

# DVDs hidden at Baker City library cited in report for Banned Book Week

By KEVIN HARDEN  
Portland Tribune

At first, the Baker County Library staff thought it was a mistake. Several DVD movies from the library's collection were turning up in odd places. Staff discovered many of them stuck behind rows of shelved items or in rooms far from the other DVDs, jammed behind Spanish language items.

Then Library Director Perry Stokes realized it wasn't a mistake. For nearly seven months, someone had been deliberately hiding DVDs of movies with lesbian and gay themes. Between October 2016 and March 2017, seven DVDs were scattered around the Baker City library, some so well hidden that staff had to buy replacement DVDs (a few were found after the replacements were purchased).

"It started to look very purposeful, not that someone just misplaced them on a shelf," Stokes said.

After a little "good old-fashioned detective work," Stokes and his staff

and wide-brimmed hat) taking a young monkey out of Africa could be racist.

"There are potential racist undertones interpreted by readers," the patron wrote (the library redacted the patron's name from its report). "Taken from Africa by a white male triggered in me the horrific slave history our country has. Also, some of the things that George experiences, such as he smokes a pipe or is thrown in jail for trying to run away, is inappropriate for the age group this book is intended for."

The patron asked that the library take the book out of circulation from all its branches. "Our racial climate is very sensitive, and at the time this was written and enjoyed it was another climate," the patron wrote.

Library Director Vaile Oehlke wrote in an August 2016 response to the request that the classic book was still very popular with many patrons. "The library entrusts parents to decide for their children what is best suited for them," Oehlke wrote.

This isn't the first time "Curious George" or one of the offshoot titles from the classic book have been challenged in libraries. During the past seven years, library patrons

have challenged the Rey classic (and other "Curious George" titles) a handful of times. "Curious George Gets a Job" was challenged several years ago because a library patron thought an episode in which George knocks over a bottle of ether and then falls asleep promoted drug use.

Other library patrons have also claimed the original H.A. Rey book had racist overtones.

**Shoved 'down my throat'**

But Baker County's situation was different. Instead of challenging the DVDs, the patron took great care to hide them. "This is a new one," Stokes said.

The county library district has five branches and a bookmobile to serve nearly 16,000 residents. In Baker City, a "really cosmopolitan" town of about 10,000, the library had 9,000 cardholders.

When Stokes talked with the culprit, he said hiding the videos was his way to push back on what he saw as society "shoving" LGBT lifestyles "down my throat."

"He said he was an old-fashioned person who wasn't raised where this kind of content was accepted," Stokes said. "He didn't like seeing it himself, and he didn't like children seeing it on the shelves."

"It wasn't an overt challenge, but certainly because he wanted to get away with it, it was a challenge to this kind of film genre."

It's not the first time someone has complained about the Baker City library's DVD collection, he said. The library district expanded its collection "after all the Blockbusters closed," focusing on "diversity of content, including indie films as well as major domestic productions."

"So, people are seeing things they aren't used to seeing," said Stokes, whose office is close to the DVD collection. "That makes some people uncomfortable."

Stokes' report on the incident was also a way to warn other libraries that it could happen to them, no matter where they were. "I wanted to let people know that this is another tactic that may be employed and it's not one we've seen before," he said.

**"There are potential racist undertones interpreted by readers."**

— Complaint filed in Portland about "Curious George"

## PILOT ROCK

# Turkey options on council plate

By PHIL WRIGHT  
East Oregonian

Pilot Rock City Council will gather Tuesday night to again chew on the town's turkey situation.

City leaders plan to discuss ways to control the growing population of wild turkeys, which number somewhere around 70 in the small town.

Some residents have complained about turkey scat and property damage from the fowl.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologist Greg Rimbach in a council presentation earlier this month said killing the birds under a state-issued permit is the surest way to end the bother.

Rimbach also said the city needs to institute local laws before the state can help. To that end, drafts of two ordinances come before the council.

The first prohibits feeding wildlife, declaring it a public nuisance, and recommends \$50-\$250 fines for each offense. The city law would make an exception for bird feeders, providing the "bird seed shall be contained in receptacles which are reasonably designed to avoid access to wildlife."

The second law would allow the city to issue permits to trap problem animals, with penalties for violations



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

**A gaggle of wild turkeys forage in a field Tuesday on the westside of Pilot Rock. A couple dozen of the birds have taken roost in the area and are causing some concerns with local citizens.**

ranging from \$20-\$250.

While the animal control ordinances do not authorize killing, that option remains on the table for the council, along with harassing the turkeys and allowing local property owner Tom Gibson to trap and relocate the birds.

Gibson, according to the council memo, offered to leave a horse trailer filled with feed in a popular turkey spot. Once many birds are inside, he would close the door and haul them to his 500 acres in the Meadow Creek area near Indian Lake.

The council also could decide not to do anything with the turkeys — the option Milton-Freewater took — while still passing the law to ban wildlife feeding.

The council meets Tuesday at 7 p.m. at city hall, 144 N. Alder Place. Among other agenda items, the council will introduce amendments to the city's traffic code for police to better enforce the ban on storing vehicles on public right of way.

And the council has some reorganization to consider.

City Recorder Teri Porter said she is retiring and moving to Arizona — where she's from — to be closer to children and grandchildren. She has worked in the position since May 2011. Rather than rushing out the door, she told the council in a letter her last day will be April 27, 2018. That should be enough time for the council to decide whether to stay with the city recorder, public works supervisor and police chief as the three department heads or hire a city administrator or manager.

## UMATILLA

# Students GEAR UP for end of high school

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN  
East Oregonian

Umatilla High School students learned that when it comes to college, they've got options. This week was the high school's annual "GEAR UP" week, which steers students to start thinking about the opportunities available to them while they're still in high school, and after they graduate.

GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, is a federal grant program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It focuses on getting low-income middle and high schoolers ready for post-secondary education.

That can include more

than just the four-year college degree.

"GEAR UP makes kids aware of alternatives to the four-year education," said Umatilla's GEAR UP coordinator, Sean Franks. "Two-year programs, technical education. This week, we teach kids — what is GEAR UP, and how can we help you?"

Franks said during this week, students also get to hear about the paths of some of their teachers.

"Every teacher has a different story," Franks said. "It's good for students to see everyone from the janitor to the superintendent, how they got to where they are."

Franks said after this week, they will start hosting some more specific events that

help student understand the application and financial aid processes better, such as a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) night.

Students also had a GEAR UP pep rally on Wednesday, where Superintendent Heidi Sipe talked about the importance of going after goals.

She showed students a photo of her hometown, Kettle Falls, Washington.

"It makes Umatilla look like a big city," she said. "I had to make a lot of my own opportunities."

Sipe asked students to think about the opportunities available to them in their own school, between the after-school program and the college credit classes.

"In your freshman year

of high school, you all had to take Success 101," she said. "You get a college credit for that. How much did it cost you? Zero dollars."

She encouraged students to get their Associates of Arts Oregon Transfer degree, which they can do in high school.

"Then you're halfway to your dream," she said. "You have the opportunity to have two years of college completely free."

She said living in a small town gives students the chance to do unique things.

"All you have to do is make sure you're taking advantage of your opportunities, paying attention and working hard," she said. "That's your end of the deal."

## BRIEFLY

### Tobacco ban, event business licenses on docket for council

PENDLETON — There are no action items for Tuesday's Pendleton City Council meeting, but council may set themselves up for further action at the Oct. 17 meeting.

The meat of the agenda is three first readings of ordinances, two of which involve a smoking ban in city parks and the expansion of the city's temporary business license rules to include vendors at Pendleton Bike Week and Pendleton Whisky Music Fest.

The smoking ban would prohibit the use of all tobacco products at city parks, carrying an enforcement power that wasn't included in an administrative rule passed in 2013 that banned smoking within 20 feet of a public playground.

When a non-enforceable rule applicable to all parks was put before the council at its last meeting, only Councilor Paul Chalmers voted for it.

The vendor business license ordinance would add Bike Week and Whisky Fest vendors to the list of temporary businesses that pay for a license.

Vendors with a permanent location in city limits are required to pay \$100 while vendors without one pay \$160.

The council will meet at 7 p.m. at the council chambers in city hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave.

### Driver in Canal Road crash ID'd

HERMISTON — The driver injured in a crash on Canal Road Thursday evening was Kyle Naillon, 20, of Hermiston.

According to Umatilla County Sheriff Terry Rowan, Naillon was northbound on Canal Road near Christley Lane when his Dodge Neon crashed head-on with a tractor driven southbound by Craig Parks about 5:30 p.m.

Naillon was transported to Good Shepherd Medical Center by ambulance.

Rowan said the location of the crash was at a "pretty

good curve" and Naillon may have been going "a little too fast for conditions." He said no citations had been issued.

"People just need to use caution in that area," he said.

### CTUIR lifts burn ban Saturday

MISSION — The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian reservation will lift its burn ban Saturday.

According to a CTUIR press release, Tribal Fire Chief Rob Burnside said the lower temperatures and higher humidity allowed the tribes to reinstate burns, which includes burn barrels and yard debris.

Questions or concerns can be directed to either Umatilla Tribal Dispatch at 541-278-0550 or the CTUIR Office of Air Quality at 541-429-7080.

Just west of the reservation, the city of Pendleton's burn ban will be lifted Sunday.

Open burning will also be allowed in the Rieth Water District and the fire districts of Lower McKay Creek, McKay Dam and Riverside.


### Seats open on irrigation boards

HERMISTON — The Butter Creek and Echo irrigation districts are looking for candidates to run for two available seats on each of their respective boards of directors.

Though separate bodies, the districts do share an office at 28790 Westport Lane in Hermiston and meet one after the other on the third Thursday of every month. Directors must be members of that district. The deadline to apply is Tuesday, Oct. 10.

Anyone interested in running for these offices should call the office 541-289-5201.

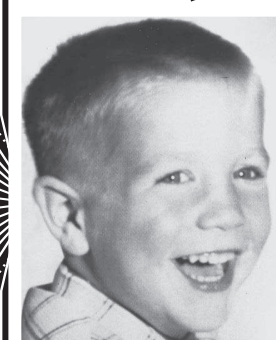

## Still Missing You



**Jeremy Kurtis Shipton**

September 13, 1983 -  
September 30, 2003

HEY! LOOK WHO'S 50!!!!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Kenny Gibbs!

From All your Family and Friends!