

# Hermiston Junior Academy celebrates 75 years

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

The Hermiston Junior Academy will celebrate its 75th year by showing its students what school was like when they first opened their doors.

“We’ll be going back to basics,” said principal and teacher Jordan Lindsay. “We will try to tie our curriculum into 75 years of operation.”

For the students in the school, open to kindergarten through eighth grade, that will include learning skills that used to be more common, but have fallen by the wayside in many schools.

“We’ll be preserving food, woodworking — things that may have been taught 75 years ago,” Lindsay said. Other lessons teachers are considering include learning how a camera from 75 years ago worked, and skills still applicable today — like quilting and gardening.

The school will try some new things, too, but the basic tenets of the Seventh-day Adventist education are comparable to those when the school started. The school teaches all its courses



Staff photo by Jayati Ramakrishnan

Hermiston Junior Academy teacher Mary Lindsay instructs students in art.

with a focus on the Bible, including creation-based science curriculum.

The school is small, with an average class size of 10 to 15 students. Classes are taught in groups of three grade levels: kindergarten through second, third

through fifth, and sixth through eighth. There is also an on-site preschool for three- and four-year-olds.

While the teachers at the school, of which there are four, must be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it’s open to all

students. Some parents, Lindsay said, are drawn to the school’s small size and low teacher-to-student ratio.

The school also has many families that maintain tradition by sending their children there. Paula Oltman, the school’s volunteer strings

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— Jordan Lindsay,  
Hermiston Junior Academy  
principal and teacher

Lindsay said. “She’s taught in Thailand and in the Philippines.”

The school’s music program is fairly extensive, with most of the students learning violin at some point during their education, and several participating in a handbell choir.

“I’d say music is a pretty big focus,” Oltman said. “We minister toward others through music.”

In addition to performing in churches, the students also play music at retirement facilities around town.

The small school also does various forms of community service. Locally, they pick up trash around town and hold a community service day two to three times a month, where they volunteer at assisted living facilities. They also take the eighth graders on a mission trip each year, and have traveled as far away as Kenya to build churches.

The school will hold a 75th anniversary dinner on Oct. 15.

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

## BOARDMAN

# Contractor sues to recoup mega-dairy construction costs

Claims Lost Valley Farm still owes more than \$1.4M

By GEORGE PLAIVEN  
East Oregonian

An Idaho-based contractor is suing Greg te Velde, the owner of Lost Valley Farm near Boardman, for failing to pay for construction work at the new mega-dairy.

Laser Land Leveling Inc. filed the lawsuit June 13 in Morrow County Circuit Court, claiming that te Velde still owes more than \$1.4 million. The complaint also lists the Boardman Tree Farm, Heiskell Holdings LLC, Hatfield Manufacturing Inc. and Concrete Special Ties Inc. as defendants.

Lost Valley Farm opened

earlier this year following a lengthy battle to secure wastewater permits from the Oregon Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Quality, which jointly administer the state’s Confined Animal Feeding Operation program. At full operation, the dairy will have 30,000 total cattle and between 125-150 employees.

Court documents indicate Laser Land Leveling, of Nampa, Idaho, worked on construction at the dairy between Oct. 19, 2015 and Dec. 7, 2016, providing excavation, concrete preparation, gravel roads, field grading and stump removal services. The final bill amounted to \$5,812,089, of which te Velde allegedly still owes \$1,413,224 plus interest at \$325 per day dating back to May 12.

On Feb. 13, Laser Land Leveling filed a lien on the project in Morrow County. To date, the company still has not been paid.

Lonnie Riggs, the company’s owner, declined further comment. A spokeswoman for Lost Valley Farm also declined comment.

Te Velde, 59, of Tipton, California, is already facing legal trouble stemming from an undercover prostitution sting in the Tri-Cities earlier this month. He was among 10 people arrested in the operation, and charged with patronizing a prostitute as well as methamphetamine possession.

When reached directly Friday, te Velde declined to discuss either case.

Contact George Plaven at gplaven@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0825.

# East Oregonian offers new podcast

By EMILY OLSON  
East Oregonian

The *East Oregonian’s* audio desk is shaking up its podcast offerings this month by launching a new series and welcoming back an old favorite.

A new podcast, the “Week in 10,” offers listeners a condensed take on the week’s top regional news. True to its name, its only 10 minutes in length, a perfect way to stay up-to-date while you wash the dishes, fold the laundry or do any task worth multitasking through. It’s hosted by the *EO’s* summer reporting intern, Emily Olson, and features interviews with other reporters.

*EO* opinion editor Tim Trainor returns to *EO Audio* with guest Steve Hill for “Pigskin Pickers.” It’s a weekly show about all things football, presented with a lot of personality. They will also feature sports reporters Eric Singer and Alexis Mansanarez for local prep updates.

A podcast — nothing fancier than a digital audio file available via the internet — is a great way to get local news in a mobile format. You can listen and subscribe on your computer or on your phone. Access

the latest episodes from the *EO* website by clicking the microphone icon in the upper right hand corner. Or, you can download podcasts on Stitcher or iTunes or the iPhone’s purple podcast app — just search “East Oregonian” or “EO Audio.”

New episodes of both the “Week in 10” and “Pigskin Pickers” are available on Friday afternoons.

For questions on finding podcasts or feedback on content, contact Emily Olson at eolson@eastoregonian.com or 541-966-0809.



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