

HERMISTON

Gifts from firefighters wrap up community spirit

By TAMMY MALGESINI  
East Oregonian

They didn't arrive in a sleigh with a team of reindeer, but members of the Irrigon Fire Protection District assumed the role of Santa Claus to help provide a brighter Christmas for a 5-year-old Irrigon boy.

Volunteer firefighter Joey Munkers and volunteer Lt. Thad Marti said Irrigon is a small community, which often results in people becoming aware of hardships others are going through. While his name and the specific circumstances aren't being made public, the first responders sprung to action to "adopt" the boy during the holiday season.

"It's important because that little kid wouldn't have anything at all for Christmas," Marti said.

Since they don't have a formal program to access funds for such needs, Munkers said the volunteer firefighters dug into their own pockets to purchase presents for the young boy. With a wad of cash, Munkers, Marti and several others headed to the Hermiston Walmart Saturday afternoon to buy presents.

Browsing the aisles without a shopping list, they looked for things they thought a young boy might like. And then they found the perfect gift — a toy fire engine. In addition to lights and sound effects, it's equipped with a water tanker.

"You can actually spray water out of the hose," Marti said.



Thad Marti and Joey Munkers, Irrigon Fire Protection District volunteers, load gifts that were wrapped for free during an "I Love My City" event Saturday at Walmart in Hermiston. The firefighter group pitched in to buy Christmas presents for a 5-year-old Irrigon boy.

Staff photo by Tammy Malgesini

It seems there is truth in the idiom "one good turn deserves another." After purchasing 15-20 gifts, Munkers and Marti headed outside the store to discover members of the Hermiston Assembly of God Church offering free gift wrapping — no strings attached, but lots of bows.

As part of the ongoing "I Love My City" campaign, about 50 volunteers were stationed at tables stretching

between both sets of main doors to the store.

"That was a bonus," Munkers said. "We were going to recruit my mom to wrap them."

Munkers and Marti said the firefighters, which includes 12-15 volunteers, are involved with a couple of projects that give back to the community. In addition to the Christmas Basket program, which helps families in need, they conduct public education

about fire safety in the schools and community. A year-round project, the firefighters also collect and refurbish bicycles, giving them to kids for their birthday or at Christmas.

"People know that if they have an issue they can reach out to us and we'll do the best we can to help them out," Munkers said.

Contact Tammy Malgesini at [tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com](mailto:tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4539.

Sams named CTUIR interim executive director

East Oregonian

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation will get its third executive director of 2017.

The CTUIR's Board of Trustees announced Wednesday that Chuck Sams will take over the position in an interim capacity on Dec. 28, replacing Deb Crosswell. Crosswell has held the interim director position since Dave Tovey resigned from the post in February.



Sams

Crosswell announced earlier this month that she will move on to tribal-owned Cayuse Technologies, where she will work as chief of staff for chief compliance officer Dawn Hagen.

Sams has held a number of executive positions in both the nonprofit and for-profit sectors regionally and nationally in the past

25 years. He has worked for the CTUIR the past five years as the environmental health officer/planner, communications director and interim deputy executive director.

He will serve in the interim director capacity until the Board of Trustees hires an executive director. According to a press release, the Board of Trustees made the appointment to ensure continuity of government and administrative leadership.

That search for a new executive director is underway and following the policies for recruitment and review, according to the release.

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is made up of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla Tribes, formed under the Treaty of 1855.

BRIEFLY

City offers training for new permitting program



PENDELTON — The city of Pendleton is joining the state's ePermitting program and is holding a workshop to familiarize local contractors with the new technology, according to a city press release.

Oregon's ePermitting services include online access to apply, pay for and receive building permits, automated inspection scheduling through phones or computers, comprehensive permit tracking and data collection, electronic plan review, and a mobile app for inspectors and contractors.

The city of Hermiston, Umatilla County and Union County have already adopted ePermitting in their own building departments.

Pendleton and the Oregon Building Codes Division will be co-hosting a training for local contractors at Pendleton City Hall on Jan. 22 from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.

For more information, contact Jerod Broadfoot, outreach and training

coordinator at the Oregon Building Codes Division by email at [jerod.a.broadfoot@oregon.gov](mailto:jerod.a.broadfoot@oregon.gov) or cell phone at 541-240-1256.

Luminaries light up the night

PENDELTON — Are those dark winter nights getting you down? The Pendleton Public Library invites adults 18 and over to make festive luminaries to lighten the mood and light up your home.

DIY @ the Library will show participants how to make luminaries out of household items and craft supplies, which are provided. The instruction begins at 6 p.m. at the library meeting room, 502 S.W. Dorion Ave.

DIY @ the Library is a craft group for adults only that meets every fourth Tuesday. The class is free, but class size is limited to 10 and registration is required by calling 541-966-0380.

Pendleton sourcing prison work crews from TRCI

By ANTONIO SIERRA  
East Oregonian

Instead of locally sourcing its prison labor, the city of Pendleton is importing from Umatilla.

At a meeting Tuesday, an Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution administrator explained to the Pendleton City Council why inmate work crews were being manned by Umatilla's Two Rivers Correctional Institution inmates rather than Pendleton's EOCI.

In May 2016, the council reversed its 1987 ban on EOCI inmates working within city limits as public opposition to the stance dissipated. Lifting the ban was conditional on a report from EOCI updating the council on the program after a year.

Tom Lemens, the EOCI assistant superintendent of correctional rehabilitation, told the council that EOCI work crews were never introduced to Pendleton because of a shift in Oregon Department of Corrections policy.

Lemens said Level 1 inmates — prisoners deemed safe by the DOC to work in the community — were shifted from EOCI's

medium-security prisons to light-security facilities like TRCI. The Pendleton prison was no longer able to keep Level 1 inmates long enough to integrate them into a work crew before they were relocated to another institution.

Although circumstances could change, Lemens said he didn't anticipate EOCI using work crews in Pendleton for the "foreseeable future."

According to a report from both Umatilla County prisons, TRCI work crews spent just four days working for the city and four days working for St. Anthony Hospital in 2017. Duties included cleaning up around buildings and offices, general facility maintenance, rock moving and placement and basic construction.

City Manager Robb Corbett said the DOC work crews had been a "significant benefit" to Pendleton "without any issues."

Dale Primmer, a city councilor and the director of Umatilla County Community Justice, said the council should "spare these folks a once-a-year dog-and-pony show" and pass a permanent reversal of the ban, which

was approved unanimously. Despite no longer needing approval from the council, Lemens said he can return with annual reports on the work crew program.

As the Pendleton Development Commission, the council also approved a \$33,433 façade restoration to the family that owns old city hall.

That sum is equal to 25 percent of the project's cost, which includes installing new windows at the 34 S.E. Dorion Ave. building. Unlike other façade grants, the money won't be dispersed in thirds as the project goes along.

This is due to the city's insistence that the building be insured before it provides any funding, said Charles Denight, the associate director of the development commission.

Diana Quezada, representing the family that owns old city hall, said the building can't be insured until all the windows are installed.

The Quezadas are under a tight timeline to restore old city hall — the windows facing Southeast Dorion Avenue and Southeast First Street must be installed by

mid-January, the rest of the windows replaced by mid-April and a certificate of occupancy obtained by Sept. 1. If any of the benchmarks are missed, the city can fine the owners or foreclose on the property.

Quezada said she was confident the project would get done on time.

An explosion at old city hall in July 2015 killed one of the Quezadas' family members, Eduardo Quezada, and badly damaged the building.

The Quezadas were previously on the brink of paying thousands of dollars in fines after missing a previous deadline to put a roof on the building by the beginning of 2017. Right before the case was set to go to trial in Pendleton Municipal Court, the city and the Quezadas reached a settlement that created their current arrangement.

Contact Antonio Sierra at [asierra@eastoregonian.com](mailto:asierra@eastoregonian.com) or 541-966-0836.

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PLASTIC IS NO LONGER RECYCLABLE

**WHAT:** Mixed plastics #1-#7 is no longer recyclable. Our depot collection containers for this material near Fallen Field and at the Transfer Station will be removed on or before January 1, 2018.

**WHY:** The only market for these materials was China. Effective January 1, 2018 China is implementing its "National Sword" policy to increase the environmental quality in its own country, which will stop all mixed paper and mixed plastics from being imported. This is a national and international issue, but the effects are very local. There are no markets to absorb what China has refused to accept.

**WHEN:** By January 1, 2018 the plastics collection containers will be removed and these plastics must be placed in the trash. Plastic water bottles and many other drink containers may still be taken for the \$0.10 redemption at grocery stores or redemption centers.

**WHO:** All Pendleton residents and surrounding areas who use Pendleton Sanitary Service recycling collection containers.

**OTHER COMMUNITIES:** Other communities that have "co-mingled" recycling (all recyclables in one roll cart at their home) will be very severely impacted by these market changes. Pendleton's impact is small in comparison.

**WHAT CAN I DO?:** Continue to recycle whenever and whatever is possible. Recycling is still the right thing to do — it saves energy, natural resources, and creates a sustainable future, but be very careful about contamination. If an item is questionable for recycling — "When in doubt, throw it out" is the best policy. For complete recycling information, please visit our website at [pendletonsanitaryservice.com](http://pendletonsanitaryservice.com) or call our office at (541) 276-1271.

Pendleton Sanitary Service, Inc. is committed to offering a recycling collection program supported by our customers and turning this difficult situation into an opportunity to strengthen the future of recycling. If markets for recycled plastics become available in the future, we are committed to reinstate our collection of plastics and adapt to current market conditions.

LOCATION: 5500 NW Rieth Road • Pendleton, OR 97801  
PHONE: (541) 276-1271 • OFFICE HOURS: Mon - Fri: 8AM - 4PM