

TEEN POACHER
BANNED FOR LIFE
FROM HUNTING
REGION/3A

RED HOT
MARINERS
BEAT ASTROS
SPORTS/1B

SOCIAL SECURITY,
MEDICARE GET
BAD PROGNOSIS
NATION/7A

EAST OREGONIAN

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WINNER OF THE 2017 ONPA GENERAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

One dollar



Staff photo by Kathy Aney

Sexual assault nurse examiners Amber Davis, Susan Stephens and Jessica Baunach brought a program called Start by Believing back to Good Shepherd Medical Center after attending a conference in Chicago.

Start by believing

Sexual assault victims fear they won't be believed

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

A sexual assault victim faces some distressing choices.

Does she go to the hospital and get a sexual assault exam? Initiate a police report? Tell a family member or friend?

Or do nothing?

Most victims of sexual assault do the latter. They choose not to report.

"Sexual assault is the most underreported crime," said Susan Stephens, sexual assault nurse examiner at Good Shepherd Hospital in Hermiston. "Only 37 percent of sexual assaults are reported. We think that in our community, it's more like 10 percent."

"They don't think they'll be believed," said nurse examiner Amber Davis. "I hear a lot of 'It's my word against his. Nobody's going to believe me anyway.'"

That type of comment bothers Stephens, Davis and their colleague Jessica Baunach. When the trio of nurses attended a conference in Chicago in April called Ending Violence Against Women, a breakout session titled "Start by Believing: Ending the Cycle of Silence in Sexual Assault" caught their eye.

The public awareness campaign is all about shifting a paradigm. Instead of blaming the victim or reacting with disbelief, the program encourages people to respond



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

A poster on an examination room used to examine sexual assault victims reads "Start by Believing" at Good Shepherd Medical Center in Hermiston.

with acceptance or at least an open mind.

As part of the session, the nurses listened to sexual assault victims talk about the agonizing decision about whether to report the crime.

"It's truly the worst day of their life," Stephens said. "They're overwhelmed. They're emotional. Then they have to talk about it and relive the attack."

The nurses were startled to hear at the conference how few young victims report sexual assault.

"On college campuses, 90 percent of sexual assault victims do not report," Stephens said. "One in four children are assaulted before the age of 18. Only 12 percent of children who have been sexually assaulted report the abuse."

The Hermiston nurses decided to bring Start by Believing to Umatilla County. They are first presenting the message to groups inside the hospital. Later, they will

See BELIEVE/8A

PENDLETON

Early literacy seeing boost since PELC opened doors

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

Kindergarten literacy rates are rising in the Pendleton School District, and school officials are pointing to the data as proof that the district's early learning efforts are working.

At a Pendleton School Board meeting Tuesday, staff from the Pendleton Early Learning Center presented data from assessments from the previous three school years.

Whether it was knowing all 31 letter sounds or all 26 lower and uppercase letters, identifying 10 consonant-vowel-consonant words, or writing out word sounds, almost every statistic rose from the end of 2015-2016 to the end of 2016.

In some categories, as little as 0.5 percent were able to meet benchmark at the start of the year. By the end of the school year, no less than two-thirds of the kindergarten population was proficient in each category.

The data for 2017-2018 showed positive signs as well.

The early learning center tested kindergartners in fall, winter and spring and organized them into tiers, with Tier 1 being the lowest and Tier 4 being the highest. In Fall 2017, 64 percent of students were in Tier 1 while 1 percent were in Tier 4.

By Spring 2018, 93 percent were in Tier 4 and 6 percent were in Tier 3. None were still in Tier 1.

The district is pinning much of the kindergartners' success on its decision to focus its resources from Title I — a federal funding program for schools with high numbers of low-income students — toward the Pendleton Early Learning Center when it opened in 2015.

Two teachers and six assistants now work under the center's Title I program.

Title I teacher Melissa Monkman explained that the teachers spend most of their days either pulling out students to work on literacy activities or "pushing-in" to support their classroom teachers while the students are in class.

They do this several times per day and Monkman estimated that the Title I team works with a fluid group of about 80 students per day.

The school is managing to raise literacy despite the data showing that fewer and fewer students are starting the year kindergarten-ready.

Carol Aldrich, the other Title I teacher, told the board that she issued an assessment at the beginning of the year where students could score a maximum of 194 points. Nearly 100 students scored less than 20.

"They just had no understanding of letters, and that letters have sounds," she said.

Lori Hale, the center's principal, theorized that parents were exposing their children to less reading than they used to and said the school is meeting with local daycare centers

See LITERACY/8A



EO file photo

Marie Norris works on a painting at the Assembly of God Church in Hermiston on Thursday, June 1, 2006.

PENDLETON

A patchwork life

Quilter who died in car crash put crafting passion to use for veterans

By KATHY ANEY
East Oregonian

A piece of the foundation of the Pendleton quilting community is gone.

Joanne Marie Norris died Sunday after her Mercury sedan left the highway and rolled. Norris was on her way home from manning a display of her quilts at this weekend's Flora School Days in the tiny town of Flora.

Norris pieced together her life quilt by quilt, stitch by stitch. The tools of

her trade were a sewing machine, needle and thread.

Several of Norris' friends sat around a round wooden table at the Thimbles Fabric -n- More shop on Tuesday reminiscing about their fellow quilter. A couple used tissues to dab at their eyes.

"People are just totally shocked," said Cindy Webb, who owns the sewing store. "She was a person who had a heart of gold."

Norris is especially known for the hundreds of quilts she sewed for veterans through a program called Quilts of Valor. She often cajoled others into doing the same, even if they had little

See NORRIS/8A



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