

**HERMISTON**

# Librarians land grant to turn teens into better researchers

Will host workshops to train teachers

By **JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN**  
East Oregonian

Many high school and college students have grown up with the internet at their fingertips — but do they really know how to use it to their advantage?

Local librarians Delia Wallis and Jackie Ray hope to show students how to use the wealth of information available as a tool to help them transition from high school to college and beyond.

Wallis works for the Hermiston School District and Ray for Blue Mountain Community College. The pair received a grant from the Association of College and Research Libraries to create a program that trains teachers to instruct students on research methods. The grant, for up to \$1,000, will fund a workshop that Wallis and Ray will host for teachers. They hope to identify gaps in the research and writing skills of students making the transition from high school to college.

"It's a difficult transition," Ray said. She said they hope to help teachers impart skills on their students that will help them in school, and in other practical settings.

"It's a habit of mind — how do we get our students into the habit of critical thinking and solving problems?" Ray

**"When you hear the phrase, 'Google it,' that's like sticking your face under a waterfall. Way too much info."**

— **Delia Wallis,** Hermiston schools librarian



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan  
**Hermiston schools librarian Delia Wallis and Blue Mountain Community College librarian Jackie Ray will use grant money to help students become better researchers.**

said. "It could be as simple as knowing what to ask for."

Wallis and Ray also hope to help students utilize a resource many of them think they already know how to use — the internet.

"What I tell parents and teachers is, they see kids on electronic devices and think they're seeing a tech-savvy person," Wallis said. "What they're seeing is a kid who knows how to get where they already want to go. What they need to learn is how to be good researchers."

Ray hopes to encourage students to use the internet as a tool when learning about the workforce.

"How do you do a good career search?" she asked. "We often go to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, but that's not often a place students think to go first."

Wallis said she hopes the training will help teachers show their students to go

beyond Google.

"When you hear the phrase, 'Google it,' that's like sticking your face under a waterfall," Wallis said. "Way too much info. You need to be able to go to the right resource and distill the information."

They also hope to teach students how to be careful consumers of information.

"For example — fake news," Ray said. "How do we develop assignments so students can recognize fake news when they see it? It's something we want every person to know how to do."

The two hope this grant will lead to students being able to think critically.

"Something may not be directly applicable in a college class, but if you have that skill set, you're adaptable," Wallis said.

Contact Jayati Ramakrishnan at 541-564-4534 or jramakrishnan@eastoregonian.com

**HERMISTON**

# Sheriff's office takes on care of neglected cattle

By **PHIL WRIGHT**  
East Oregonian

Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan said his staff is keeping close eyes on a herd of suffering cattle near Hermiston.

"We're going out there probably at least three times a day," he said.

The sheriff's office Saturday responded to a report of dead and neglected cattle near Columbia Lane and South Edwards Road, Hermiston. Deputies found 14 dead cattle, another 15 too weak and emaciated to relocate, and one calf was in such bad shape it could not stand and was euthanized.

Rowan said the cattle belong to Michael Hockensmith, 55, who has not returned multiple calls for comment. State and county records show Hockensmith is the president of the Cedar Creek Cattle Company, a 96-acre farm at 33355 Dallas Road, less than a mile's drive northwest to the intersection of Columbia Lane and South Edwards Road.

Rowan said the sheriff's office contracted with a couple of people who are feeding and watering the cattle.

"There's no water resource for part of the property," he said, "so they have to haul water in."

He also said deputies

are visiting the site to verify the contractors are doing their jobs and to check on the condition of the cattle.

"We've more or less taken over the feeding and care of the animals until we progress the case forward," Rowan said.

The sheriff's office budget has \$10,000 for caring for neglected animals, a fund Rowan said it would tap into for this case. Caring for that many large animals, he said, probably would deplete those funds in short order.

"The main focus is to essentially get them up to a state where we would feel comfortable in transporting them," Rowan said.

But where they will go remains a question. Rowan said there are not a lot of places that can accommodate that many cattle and not cost the county a lot of money.

The criminal investigation into the mistreatment of the animals also continues, Rowan said, and his staff would refer case to the district attorney's office, which reached out to a Portland-based prosecutor who is an expert in animal neglect cases.

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

**BRIEFLY**

## Union Pacific train derailed Monday on reservation

MISSION — Eleven railroad cars derailed Monday night near Bingham Road about 20 miles east of Mission on the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

Union Pacific reported no spills, no hazardous materials involved and no injuries.

Justin Jacobs, a spokesperson for the railroad, said crews have been working since the crash to removed derailed cars and make repairs and the cause is under investigation. The tracks are one of two mainlines in that location.

The Oregon Environmental Response System notified the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality of the derailment.

## Hermiston police trying to find stabbing witnesses

HERMISTON — Hermiston police continue to struggle finding people willing to talk about last week's stabbing that injured one man.

"We still have an uncooperative victim," Hermiston police chief Jason Edmiston said, "and we have multiple potential witnesses that are avoiding us. The detectives are very much trying to track down those individuals."

Edmiston previously identified the victim as Troy Curtis Rutherford, 30, who suffered superficial stab wounds to the head and back of his shoulders, and the possible suspect as Marcus Allen Nelson, 32. Both men live in Hermiston and have records for minor crimes. Edmiston said their reports to police conflicted about what happened the morning of Jan. 5 at a trailer at Dun Rollin Trailer Park, 445 E. Jennie Ave., Hermiston.

Edmiston also said detectives would stay on the case for maybe another couple of weeks, but if nothing flushes out, they will write their reports and send the information to Umatilla County District Attorney's Office to consider charges.



Eleven Union Pacific cars derailed Monday night on the Umatilla Indian Reservation. No injuries or spills were reported.

Photo by Wil Phinney/Confederated Umatilla Journal

## Pendleton dog park open to public

PENDLETON — Pendleton's first dog park has been open since the late summer, but its presence isn't easy to spot.

Pendleton parks and recreation director Donnie Cook said the city opened the Let'Er Bark Dog Park on the north banks of the Umatilla River the week after Round-Up in September, but it won't be able to install a sign directing the public to the park until after the weather warms.

The public can access the park from Northwest Carden, across the street from Pendleton High School.

The park currently features signs with the dog park rules, trash can and a picnic table, and is the only public place dogs are allowed without a leash.

Cook said he's trying to work with the Round-Up to open the gate to a dirt lot that could serve as off-street parking, but in the mean time, people can park on Carden on access the park on foot.

Cook said the early feedback has been positive, with one person commenting that the park has cleared up some of the homeless encampments along the river.

## Vacancies announced on two city committees

HERMISTON — The city of Hermiston is accepting applications for vacancies on the Budget Committee and Recreation Projects Fund Advisory Committee.

Positions 1, 2, and 3 are open on the Budget Committee, which reviews and approves the proposed city budget. Position 2 is open on the Recreation Projects Fund Advisory Committee.

Applications are available

at city hall, 180 N.E. Second St., and online at hermiston.or.us. Completed applications can be turned in at city hall or emailed to Lilly Alarcon-Strong at lalarcon-strong@hermiston.or.us by 5 p.m. Feb. 28.

Applicants must not be full-time employees of the city or a supplier or contractor to the city. People can sit on no more than two city committees. Preference will be given to city residents.

## Demolition training in Boardman

BOARDMAN — The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment Northwest from the Whidbey Island, Washington, Naval Air Station will conduct routine demolition training at the Naval Weapons Systems Training Facility in Boardman next Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 17 and 18.

All training will occur during daylight hours in the central section of the range property, and staff have taken safety precautions to make sure operations don't pose any threats to people or the property. Surrounding areas may see dust clouds or feel ground vibrations from the tests.

Mike Welding, public affairs officer for the station, said retrograde munitions would be demolished.

"They've been collected over time," he said. "The maximum amount charge they'll use on this is 10 pounds (the explosive charge). That's categorized as very small."

Welding said the station does these disposals of old munitions a couple of times a year.

Briefs are compiled from staff and wire reports, and press releases. Email press releases to news@eastoregonian.com

**SUBMIT COMMUNITY NEWS**

Submit information to: [community@eastoregonian.com](mailto:community@eastoregonian.com) or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

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