County Historical Society Museum

HERITAGE LUNCHEON 2016

A Walk Through Oregon

KERRY TYMCHUK • Executive Director

Oregon Historical Society
Saturday • October 1st • 12-2 pm
Pendleton Convention Center

\$40 UCHS MEMBERS **\$50 GENERAL PUBLIC**

Tickets available at Heritage Station Museum & Pendleton Book Company