

Red Nose Day



ABOVE: Sister Monica Borden and St. Anthony Hospital CEO Harry Geller sported red noses Thursday as part of Red Nose Day. The event, which seeks to end childhood poverty, was started in England in 1985. Comic Relief USA stages the event in the U.S. and Walgreens sells the noses for \$1. Half goes to charity and half to production of the nose.

RIGHT: Sister Monica Borden poses with other St. Anthony Hospital employees wearing red noses Thursday as part of Red Nose Day.



Staff photos by Kathy Aney

Early morning fire damages Hermiston home

East Oregonian

A Hermiston home was badly damaged in a fire Wednesday morning, and officials are still investigating the cause.

Umatilla County Fire District 1 responded to a home in the 1300 block of West Joseph Avenue around 4:45 a.m. Wednesday, and found smoke and fire spreading from the back side of the home into the attic area. Crews made sure all residents of the home were outside, and then attacked the fire from both inside and outside.

No one was injured in the fire, and some items from the home were saved, but the home suffered serious damage. UCFD estimated the loss at \$80,000 for the home, and \$40,000 for the contents of the home.

They were aided by Umatilla Rural Fire Protection District.



Photo contributed by Umatilla County Fire District 1

A fire did serious damage to a house Wednesday morning on SW Joseph St. in Hermiston.

MARKET: Slated to go on throughout summer

Continued from 1A

The farmers market almost didn't happen. Mitch Myers, who had been approached by the city about taking over the market, briefly canceled the event after a dispute with the city caused a delay in the opening of a permanent shade structure that was to be the market's new home. But after the city offered to host the market downtown instead, Myers put together a new plan to host it on a different site.

Teresa Engbretson of Paterson, Washington, was selling fresh flowers Thursday through her business My Garden Overfloweth. She said the switch from Saturday to Thursday was a little tricky for her since she has a major market to attend Friday mornings, but she loved the new location.

"There seems to be a lot of traffic along here," she said.

The addition of a massive shade tent was a new development that was a big hit with vendors and shoppers as temperatures reached near 90 degrees.

"I'm in love with this," said Rod Frerichs, pointing upward. "This is totally nice."

Frerichs' booth was called Homemade Happiness, featuring home decor by him and sewing crafts from his wife. He said he had a booth on the last day of the farmers market last year and decided to commit to the entire summer this year. He said he had liked the market being in the heart of downtown and on a Saturday, but he could also see the benefits of the new arrangement, particularly



LEFT: Hermiston Farmers Market vendor Robert Smith sautees some cheese Thursday evening at his Smith's Tiny Farm booth. RIGHT: Vendor Chris Finley, of 3rd Generation Farms, holds out a bunch of radishes Thursday night for her customer to see.

since some vendors had commitments to larger markets on Saturdays.

"I'm optimistic," he said. Live music was scheduled to start around 5 p.m. but by 4:30 p.m. the market was already busy. The Walchi Farms booth was doing steady business selling bundles of fresh asparagus for \$1.50 apiece. Like many of the produce stands, as the growing season progresses the farm plans to add more produce options such as watermelon.

Shoppers Jeanie Bloodsworth and Sherry Thompson said they were looking forward to more produce as

the season goes on, but were excited for the market's opening. Thompson was waiting on a bouquet of flowers from My Garden Overfloweth.

"I always get some for me and some for Mom," she said.

Bloodsworth said she thought the shade tent on a busy corner of First Place was the "best location so far" for the farmers market.

"I saw them putting up the tent the other day and thought, 'That's so nice,'" she said.

The Maxwell Market is slated to run Thursdays from 4-8 p.m. through the rest of the summer.



Staff photos by Kathy Aney

Local districts discuss sexual harassment policies

By JAYATI RAMAKRISHNAN
East Oregonian

As Oregon's largest school district deals with fallout from a sexual abuse scandal, other schools explained their own policies and the cultures in their districts.

Portland Public Schools have recently come under scrutiny for the way they've handled sexual harassment complaints, with a report revealing that for decades, the district ignored or didn't properly deal with complaints about teacher Mitch Whitehurst sexually abusing students.

Many local administrators said they feel their policies adequately address reporting and complaint procedures.

David Marshall, Hermiston School District's human resources director, said the district investigates every complaint they receive.

"Typically, it will start with the principal," he said. "They'll kind of do an investigation. If a complaint like that comes in, everything else gets dropped."

He said one of the first things the district will do is determine if they need to involve law enforcement. If so, they will let officers conduct their investigation, and the district will step back.

"If charges are pressed, it's pretty straightforward," he said. "But if law enforcement doesn't do anything, we review it."

He said sometimes, even if the complaint doesn't rise to the level of law enforcement, the district will discipline the staff member according to its own policy.

He said all staff receive annual online training about sexual harassment, both a general training and one specific to grooming, and reporting other staff members.

Umatilla School District Superintendent Heidi Sipe said the district keeps investigatory files forever, for both founded and unfounded complaints. Complaints are color-coded based on the discipline enacted.

"Staff can request (by contract) that items be removed from their personnel file," Sipe said via email, noting that file is separate from investigatory files. "However, I've never removed, nor ever

been asked to remove, anything related to discipline for a situation regarding a student."

Stanfield Schools Superintendent Beth Burton said that as per House Bill 2062, upon hiring a new staff member, the district requests information about whether the person was ever the subject of a substantiated report of child abuse or sexual misconduct in their previous jobs.

She said all staff are also required to take several annual trainings online, which range from general safety issues and mandatory reporting, to trainings specifically about sexual harassment. Staff are tested on the subjects, and required to pass.

"We actually provide paid time to complete the trainings, because they are important and staff members need the information," Burton said in an email.

Additionally, she said, students are given instruction about the school's sexual harassment policies.

Burton said the district has not been compiling complaint numbers on a yearly basis, but may begin doing so to better review complaint practices and procedures.

John Larson, a former Hermiston teacher who is now the president of the Oregon Education Association, issued a statement last week condemning the inaction of Portland Public Schools, and encouraging other schools to revisit their own policies.

Larson said the OEA itself does not set policies, and that is up to individual school districts. He said districts typically also offer their own trainings about sexual misconduct and mandatory reporting.

"We will continue to encourage districts to ensure that reporting procedures and trainings around issues of sexual abuse and misconduct are strong," Larson said in an email.

The Teachers Standards and Practices Commission has an online database of all the complaints that have been substantiated against teachers, dating back to at least 1997. In 2018 so far, six teacher licenses have been revoked. Of those, four had to do with sexual harassment or abuse of a student. The incidents had all taken place in previous years, but the license revocations were not enacted until 2018.

BRIEFLY

Irrigon man takes plea in rape case

East Oregonian

HEPPNER — Mayor Alberto Granados of Irrigon pleaded guilty last week to raping an underage girl when he was 37.

Granados faced three counts of second-degree rape and eight more of first-degree sexual abuse, according to Morrow County Circuit Court records. The state alleged he committed the crimes in 2017 against a girl younger than 14.

He changed his plea on

May 17 to guilty on one count of second-degree rape. On his plea petition to the court, Granados admitted between March 1 and July 10, 2017, he had sex with the girl.

In exchange for the plea, the district attorney's office dropped the other charges and recommended the mandatory minimum prison sentence of six years, three months. Circuit Judge Jon Lieuellen handed down the sentence along with post-prison supervision for three years, nine months.

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