

BMCC instructor to lead National Association of Agricultural Educators

Nick Nelson has served on college faculty for 11 years

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
EO Media Group

Nick Nelson, an animal science instructor at Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, is set to become the first teacher from Oregon and first from a postsecondary institution to serve as president of the National Association of Agricultural Educators.

Nelson was chosen during the NAAE annual convention Dec. 5-9 in Nashville. The group represents more than 7,800 members and 12,000 agriculture teachers across the country.

As NAAE president, Nelson said his primary focus will be working to solve the agriculture teacher shortage nationwide. According to the association, there were 770 open teaching positions in 2016, and 98 schools were forced to eliminate their agriculture programs due to budget cuts, low enrollments or inability to find a qualified instructor.

"Ag teachers are truly dynamic individuals that wear numerous hats," Nelson said in a statement. "They teach in the classroom, serve as the FFA advisor and then make project visits to students' homes all year long.

"They are also very active in the community, doing numerous tasks, all the while raising a family and farming on the side," Nelson said. "It is no wonder why we are seeing an increase



Blue Mountain Community College File
Nick Nelson, left, animal science instructor at Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, instructs a student in one of his ag classes. Nelson was selected to serve as president of the National Association of Agricultural Educators at the group's annual convention Dec. 5-9.

in the number of schools that want ag programs, but not enough ag teachers to fill the positions."

Nelson said the biggest thing is to get more states participating in the NAAE Teach Ag campaign, which helps to recruit, retain and mentor more young agriculture teachers.

Nelson is a second-generation teacher whose father, Veril Nelson, taught agriculture in Roseburg. Together, they also raise Red Angus cattle and market bulls through the

Lorenzen Red Angus program.

Before arriving at BMCC, Nelson taught high school in Clackamas and Hermiston. He will serve one year as NAAE president and travel to Washington, D.C., for board meetings as well as the National Policy Seminar, hosted by the Association for Career and Technical Education.

"It's a service job, and the Western states really pushed me to continue that on," Nelson said. "That's really why I did it, to represent them."

Umatilla man stabbed, thrown from vehicle

East Oregonian

A Umatilla man was treated for non-life threatening injuries Monday night after he reported an acquaintance stabbed him and threw him from a vehicle in the 800 block of North First Street, Hermiston.

Hermiston Police said they received a call around 9:45 p.m., saying a male victim had been thrown from the vehicle.

When officers responded they found that the victim had been stabbed in the abdomen. He was taken to Good Shepherd Medical Center, Hermiston for treatment of non-life threatening injuries.

Officers arrested Alex Ortega, 25, for second-degree assault and lodged him in the Umatilla County Jail. Ortega, of Hermiston, also owned the 1996 Honda Civic where the stabbing allegedly happened.

Officers also arrested Nina J. Hodges, 22, of

Hermiston, on a probation violation, and lodged her at the Umatilla County Jail.

The vehicle was impounded and a search warrant was served Tuesday morning.



Alex Ortega

Hermiston Chief Jason Edmiston said the investigation is ongoing, and that it was an isolated and quickly contained incident.

"[It] involved three persons known to each other with what we believe was a very unique 'friendship' leading to a dispute taking place inside a moving vehicle," Edmiston said in a press release.

Edmiston said police believe they have a confession from Ortega, and all three people involved have a history with police in the area.

Hermiston Police were assisted by the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office, the Stanfield Police Department and the Oregon State Police.

HERMISTON

Community dinner serves Christmas ham

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**
East Oregonian

The second of the twice-yearly Community Fellowship Dinners in Hermiston will offer a free holiday meal on Christmas Day.

The traditional meal features Hill's Meat ham with all the trimmings. Also, there is a limited supply of turkey. The dinner includes a vegetable and dessert.

Anyone who wants to eat is invited to attend Monday, Dec. 25 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Hermiston High School's main commons, 600 S. First St. Also, meal delivery service, take-out orders and transportation to the meal site is available.

People are treated as guests at the event. As soon as someone enters the door, they are greeted, seated and served, said Gary Humphreys, CFD board chair.

The community meal started in the mid-1980s as a way to provide a nice holiday dinner to people who might otherwise spend it alone. The meal's humble beginnings included about 30 people in the home of Joe and Janet Kiser.

Since then, it has grown and changed venues a couple



File photo

Volunteers bow their heads in prayer before serving at the free meal on Thanksgiving in Hermiston. The second of the twice-yearly free Community Fellowship Dinners is Christmas Day in the main commons at Hermiston High School.

of times before finding a long-time home at the Hermiston Senior Center. However, due to the building's demolition, the CFD board, which was organized in 1993, approached the Hermiston School District to inquire about use of its facilities. The meal was held in the school's commons for the first time during last month's Thanksgiving dinner — serving about 700 meals.

Humphreys said the high school's facilities offer opportunities for further growth of the event. Equipment, parking and seating is far superior to

what's was available elsewhere in town.

However, Humphreys said volunteers are the key to the event's success.

"I've been helping long enough to see moms and dads bring their kids there," he said. "And then I see the kids coming back as adults."

Even with many longtime and returning volunteers, there's always room for others to get involved, Humphreys said.

Volunteers are needed for food preparation and set-up Saturday, Dec. 23. Organizers

will be on hand from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., but those interested in assisting are welcome to help for a couple of hours or all day.

All ages are invited to volunteer, although there is an age limit for those working directly in the kitchen. Assistance is needed for everything from greeters, servers or deliveries to meal prep, the hot line or clean-up. While walk-ins are welcome, it's helpful if volunteers sign up in advance for planning purposes.

For more information, to volunteer, for meal delivery or to arrange transportation, contact 541-371-9772 or cfthermiston@gmail.com. Those interested in volunteering should provide their contact information, what you'd like to do and when you can help. Financial donations can be sent to Community Fellowship Dinner in Hermiston, P.O. Box 1551, Hermiston, OR 97838.

In addition, information about the meal is available by searching Facebook for "Community Fellowship Dinner."

Contact Community Editor Tammy Malgesini at tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4539

FBI's poem advises parents about tech toys

PORTLAND — The Oregon FBI's "Tech Tuesday" segment advises parents to be careful of new "smart" toys, which connect to the internet. The state branch even put its warnings in poetry:

"Personalization is key, and that means learning what your kid is all about.

This can lead to serious privacy invasion, make no doubt.

Tommy's new toy may capture his likes and locations with voice recognition.

GPS, microphones and video recording are all part of the proposition.

Samara's big gift may soon know where she lives, goes to school and plays in the park.

And it can send that info to back to the company, leaving you in the dark."

Given those reasons, how should parents keep children safe this holiday season? The FBI has these answers:

- First, research the toy and its manufacturer. Check to see if hackers have

breached the company's database in the past and try to determine the level of security the corporation uses to protect its customers.

- Second, turn on all possible internal security devices. If a password or even dual encryption option is available, use it. Likewise, if the company offers an update or software patch, install it immediately to protect against possible vulnerabilities. Also, make sure any WiFi system connected to the toy is equally secure.

- Third, read all of the company's disclosure statements to understand the purpose and destination of the information the toy collects.

- Finally, monitor the use of the toy. When not in use, turn the toy off completely to avoid automatic systems, such as GPS or voice recording, from continuing to collect data.

Following this advice can help you make Christmas turn out nice.

Assembly of God presents Christmas in Hermiston

East Oregonian

Awesome music, a touching message and memories you'll never forget are promised during Christmas in Hermiston.

Rev. Terry Haight of the Hermiston Assembly of God Church describes the special service as an interactive, family-friendly event with a "clear message about Christmas."

He invites everyone to attend.

The service is Sunday,

Dec. 24 at 11 a.m. at Hermiston Assembly of God Church, 730 E. Hurlburt Ave., Hermiston. People are encouraged to reserve free tickets in advance. If necessary, the church may add a second service. In addition, complimentary childcare is available for children under 5. Kids over 5 years are welcome to attend the service.

For more information or to make a reservation, call 541-567-5831 or visit www.christmasinhermiston.com.

Submit community news to: 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.

Hat Rock area residents seek grazing district

By **PHIL WRIGHT**
East Oregonian

Four land-owning couples near Hat Rock State Park seek to create a new livestock district to protect their property from open grazing.

Bob and Sue Keys said they started the effort. They live on Salmon Point Lane west of the park, and said for the past 20 years they and their few neighbors on the bluff put up temporary electric fences a few months

a year to keep out grazing cattle.

The cows have caused about \$1,000 in property damage, he said. But now at 84 years old, building and taking down that fence is getting to be too much.

Neighbors Rick and Jean McAndrews, Jason and Serena Torres, and Jerry and Norah Pratton signed onto the petition for the district, which would exempt 2,000 acres from open grazing along the banks of the Colombia River,

including some of Hat Rock.

Sue Keys said the district only establishes boundaries and does not come with any taxes. But like other districts, the Umatilla County Board of Commissioners has to hold a public hearing on its formation. The board at its meeting 9 a.m. Wednesday at the courthouse in Pendleton will consider scheduling the hearing for Feb. 7.

Bob Keys said the formation of the district could mean a cattle owner there

would have to put up fencing to keep them contained.

The county board also will consider vacating a portion of Pine Creek Road and allowing the public works department to spend \$8,500 to buy a 1987 Autocar snowplow with wing and sander from state surplus property.

Public Works Director Tom Fellows in a memo to the board about the plow said it would be added to county snow removal equipment.

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